



City of Greenville  
Recreation and Parks Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, February 12, 2020 @ 5:30 PM  
City Hall – Council Chambers  
200 West 5<sup>th</sup> Street

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

- Nikki Caswell, Chair
- Gordon Darragh, Vice-Chair
- Hasan Hilliard
- Byron Aynes
- Kristian Williams
- Jaimie Yahnker
- Mike Saad
- Darin White
- Carrie Watson

**STAFF:**

- Gary Fenton
- Don Octigan
- Councilmember Monica Daniels
- Chasity McCurdy
- Laura J. Davenport
- Mark Nottingham
- Dontrell Jones
- Dean Foy
- Brad Williams
- Mark Tysinger

**AUDIENCE PRESENT:**

None.

**MEETING AGENDA, DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS:**

The meeting opened at 5:30 PM and the following items were addressed:

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. INTRODUCTIONS**

Tristan Looke from ECU Planning and new Commissioner Darin White.

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made to approve the February 12, 2020 agenda as presented.

Motion: Jaimie Yahnker

Second: Gordon Darragh

Motion carried unanimously among those present.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made to approve the January 8, 2020 minutes as presented.

Motion: Gordon Darragh

Second: Jaimie Yahnker

Motion carried unanimously among those present.

**V. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**VI. DIRECTOR’S MONTHLY REPORT**

A. It is great to have Darin White back with us as a member of the Recreation and Parks Commission. He was an active, supportive member of the Commission’s efforts for six years earlier with Greenville Recreation and Parks. Staff is glad he was offered the chance to rejoin and grateful he chose to say yes to that offer. This particular appointment to the Commission was by City Councilmember Monica Daniels.

B. Many years ago the fall and winter was considered the slow season of recreation and parks. Those days are gone; all seasons in Recreation and Parks are busy, and though some can be more pressure-filled than others, there’s never a good time to be away from for very long. When the budget

falls in the middle of one of those busy seasons, it becomes even more challenging and that's where staff is right now; especially with spring and summer just around the corner and a new two-year City budget being developed for approval in June.

- C. The approach of spring and summer is an exciting time for staff, when parks and trails begin turning green as turf and trees come out of dormancy, spring programs begin, and preparations get underway for PirateFest, the beginning of another season of Exceptional Community Baseball League (ECBL), Little League Baseball, the start of Jackie Robinson Baseball League, the beginning of this year's Sunday in the Park Series, the opening of Splashpoint sprayground and the Community Pool, registration for countless day camps and playground programs, the Field of Honor Flag display and the July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration at the Town Common.
- D. In the past few months Recreation staff have been planning and developing these upcoming program and events, and assembling the Spring/Summer Program Guide (at each seat). It illustrates the creativity of staff and their efforts to provide something for everyone and hope you will take the time to browse thru the publication to become acquainted with the diversity of events and services planned and provided by the department. The guide is available at all recreation facilities and may other sites and businesses across the City. Citizens can call the office at 252.329.4567 to determine the site that's nearest to their home or workplace. An electronic version is also available on the City's website.
- E. Later this evening Parks Superintendent Dean Foy will provide progress related to another truly exciting project, the Sycamore Hill Gateway Plaza at the Town Common, on the SW corner of the park at Greene and First Streets. You can now see some of the construction associated with the impactful and long-awaited project. In the next few weeks staff will be releasing details of the ribbon cutting and dedication planned to celebrate the completion of this monumental project. Greenville is truly fortunate to have a riverside park so centrally located in the community as the Town Common is and because of the mid-city location, Town Common is thought of as everybody's park. It's Greenville's version of NY's Central Park and it's getting better and better.
- F. Last month the Director mentioned writing an article for the Chamber of Commerce's 2020 edition of *Glimpse Magazine*, on the new Adventure Project that will be located on the North bank of the Tar River on the City's East side, a few miles downriver from the Town Common. As reported, the article entitled "A Place with Potential," has been released in print form and copies are at your seat this evening. This future park is a monumental project that will require numerous partnerships with outside groups, businesses, not-for-profits, and perhaps even with individual families and citizens. It will take a lot of time, but will ultimately have a huge impact on our City's image, quality of life, economy, reputation, and the more people know about it, the better.
- G. Later on tonight's agenda, staff will be asking the Commission to approve staff applying for grant support for the Adventure Park thru the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (NC PARTF). Applications are due on 5/1 and at this moment it's uncertain whether staff will be applying for support for additional land acquisition or support for park development, or possibly both, but either way staff will be able to utilize the money invested in the recent acquisition of the parks initial 163 acres towards the required match for a PARTF grant in 2021 or 2022. That was \$400,000 and little over 25% of that came as a gift in support of this recent acquisition. Commission approval tonight will allow staff to seek City Council's approval for the PARTF application, once it's completed. If approved the City would receive up to \$500,000 in reimbursement for expenses related to the project.
- H. As mentioned in the monthly report, City Council hosted its annual Planning Session in late January and several of the goals they established at that time have aspects directly related to what staff does in Recreation and Parks, focusing on wellness, attractive and vibrant neighborhoods, economic development, recreation opportunities, safety, operating in a fiscally responsible manner and promoting our City. Numerous tasks called Action Steps are needed to help achieve these goals, will be the responsibility of Recreation and Parks.

