

**Winchester Parks & Recreation
Parks & Recreation Advisory Board - Minutes
Monday, September 28, 2020
Social Hall, Active Living Center
6:30 PM**

1. Welcome & Call to Order – President Bill Stewart

2. Attendance Roll Call

Present: Bill Stewart (President), Mike Miller (Vice President), Cal Allen, Regina Coates, Scott Jenkins, Casey Stine, and Chris Way

Absent: Andy Gail

City Staff: Lynn Miller and Samantha Crisman

Press: None

3. Approval Minutes –

3.1 A motion to approve August 24, 2020 meeting minutes was made by Cal Allen and seconded by Chris Way. All were in favor; the minutes were approved.

4. Introductions & Presentations

4.1 Recognition of Shelly Lee’s Service as a Board Member – Bill Stewart and members of the Advisory Board recognized Shelly Lee for her service to Winchester Parks and Recreation and the Winchester Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

4.2 Recognition of James (Hector) Robertson’s Service as a Board Member – Hector was not present at the meeting. The Board will postpone his recognition.

4.3 Introduction of Scott Jenkins newly appointed member of the Parks & Recreation Board – The Board is glad to welcome Scott Jenkins. Mr. Jenkins gave a brief introduction of himself. He stated he is excited to give back to the Winchester community.

5. Public Comments - None

6. President’s Report – Bill shared how glad he was to see people back in the park. It is refreshing to see the community outside on a beautiful evening. It brought a smile to his face to see the activity again. He stated he knows the staff is working hard to return things back to normal.

7. Board Member Comments –

- a.** Mike shared that he attended a sanctioned disc golf tournament in the park. There were about 70 disc golfers in the tournament. Mike visited the tournament and spoke with members of the lead group and learned that Nathan Hughes gave back to the park by doing some maintenance work

on the course and wanted to recognize him for his contribution. It was a nice event and he was glad to see it occur. There is a need for signs around the shelters and paths in the area of the course warning people of potential flying discs in the area. Casey recommended everyone check out the Apple Valley Disc Golf Club's Facebook page, they are big proponents of Jim Barnett Park and the course here. Lynn commented there are many individuals that have been very helpful to the park in the past year with disc golf course maintenance.

8. Report – Projects & Programs Committee - None

9. City Manager Comments - None

10. Director's Report

10.1 Administration

The Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Winchester and Shenandoah University was approved by the Winchester City Council during the Regular Council meeting September 22nd. Improvements to Bodie Grim and Henkel Harris Fields are scheduled to begin in early October concluding in early spring enabling the fields to be utilized by Handley High School Baseball and Softball. Bridgeforth and Rotary Fields will remain under the Parks & Recreation Department for maintenance, scheduling and promotions until August 1st of 2021. Work on Bodie Grim and Henkel Harris is scheduled to begin on October 5th, it is scheduled to be completed in time for the VHSL baseball and softball seasons in 2021. Winchester Parks and Recreation will maintain maintenance and scheduling priority for Bridgeforth and Rotary fields until construction begins in summer of 2021.

10.2 Virginia High School League (VHSL)

The VHSL Executive Committee has adopted Championship + 1 Schedule. The schedule has identified 4 Seasons beginning on December 14th with the Winter Season and continuing. The seasons impact the department as we host Swim, Baseball and Softball. Each sport will play 60% of the normal contests which would be normally permitted. The full informational packet as received by the department is attached for informational purposes. Staff has put a lot of thought in to how to keep things moving as close to normal as possible. The Board will be made aware as this progresses.

10.3 Ruth Jackson Memorial Park

The Ruth Jackson Memorial Park located at the corner of S. Kent and East Cecil Streets is scheduled to be dedicated on Thursday, October 15, 2020 at 11:00 AM. Planning for the event is moving forward in a coordinated effort with Parks & Recreation, Planning & Zoning, Public Works and the City's Communications Department. As plans are completed so will be amenities to the park. These will include an interpretative marker, sign identifying the park, planters and benches. The completion of this neighborhood park has been a long time reaching completion but it is strategically located immediately adjacent to the Green Circle Trail, is located on an historical site in the downtown area and is at the terminus/beginning of the section of the Green Circle Trail which parallels a portion of the Town Run. Please save the date and plan on attending. The naming of the park was determined by a community contest asking for potential names and is reflective

of the previous place of business, Ruth's Tea Room. There will be a historical marker placed at the park detailing what Ruth's Tea Room meant to the community.

