



City of Boiling Spring Lakes

**9 East Boiling Spring Road
Boiling Spring Lakes, NC 28461**

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting Minutes March 16, 2016 at 6:30 P.M.

ATTENDANCE: Bob Stanley, Chairman, Bruce Pennington, Sandra Krasnow,
Carolyn Doshier

Absent: Paige Garza

Late: Bon Cantrell (late/excused - arrived at 7:30 PM)

Commissioner Liaison: Mary Stilwell

Staff: Mary Green ~ P&R Director, Pamela Bellina ~ Administrative Assistant

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular monthly meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was called to order by Chairman Robert Stanley at 6:30 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Bob Stanley requested to add to Old Business: d. BSL Dog Park Survey

A motion was made by Bruce Pennington and seconded by Sandy Krasnow to approve the agenda as changed.

Vote: 4 - 0; Motion Carried

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Carolyn Doshier and seconded by Bruce Pennington to approve the February 17, 2016 minutes as written.

Vote: 4 - 0; Motion Carried

IV. Subcommittee Reports

- a. Communications Subcommittee**
- b. Facilities Subcommittee**
- c. Department Subcommittee**

Bob Stanley visited Schneider's Park to look at the flooding issue. Mary Green advised that the park does have a flooding issue and the parking lot is inaccessible at this time; however the park can be used. It is not just a Parks and Recreation problem but is a drainage issue which will be a long-term process to fix and our City Engineer is working on it.

Mary Green also advised that she has received the two "Living Legacy" benches (previously referred to as memorial benches) from Joe Medlin who made the benches for approximately \$200 each bench. Mary noted they are beautifully made and that Joe made a majority of the benches along the Southport waterfront which have been there for many years. She will discuss with the Buildings and Grounds Department where to place the benches. Carolyn will send a Thank You note and advised that Joe put the City's benches before other jobs he had. Mary also advised that Bon and Carolyn created a brochure with an order form for the Living Legacy benches which she will provide a copy to the members. Mary commended Carolyn and Bon for their great work on this project.

V. Old Business

a. Boiling Spring Lakes Comprehensive Land Use Plan Wes McLeod, Cape Fear Council of Governments

Wes explained what the Land Use Plan entails, how they look at the demographics of the City, land use issues, transportation issues and primarily look at long term goals and recommendations of how the City should develop out or implement policy relating to land use and development. They are also looking at community facilities and services. Wes would like to hear from the Advisory Board what their priorities are. He understands that our Parks & Recreation Master Plan will need to be updated sometime in the near future. He looked at, pulled information from and drafted an outline of priorities he believes is what the Parks and Recreation Department is looking to achieve (in order of priority):

1. The construction of a new multi-purpose recreation center on the east side of Rt. 87.
2. Providing more options for bicycle and pedestrian transportation.
3. Identify land to be acquired for a new multi-purpose recreation facility.
4. Laying out the City in quadrants to better understand the level of service needs for each quadrant and that each quadrant has its own facilities.

Wes asked if there were additional priorities that should be added to the list. Mary explained to the members how the quadrants were created and what she is looking to achieve in each quadrant and the feasibility of connecting quadrants.

Following are some of the members thoughts about what should be on focus: Bob would like to see a dog park for the City since there are quite a few residents who have requested one. He thought the City also needed a skate park for the kids. Carolyn thought a dog park was a good idea. She also noticed how many people were out walking and that there is a definite need for walking and bicycling paths. She also suggested a path to walk across the dam since there is no room to walk. Commissioner Stilwell reminded the members that the City is part of the Greenway/Blueway project with the County and she has learned how expensive it is to create parks, bike paths, dog parks and skate parks. Wes advised about the Cape Fear Regional Bicycle

Plan that is currently being planned which he encouraged the members to look into. Wes further advised that greenway and multi-use paths cost approximately \$500,000 per mile. Sidewalks can be even more expensive especially in a town such as this where there is not a lot of room for curb and gutter. Wes thought it would be important for the City to put together a plan for non-motorized transportation so it can receive funding from the DOT which funding does require a local match. He spoke with Mary about the possibility of putting together a grant to get started on bike and pedestrian transportation.

b. FY 2016-2017 Budget

Mary provided information on the following projects which are in her budget: the Muse Park renovations and the Concession and Rental Operation at Spring Lake Park. Mary's initial budget meeting with the City Manager is on Friday. The department heads meet with the Board of Commissioners on April 15, the public hearing is in May and then it goes to vote by the BOC in June.