## **VII. ASSISTANT DIRECTORS REPORT**

- A. 2019 Year in Review
  - 1. 2019 was a great year for our department. There were several goals achieved and new ones set for the upcoming year. Recreation staff worked diligently on several projects and programs.
    - a. Staff planned, organized, and implemented over 600 individual program ranging from the arts, athletics, computer science, nature, and wellness/fitness. Twenty (20) new programs were created in 2019 at various locations.

- b. Approximately 16,000 individual registrations were taken in 2019 for programs offered by GRPD staff.
  - c. Athletic staff organized programs for over 3,000 youth and adults.
  - d. Staff assisted with safety inspections of playgrounds, recreation facilities and parks, which resulted in over 1,200 inspections being completed.
- B. 2020 North Carolina Recreation & Parks Association (NCRPA) State Conference
- 1. 700+ recreational professionals and vendors from across NC will be in attendance.
  - 2. Don Octigan and Heather White will Co-Chair Conference Planning Committee.
  - 3. 35+ Recreation & Parks staff will be involved in organizing, planning, and implementing the conference. The Conference Planning Committee is comprised of 10 subcommittees.
- C. Adult Basketball League
- 1. The 2020 Adult Basketball season began in January and is currently midway through the season. This is the first year staff have used a third party vendor to contract sports officials. Staff have worked with Silbo for the last 8 months on an agreement that led up to this basketball season. Staff has contracted with Silbo to manage sports officials for adult basketball, softball, kickball, and flag football. The current agreement runs through the summer of 2021. At that time staff will evaluate the current agreement and decide how to move forward in future seasons.
  - 2. This agreement has allowed staff the opportunity to work on other initiatives, one includes management of the new volleyball facility at Boyd Lee Park.
- D. Staff are currently finalizing plans for this year's summer camp program. Registration began on 2/3. Schedules for each camp can be found online at [www.greenvillenc.gov](http://www.greenvillenc.gov).
- E. Summer Camp employment opportunities shared.
- F. Important Dates
- 1. 2/3 Future Stars Youth Soccer Registration concluded.
    - a. 831 participants as of today; 98 teams.
    - b. 26 volunteer coaches still needed; call 252.329.4550 if interested.
  - 2. 2/29 Cultural Arts Day at Jaycee Park for Arts & Crafts.
  - 3. 2/29 Future Stars Youth Soccer practices begin at Bradford Creek Soccer Complex.
  - 4. 3/13-14 Hosting 10U & 12U SWAC Youth Basketball Tournament
    - a. 16 teams competing, all from Eastern NC
    - b. Anticipated economic impact of \$137,000.
  - 5. 3/21 Exceptional Community Baseball Opening Ceremonies at Elm Street Park, Sarah Vaughn Field of Dreams.

## VIII. STAFF REPORTS

### A. Recreation Division Report

- 1. Dontrell Jones, Recreation Supervisor – Eppes Recreation Center (introduced by Recreation Chasity McCurdy)
  - a. Staff – Dontrell Jones, Travis Clemons, and ....
  - b. Hoop Fest – January 2020 – Combined with South Greenville Recreation Center.
  - c. Current Programs – Youth basketball.
  - d. Spring in to Summer event at Eppes Recreation Center on Saturday, 4/4 from 1:00 – 3:00 PM. An opportunity for families to learn more about summer camps, how to register, and the financial assistance program that could help with summer camp fees.
  - e. Shared Summer Camp photos from last year.
  - f. Assistant Director Don Octigan thanked Mike Watson for his assistance with projects at Eppes Recreation Center.
- 2. Brad Williams, Parks Program Assistant, River Park North (introduced by Parks Coordinator Mark Tysinger)
  - a. Recent Happenings at River Park North
    - i. Construction on the accessible water sports facility is wrapping up and hope to have this facility open in the spring for the public.
    - ii. Most programming has seen full numbers throughout the fall and winter seasons.
    - iii. Tayrn Sutton, new STEAM Lab Coordinator, has been working with staff and volunteers to augment nature center tours and program offerings, while also offering additional STEAM specific programs.