10.4 Aquatics

Outdoor Aquatics Facility

Closed for Season – September 7th – Labor Day, we will begin winterizing next week

Indoor Aquatic Facility

Opened – Tuesday, September 8th – Day After Labor Day

Programs Offered– Lap Swim, Aquatic Exercise, Senior Swim, General Swim and Swim Team Practice

No Swim Lessons Currently being Offered

Occupancy Load Restricted to 8 Applying Social Distancing for all activities except lap swimming. Lap Swim and Swim Team Practice will be permitted 12 swimmers. Six (6) will be on each end of the pool providing separation.

10.5 Maintenance

Finalizing Sensory Trail – Awaiting Additional Posts (roughly 12)

Continuing mowing all areas – maintenance continues to get some criticism, the rainy season did not help us this summer, nor did the shortage of staff. Mike commented about just how many acres there are to care for within the city.

Authorized to Fill One Maintenance Tech Position and Two Seasonal

Wilkins Lake and Surrounding Area - Maintenance in Schedule, 33 grass carp have also been added to help clear the grass.

10.6 Facilities

Cleaning & Sanitizing Plans Continuing

Received Hydrogen Peroxide Sanitizing Equipment

Parks continuing to Host City Council Meetings in Social Hall

10.7 Staffing – Hiring Freeze Continuing – Vacancy Status

Administration

Administrative Assistant – Posted, 151 Applications Received

Community Recreation & Special Events

Comm. Rec. & Special Events Specialist - Vacant

Aquatics

Aquatics Specialist – One (1) Interim In-Place – One Full Time Position Vacant, Other Currently Filled will be Vacant October 9th

Isabella Pender will remain on as a lifeguard in the department

Part time Lifeguard Positions – 1 Interviewed

Maintenance

Superintendent - Robert Garrett – Serving as Interim Superintendent - Vacant

Maintenance Tech – 33 Applicants - 2 Interviews Conducted

Seasonal – No Interviews Conducted

Facilities

1 Part-time Custodian vacant

Front Desk Staff – Down 2 – 3 Part time Positions

Child Care

Several Part Time Positions Vacant

10.8 Group E-mail –

Amy Simmons, Director of Communications for the City has advised that group e-mails are being established for Boards and Commissions and such will be included on the meeting calendar as an option for submitting public comments prior to **virtual** meetings. If the Board is having a virtual meeting and comments are received the comments should be read aloud as recommended by the City Attorney. Additionally, virtual meetings must provide a public comment section on the agenda and the public must be provided an opportunity to speak via the virtual platform that is being used. Sam and I are on the list of individuals to receive the e-mails. **Amy directed that Board members may receive e-mails from the public via this e-mail address but should not respond as Sam and I are to address these.** Should Board members receive e-mails from this address please forward to Sam or me. We will address the e-mail as well as include the Board member in any response. The e-mail address is parksboard@winchesterva.gov .

11. Assistant Director Report

11.1 Parks & Recreation Seasonal Guide

Winter/Spring 2021 Guide – Design Schedule Established

11.2 Abrams Creek Wetlands

A dedication recognizing the Garden Club of America for their contribution through a grant to the Winchester-Clarke Garden Club of \$30,000 for the continual maintenance and preservation of the site. Ceremony will be conducted Friday, October 2nd at 12PM.

Fall trimming and cutting of the Wetlands will be conducted Friday, October 2nd and Saturday, October 3rd from 12PM – 4PM and 8AM – 12PM respectively. Department staff will be on hand to assist in the cutting of larger brush and trees while volunteers will be in attendance to assist with the pruning of smaller undergrowth. The pruning of the undergrowth and the cutting of larger brush and trees will be immediately followed by spraying the raw cut edge with a herbicide to prevent regrowth of the unwanted vegetation.

Board members are welcome to attend the dedication ceremony and assist with the volunteer pruning and cutting. Appropriate footwear is a must.