The two big budget items are the Muse Park basketball and tennis court renovations as prepared by Bon and Carolyn which includes fencing around the basketball court as well as some fencing upgrades for the tennis court. There is no lighting in this budget which can be looked at in the future. Mary has \$18,000 in the budget for the fencing and replacing two existing basketball goals.

The other project was the potential to add a concession and rental facility at Spring Lake Park. Mary put together a proposal which will take shelter #2 and develop it into a concession/rental operation which can store rental kayaks, canoes and paddleboards along with an area to sell snacks. Mary does not want to get Health Department certifications so there will only be prepackaged items such as chips, soda, water, and ice cream for sale. This project is not cheap but would produce revenue for many years to come. Mary was conservative with her revenue numbers but believes in three to four years it will pay for itself. She further advised it will put a Parks & Recreation employee in the park during the busiest times of the day, on extended weekends and holiday weekends which can potentially ward off issues that happen. Mary feels this will be a great recreational facility in a park that is heavily used. Mary noted the proposal also includes a couple of smaller picnic shelters in this park as the new trend is toward smaller shelters which provide more rental potential.

Mary has proposed increases to part time salaries which will especially be seen with the addition of part-time seasonal staff for the concession stand. Also proposed is an increase in summer camp salaries because with better salaries Mary can hire better qualified staff which will amount to an approximate \$2,000 difference. The new recreation program supervisor will start work on March 30th.

Other budget items will be new money for professional services for updating the Master Plan. Mary received two initial bids in the \$9,000 range which was a lot less than she anticipated. Mary has also put in a line item of \$2,000 for appraisal fees. Although the property on Alton Lennon is not an option right now, in speaking with the City Manager they want to include a little money in the budget in case the owner is willing to sell the property at appraised value and would allow for the City to pay for an appraisal so an offer can be determined and a grant can be applied for. The property is not off the table but it is not on the table.

Another big increase will be in park equipment. Picnic tables, benches, updated park signs, bike racks and such cannot be put off any longer. The line item will go from \$2,500 to about \$13,000 which will get whittled down; however, there are eight to ten parks that need upgrading.

The non-capital items will continue with the replacement cycle for cardio equipment in the fitness room but this year is the last year of the replacement cycle. Two upright bikes and a rowing machine will be replaced. There will be approximately three to four years before the next replacement cycle starts.

There will be small cost of living increases to some programs for this year because the admission price for places such as Jungle Rapids has increased as well as the cost of snacks, etc.

c. 4th of July 2017

Mary has been very busy with preparing for the budget and has not been able to devote any time to the planning of this event. Commissioner Stilwell advised that the Special Events Committee has a new chair and if this is an event that the Advisory Board wanted to undertake, maybe the members could ask Special Events if they would like to take over. The new chairperson's name is Melissa DeBruhl. Mary Green thought there was some confusion as to why the Advisory Board wanted to take on a special event such as this since there is already a committee for events. Mary will be happy to write a letter to the Special Events Committee asking them to consider taking on this event.

A Motion was made by Bruce Pennington and seconded by Carolyn Doshier to have Mary Green make a request to the Special Events Committee to consider taking over the Boiling Spring Lakes 4th of July Festival event.

Vote 4 – 0; Motion Carried

d. Dog Park Survey

Bob Stanley advised the last time a dog park survey was done was back in August of 2010 and he feels it is time to present another survey to find out how much interest there is. Mary asked the members to think about the presentation of this survey: who will present it - the Advisory Board or the Parks & Recreation Department and how are the numbers going to be crunched. Mary advised the dog park question could be included in the survey which will be prepared for the update to the Master Plan in the Spring of 2017. Commissioner Stilwell advised that there was a group of people who spoke at a BOC meeting about having a dog park and their willingness to fundraise to have one. Mary Green thought a survey was a good tool but advised more than 233 people need to respond from a population of 5500 to get true numbers. Mary asked if the board could table this matter to the April meeting so she could gather information as to potential cost and who will create and distribute the survey.

