

PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Tuesday, October 1, 2024 | Glencairn Garden Learning Center
12:00 PM

MINUTES

PRESENT: Rene Brannan, Lawrence Brown, Jr., Bev Carroll, John Coleman, Rodger Culbreath, Larry Erwin, Jacqueline Jones, Toy Rhea, Matt Watson

STAFF: Mark Sexton, Becky Adams, Rebekah Ardis, Andrea Barnette, Elssy Carpenter, Samantha Green, Jesse Holliman, David Linder, Katie Waszak and Haley Zuehlke

CITIZENS' COMMENTS: N/A

Commissioner Carroll began the meeting by introducing the new Commissioner, Rodger Culbreath, to the group. Roger is a graduate of Clemson University and works for Comporium. Rodger has coached baseball for the City of Rock Hill youth program for the last seven years.

STAFF

HIGHLIGHT: Samantha Green is the Special Events Coordinator for Parks, Recreation & Tourism. She was born and raised in Clover, SC. She received a Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management from the University of South Carolina Beaufort. She began her career as a Recreational Assistant for Clover Parks & Recreation and later worked as a Special Events Coordinator. She joined the City of Rock Hill in November 2024.

MINUTES: The September 3, 2024 meeting minutes were approved. Commissioner Coleman motioned to approve both meeting minutes with Commissioner Rhea seconding. All were in favor.

OLD

BUSINESS:

Strategic Plan Update

- Mark Sexton explained the PRT reorganization. The organization used to be seven layers deep, and the reorganization has adjusted to only four layers. This means that some supervisors are now supervising more employees, and others who were previously supervisors are no longer supervising. This did not affect pay rates. Athletics has moved to now fit under the Recreation Division rather than Tourism. David Linder is now the Recreation Division Supervisor; Garnet McKeown is still managing therapeutics, recreation centers, and pools. Brian Jones has assumed the role of Tourism Division Supervisor while still over the Sports & Event Center; Leslie Ballard will now manage the day-to-day operations at the facility.
- Jesse Holliman announced that construction is underway on the Lee Street Annex. The McGirt Auditorium project is continuing and should be completed on time. The Armory Park construction bid is underway and should go live in the next two weeks. The Manchester Meadows landscaping bid has been awarded. The Southside Regional Park bids are currently in the vetting process. Mark announced that the City received an Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Grant for the Southside Regional Park in the amount of 15 million dollars. The City must match the grant and ensure that all items used are approved by Buy America Build America (BABA).

Master Plan Update

- Parks Division Spotlight: Jesse Holliman highlighted the ongoing tree work throughout all Parks. PRT is responsible for all trees touching park property or roadways. A tree that was leaning and had dead wood was recently removed from Friedheim Park. Jesse explained that the budget allotted \$30,000 for tree work; nearly \$170,000 was spent on trees this past year. For FY25, PRT has currently passed the \$30,000 budget for the year. The department is working towards a routine maintenance plan for trees to hopefully keep them alive longer. Commissioner Rhea asked if the work is done by staff members or contracted out, to which Jesse explained that nearly 90 percent of the work is contracted out.

- Miracle Park cleanup took place in September before the Blue Dogs Benefit Concert was held on September 19, 2024, raising funds for phase two of park development.
- Recreation Division Spotlight: The Youth Football Jamboree was held on Tuesday, September 3. David Linder announced that the program has 309 participants this season, slightly down from the previous year. David mentioned that games are being played on the outfield of the softball fields at Cherry Park. Commissioner Brown raised concerns about the proximity of spectators to players and coaches. Staff and the Football Advisory Committee plan to discuss this issue further. Lake Day at Camp Thunderbird was organized for Emmett Scott Fun in the Sun Campers as a reward at the end of the camp. Seventeen campers could swim in the lake and participate in other activities that Camp Thunderbird has to offer.
- Tourism Division Spotlight: The Sports & Event Center hosted a local boxing group, Laced Up Boxing Promotions, in September with 24 boxers participating in the event. The Rock Cup Jr. Tournament was held at the Sports & Event Center with 83 players and 146 matches played over the course of two and a half days. The Carolina Cardinals hosted a fast-pitch event that featured college games at Cherry Park, Hargett, and Winthrop. Upcoming events include the American Cornhole League Regional event at the Sports & Event Center October 4 – 6. The Spikeball Collegiate Nationals will be held at Manchester Meadows on October 12 and 13. Weekday tourism included a York County Reads program held at Emmett Scott on September 3. A comparison of regional tourism facilities was provided to the Commission. It was noted that seven events were canceled at Cherry Park this year due to the weather. The department is evaluating options to turf the fields in the future possibly. Currently, costs are estimated at approximately one million dollars per field.

NEW

BUSINESS:

Rock Hill Parks Foundation Update

- Becky Adams informed the Commission that the Parks Foundation has an operating budget of 3.1 million dollars with fifteen funds. Currently, the Foundation is applying for non-profit status as it has previously operated under the Foundation for the Carolinas scope. The Parks Foundation has assisted with projects at facilities including Cedar Crest, McGirt Auditorium, Miracle Park, Manchester Meadows, and more. The Foundation is sponsoring a thank you breakfast for maintenance staff members on October 24 and 31.

Old Town Events Update

- Elssy Carpenter spoke on past Old Town events, including St. Patty's Day, Red, White, & Boom, Food Truck Friday, and the Old Town Market. It was announced that the Fall Festival was canceled due to the devastation in the local community, as many residents were still without power, and due to the larger devastation in surrounding communities in Georgia, North, and South Carolina. Elssy announced the upcoming Octoberfest event that will be held on Main Street on October 19.

Camp, Outreach & Pools Comparison Report

- David Linder presented the Summer Camp Comparison, explaining that Camp Arc, Fewell Park Explorers, and Emmett Scott Fun in the Sun participation increased. Rec-in-a-Box participation significantly increased, and the department is receiving more requests to utilize the equipment. The pool numbers were down for the year. David explained that issues with the pool management company caused unexpected closures.

Community Outreach & Partnership Report

- The Senior Health fair, featuring 40 vendors, was held on September 19 at the Sports & Event Center. The City of Rock Hill will host the Youth Football State Championships at District 3 Stadium on December 14. Maintenance staff assisted other departments with cleanup of limbs and debris throughout the City after Hurricane Helene.

**ADDITIONAL
COMMENTS:**

- In lieu of the December meeting, Commissioners are invited to attend the Holiday Luncheon. If any issues that need to be addressed arise, the Commission will meet briefly before the luncheon.

EXECUTIVE

SESSION: N/A

NEXT MEETING(S): Tuesday, November 5, 2024, at 12 PM at Glencairn Garden Learning Center

ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Katie Waszak