11.3 Special Events

Frederick Douglass Family Days – Conducted Sunday, September 13, 2020 at Frederick Douglass Park. All reports indicate the event was a success and was attended by an estimated 350 individuals. This is a significant reduction from previous years due to the COVID-19 virus and the occupancy load criteria reducing gatherings to no more than 250 individuals.

Santa Tour – In lieu of a Holiday Parade during this holiday season Santa will be touring the City to greet all the good boys and girls in their respective home neighborhoods. The Santa tour was decided upon following a meeting with Mayor Smith, Interim City Manager, Mary Beth Price, EDA Director Shawn Hershberger and a member of his staff and representatives of Parks and Recreation. The concern for a parade or a reverse parade was the ability to maintain proper social distancing. It was the opinion of those attending the meeting that a touring Santa would be the safest format for this year.

Tree Lighting – The customary tree lighting is being deferred in lieu of a virtual tree lighting ceremony. This will provide the opportunity for view the tree lighting and the shenanigans of Elves in the safety and comfort of the individual's home.

Santa's Workshop – At the present time Santa's Workshop is not looking favorable due to the criteria associated with social distancing.

Letters for Santa – Continues to be a go. Yeah!!!!!!

Additional details on each of the above will be forthcoming.

11.4 Athletics

Winchester Baseball – Late Season Concluding

Ultimate Frisbee is ongoing

Kickball is ongoing

Reviewing Winter Programming

Preparing for closure of Bodie Grim and Henkel Harris Fields for Renovations. Construction is slated to begin October 5, 2020.

11.5 Community Recreation

Private Music Lessons – Being Scheduled

Community Yoga and Veterans' Yoga in Planning Stages

Staff is Developing a Plan for Safe Return to Community Recreation Programming

11.6 Child Care

School Year – Full day program developed and approved, registration began Monday August 24, 2020 and is Continuing. Program Modeled after WPS Hybrid Program. Currently have 20 children registered, 10 each Day Four Day Per Week.

12. Additional Items -

12.1 September 11, 2020 Observance

Virtual observance presented. Good feedback was received from the community. Thank you to Bill for participating.

12.2 Ash Tree Removal/Replacement Program –

Coordinating with Virginia Department of Forestry to Remove and Replace Dead and Standing Ash Trees killed by the Emerald Ash Beetle. This is a 50%-50% matching grant. Currently 14 Ash Trees have been accepted in the program by VDOF

12.3 Board Membership Status

Regina Coates Eligible for Re-appointment. Awaiting Confirmation

Shelly Lee – Term has expired serving until vacancy filled

Hector Robertson – Term expired serving until vacancy filled

Katie Jordan – Term expired – position filled

Newly Appointed Advisory Board Members

Chris Way – Appointed - July 14th – 3 yr. term 7.13.2023 Conducted Orientation/Review

C. Scott Jenkins – Appointed July 14th – 3 yr. term 7.13.2023 Conducted Orientation/Review

13. Next Regular Meetings –

13.1 Monday, October 26, 2020

6:30 PM

War Memorial/Active Living Center – Social Hall

13.2 Monday, November 16, 2020

6:30 PM

War Memorial/Active Living Center – Lord Fairfax Room

14. Closing Comments Director – Out of Office 10.2 – 10.12

Lynn made the suggestion the Board to invite various civic organizations to meetings to get their input in relation to their priorities for the park.

Doug Butler and the Kiwanis Club have been vital to the department in helping remove and replant trees by the Kiwanis shelter. We are thankful to have new trees.

15. Closing Comments President -

Bill asked the Board to start thinking about which organizations they would like to invite to meetings.

Bill thanked Mike and Casey for sharing their experience and interest in disc golf and the tournament that took place over the weekend.

Thank you to the city of Winchester, Parks and Rec, and Leslie for including him in the 9/11 commemorative video.

16. Closing Comments Board Members –

Casey asked about vacant positions on the Board. Bill clarified that the board will be full after the appointment of the ninth member in October.

17. Motion to Adjourn –

17.1 With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Cal Allen, seconded by Casey Stine and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:46pm.