- iv. Currently, staff is gearing up for a busy spring and summer season (camp registration and spring programming for weekdays and weekends – child/adult).
  - 3. Programs and Projects
    - a. Work on watersports facility (will have accessible kayaks and peddle boats).
    - b. Winter Survivor Camp (fire building, outdoor cooking and survival – offered over holidays).
    - c. River Park North at Greenville Gives (roasting marshmallows).
    - d. Santa's Workshop (meet and greet Santa, crafts, and hayride).
    - e. High school reptile interactive programs with the nature center.
    - f. Fire pits at the New Year's Eve Celebration at the Town Common.
    - g. MLK Day of Service Cleanup (50 ECU football team members, churches and citizens).
    - h. Decorating Trees for Wildlife program (parent/child interaction).
  - 4. Upcoming Programs at River Park North
    - a. NC Aquarium and NC Maritime Museum
    - b. Fly Tying with the Great Outdoor Provision Co.
    - c. Aurora to Goose Creek Family Excursion
    - d. Egg Scramble
    - e. Bear Watching Trip at Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge
    - f. Critters Undercover
- B. Parks Division Report
1. Dean Foy, Parks Superintendent
    - a. Sycamore Hill Gateway Plaza (FIP) – Making progress, remaining precast walls will be in this week. Received samples of the glass panels this week. Still on schedule – should be finished with construction at the end of March. Shared current images.
    - b. Volleyball Courts – Forms being installed for the poured in place retaining walls. This project is on schedule.
    - c. Watersports Facility – Under water right now due to flooding. Need to install anchors for the dock; project is almost complete.
    - d. Town Creek Bridge – Painting the bridge and contractors on-site this past Monday, should take 3-5 weeks. Shared current images. PO has been requested for the concrete decking; hope to begin by the end of March. PO is also in place for lighting. This will be a nice venue for the City. All improvements (painting, decking, and lights) have an anticipated completion date of 6/30. Bridge will be painted a light gray (recommended by Musco lights).
    - e. Staff is gearing up for spring and recreation programs.
  2. Mark Nottingham, Parks Planner
    - a. Rivers Edge Sculpture Zoo
      - i. Invitation to bid will be published this week.
      - ii. Located next to the dog park.
    - b. Beach Volleyball Courts
      - i. Groundbreaking ceremony held on 1/16.
      - ii. Foundation work is underway.
      - iii. Construction expected to take 4 months; spring 2020.
    - c. River Park North Primitive Trail
      - i. Adding 1.3 miles of primitive trail to an existing 1 mile primitive trail.
      - ii. Bid solicitation – Received on 2/6; low bidder has been selected.
      - iii. Environmental Permits – Floodplain, Riparian Buffer Authorization, and Wetlands (need to be required before any implementation).
    - d. New Park Land
      - i. Permits – Erosion control, buffer authorization, and no-rise certification.
      - ii. Site Plan – Site plan scope being defined and will include grading, parking, and potentially a kayak launch.
      - iii. Property Prep – Repairing roof damage, cleaning gutters, clearing/pruning vegetation, and trails.

**VIX. NEW BUSINESS**

A. PARTF Grant Application for Adventure Park Support

A motion was made to recommend City Council approve the PARTF Grant Application.

Motion: Jaimie Yahnker

Second: Byron Aynes

Motion carried unanimously among those present.

**X. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

A. Nikki Caswell – Offered help with the conference. Thanks for your hard work to make Greenville a great place to be.

B. Carrie Watson – Appreciate your work on behalf of the City. Good to see conference coming to town and creative ways to bring in money from private and public stakeholders.

C. Mike Saad – Welcome back to Darin. Programs at RPN and ERC look great.

D. Byron Aynes – Thanks for presentations tonight. Impressed with programs at ERC.

E. Gordon Darragh – Thanks for work and great presentations. Welcome back Darin.

F. Darin White – Thanked Gary for being persistent. Thanks Councilmember Daniels for accepting application. Good to be back and thanks for welcoming with open arms.

G. Jaimie Yahnker – STAR is 20 years old this year, would not be around without the collaboration with GRPD. Welcome back to Darin.

H. Kristian Williams – Impressed with creative programs being offered. Happy to be a part of this Commission and the things Greenville is doing.

I. Councilmember Monica Daniels – Welcome to Darin. Thanks to staff and great presentations. Really excited about everything, the hard work is evident and truly appreciated.

**XII. MOTION TO ADJOURN**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 6:46 PM.

Motion: Byron Aynes

Second: Jaimie Yahnker

Motion carried unanimously among those present.

Respectfully Submitted,



Laura J. Davenport  
Administrative Assistant  
Recreation and Parks Department