



City of Greenville  
Recreation and Parks Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 13, 2017 @ 5:30 PM  
City Hall – Council Chambers  
200 West 5<sup>th</sup> Street

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

- Garrett Taylor, Chair
- Jaimie Yahnker, Vice-Chair
- Hasan Hilliard
- Audrey G. Nealy
- Nikki Caswell
- Gordon Darragh
- Mike Saad
- Elizabeth Seda
- McLean Godley, City Council Liaison
- Juquon Whitaker

**STAFF:**

- Gary Fenton
- Don Octigan
- Laura J. Davenport
- Lamarco Morrison
- Dean Foy

**AUDIENCE PRESENT:**

Dr. Jim Decker

**MEETING AGENDA, DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS:**

The meeting opened at 5:37 PM and the following items were addressed:

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. INTRODUCTIONS**

None.

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made to approve the September 13, 2017 agenda as presented.

Motion: Audrey Nealy

Second: Nikki Caswell

Motion carried unanimously among those present.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made to approve the July 12, 2017 minutes as presented.

Motion: Audrey Nealy

Second: Gordon Darragh

Motion carried unanimously among those present.

A motion was made to approve the August 23, 2017 minutes as presented.

Motion: Audrey Nealy

Second: Gordon Darragh

Motion carried unanimously among those present.

**V. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Dr. Jim Decker stated he was a strong supporter of GRPD. On 6/5/17 City Council asked the department to move forward with a contract for Bradford Creek Public Golf Course management. On 9/13/17 a firm has yet to be hired. Would like to know what is going on. Director Fenton addressed his concerns.

**VII. DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY REPORT**

A. Staff is busy finishing up summer activities, programs, events, and maintenance requirements, and is now preparing for the fall version of all of these things. These programs included an evening of touring some of GRPD facilities and thanks to those who were able to join the tour. It's important for

Commissioners to get a personal experience with the needs, projects, challenges, and improvements within our parks system.

- B. Welcome to new Commissioner Juquon Whitaker.
- C. Previous City Manager Barbara Lipscomb has retired and new City Manager Ann Wall has been with the City since July. She is working to familiarize herself with City projects, issues, staff and facilities. She spent time with the Director on 8/22 and 8/25 becoming acquainted with parks and recreation facilities.
- D. This summer the City made history as the “Summer of the Bat and Ball.” The City is still in awe at the accomplishments of the local All-Star teams that won the state of NC title and then went on to capture the Southeast US Regional title including:
  - The Pitt County Girls Softball League, 8U All-Stars,
  - Greenville Babe Ruth Baseball, 14U All-Stars,
  - Greenville Tar Hill Little League, 8-10 All-Stars,
  - Greenville Tar Hill Little League, 9-11 All-Stars, and
  - Greenville North State Little League, 10-12 All Stars who represented Greenville, NC, and the Southeast US in 2017 Little League World Series in Williamsport, PA finishing 4<sup>th</sup> in the world.These teams will be recognized at tomorrow night’s City Council meeting.
- E. Tomorrow night’s City Council meeting includes a staff presentation regarding the possibility of contracting with a marketing firm for professional services at the golf course. Staff has also been investigating the possibility of contracting with Billy Casper Golf for overall operations and management of the golf course. This has required a lot of time of Parks Superintendent Dean Foy. Staff will keep you informed on the final decision.
- F. Several staff had planned to attend the NCRPA Annual Conference in Greensboro, however with the uncertainties of Hurricane Irma and it being a joint conference with the South Carolina Recreation and Parks Association, it was postponed until December. Staff continues to hope the City will host another NCRPA Conference, as we did over 6 years ago.
- G. Numerous Recreation and Parks staff will be assisting with the 2017 NC League of Municipalities Conference, hosted by Greenville. This event brings several hundred visitors to Greenville.
- H. Continue to assess 80 applications for the Special Projects, Marketing & Events Coordinator position, the purpose of which is to:
  - Establish initiatives and processes for marketing our services and facilities,
  - Lead and coordinate our efforts to secure outside resources such as money, volunteers, event sponsors, bequests, equipment, supplies, services and land donations,
  - Plan and coordinate public concerts and other City wide events, and
  - Manage a variety of special projects.This effort has consistently been bumped by sudden, time-sensitive priorities, but applications are down to eight finalists now, and interviews will take place in early October, hoping to fill the position in early November.
- I. If you receive The Daily Reflector, you may have received a copy of the fall issue of *Greenville – Life in the East*, which features various local stories and matched them with TV shows of the present or past. Our department was matched with the TV show, “Parks and Recreation.” Six staff members made the cover of the magazine that parodied a promotional image from the real TV show.

## VIII. STAFF REPORT

- A. Don Octigan, Recreation Superintendent
  - 1. Recreation Update
    - a. Shared highlights of the All-Star team Celebration, Jackie Robinson Closing Ceremonies, and programs from Athletics, Center for Arts and Crafts, Specialized Recreation and GAFC.
    - b. Upcoming Events include:
      - i. Week of 9/4 – Fall programs began, including practices for Future Stars Youth Soccer, Youth Flag Football, Adult Flag Football, Specialized Recreation Programs, and various art programs.
      - ii. 9/14 Yoga in the Park at Town Common at 6:00pm, each Thursday in October
      - ii. 9/17 Splash & Dash Kids Triathlon at GAFC
      - iii. 9/13 Future Stars Youth Soccer begins, 860 participants with 92 teams

B. Dean Foy, Parks Superintendent

1. Ronnie Crandol, who has been with the GRPD for 27 years is retiring on 9/27. This position has been posted internally.
2. Greenville Jaycees is stepping down from planning the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration at the Town Common. Staff will actively find another group to provide the show. Over the last 7-8 years, Hastings Ford has donated \$7,000 worth of fireworks yearly.
3. Billy Casper Golf – Staff was instructed to write an RFP for contract management. This was completed and the three firms that responded were interviewed and one was ultimately selected, Billy Casper Golf. Staff was in preliminary negotiations and then instructed to explore contracting with marketing firm. Mr. Foy contacted three firms, in which two gave phone interviews and one gave a personal interview. This was also listed on NCRPA's List Serve asking if any other municipality had worked with a third party marketing firm for golf. There were no responses. Questions arose such as:
  - a. Budget – to implement a marketing strategy, which is \$35-50,000 (uniform across all three firms). The current advertising budget for Bradford Creek is \$5,000 and has been that amount for years.
  - b. Need your own stand-alone website, not just a page on the City of Greenville website.
  - c. Need search engine optimization – that's what puts you in the top three. If you Google golf in Greenville, Bradford Creek is already in the top three. If you click the link, it takes you directly to the website where you can access tee times, rates, and clubhouse rentals.
4. If you choose a marketing firm, they will also have to do some research on Bradford Creek.
5. No one shared a strategy for Bradford Creek. One had a one word approach to manage advertising and TV ads, radio and online. One firm suggested no TV ads because there is no money to run in the market. Online presence needs to be maintained and reputation repair needs because every time you hear Bradford Creek it's in a negative light.
6. The course is in as good as shape as it's ever been. Credit is given to Nicky Atkinson, who is a mechanic – not a Greens Superintendent. Also give credit to Billy Casper Golf who has contracted with the City to provide greens oversight. The weather has helped also.
7. All three firms were asked what the return would be (a guesstimate) and two firms would not provide an answer. One firm gave a guesstimate of 2-5% on the marketing dollar.
8. All three firms had no golf related clients.
9. Billy Casper Golf is not interested in providing only the marketing piece because the City does not have the staff on board to successfully implement their strategy. There is more to Billy Casper marketing than just advertising.
10. Will share findings with City Council and see what the direction will be.

C. Lamarco Morrison, Parks Planner

1. Capital Project Updates
  - a. Town Common
    - i. Gateway Plaza and Restrooms  
Rhodeside & Harwell (R&H) have provided two design alternatives and a preferred design alternative has been chosen by stakeholders. The preferred design alternative will be presented to City Council tomorrow night.
  - b. Westpointe Village
    - i. A preferred design alternative has been selected for the development of the park. The final master plan will be presented to the focus group in late September.
    - ii. GRPD has executed the purchasing contract with Cunningham Recreation for the park's playground. It will take approximately 6-8 weeks to fabricate and ship the playground equipment. The playground and amenities will be installed in late fall 2017.
  - c. Tar River Legacy Plan – Action Sports Park
    - i. The City has extended the review and evaluation period for the Action Sports Park proposals to add much needed representation from the BMX Community. Four representatives led by Lauren Mirra, the widow of the late Dave Mirra, have been added

to the selection committee. Staff anticipates the evaluations will be completed by mid-September.

**IX. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**X. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**XI. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

A. Juquon Whitaker – Looking forward to working with Commission.

B. Nikki Caswell – Welcomed Mr. Whitaker.

C. Audrey Nealy – Welcomed Mr. Whitaker and kids are excited about the sign at Westpointe.

D. Jaimie Yahnker – Welcomed Mr. Whitaker and appreciative of the ride home after Commission.

**XI. MOTION TO ADJOURN**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 6:47PM.

Motion: Audrey Nealy

Second: Gordon Darragh

Motion carried unanimously among those present.

Respectfully Submitted,



Laura J. Davenport  
Administrative Assistant  
Recreation and Parks Department