A Motion was made by Sandy Krasnow and seconded by Carolyn Doshier to approve Old Business as amended.

Vote: 4 – 0; Motion carried

VI. Public Comment

Judy Theur wanted to speak about taxpayer status as it pertains to Parks & Recreation fees. Judy advised that currently if someone rents a home in BSL and do not own a vehicle they have to pay higher Parks & Recreation fees because they are not considered a taxpayer in BSL. Judy felt if a resident pays rent to a landlord, the landlord in turn pays the mortgage and property taxes; therefore they are a taxpayer in essence. She feels renters that do not own vehicles or any other asset that can be taxed are being punished by paying a higher fee. Judy feels the City should make residents feel welcomed, not punished because they do not own a house or vehicle. Judy also feels that the renter does in fact pay rent to a landlord who in turn pays the taxes and then the renter has to pay a higher fee to use the facilities, it could be considered double-dipping. She believes this affects the seniors in town who rent but can no longer drive, are living on small social security checks and to make them pay a higher fee to use the facilities is unfair. Changing the verbiage back to resident/non-resident would be righting a wrong.

Mary is enforcing policy that was handed to her when the fee schedule went from resident/non-resident to taxpayer/non-taxpayer which change happened around 2008-ish. Previously, a resident needed to show proof they resided in town with a document such as a water bill or driver's license. After the change to taxpayer/non-taxpayer status, a resident must show proof of taxes paid in Boiling Spring Lakes. The burden of proof is on the resident to prove they pay taxes in Boiling Spring Lakes. Mary understands the problems between the two designations and while it is not a big difference when using the fitness room - \$3 per day versus \$5 per day - but there is a big difference with room rental fees of \$275 for taxpayer versus \$500 for non-taxpayer. Mary advised the definition could be changed in the fee schedule however the policy needs to be clear, concise and explainable to the public. Mary advised if changes to the fee schedule will be recommended to the BOC by the Advisory Board, it needs to be made to coincide with the new budget as the fee schedule is set with the budget. Commissioner Stilwell advised that if the Advisory Board would like to make a recommendation to the BOC, she would be happy to do so.

Judy also advised the daffodils are up at Spring Lake Park. She also invited Carolyn since she was a new member of the board, to visit the butterfly garden which is a national awarding-winning garden.

Mary also advised that Judy will be teaching a free workshop at the Community Garden on Saturday and if it rains, it will be held at the Community Center.

VII. New Business

a. Parks & Recreation Fee Schedule

Mary advised that the Parks & Recreation Department as well as the City has a fee schedule that dictates what the City can charge. Our fees are based on taxpayer and non-taxpayer status and as such there is a clear line which has nothing to do with a landlord - either you do or do not pay taxes. There are some programs on the fee schedule where there is not a big difference in fees between the two statuses however there is a big difference when talking about community center room rentals. For an 8-hour wedding package there is a big difference from a taxpayer who pays \$500 to a non-taxpayer who pays \$800. We do have 5 – 7 of them every year where it comes up whether they are taxpayer or non-taxpayer. The difference between the two statuses is \$2100 in fees per year which could reflect on the department's

revenue. Commissioner Stilwell thought looking at it as resident/non-resident would make a big difference and those people who do not live in the City would pay the higher amount, the people who live in our city would not pay the higher rate. Commissioner Stilwell feels verbiage is the problem. Whether they are a taxpayer or not, they are a resident. Mary advised there could be a reduction in revenue for the department but cannot say if it will be \$15,000 or \$15 because it is not something she tracks. Mary advised the verbiage was changed on request in the fee schedule discussion around 2008-ish by the BOC with the statement that taxpayers who pay into the city coffers should pay one rate, while individuals who do not pay into the city coffers should pay a little bit more for use of the facilities. Mary does not agree nor disagree whether it should be taxpayer/non-taxpayer or resident/non-resident as long as it is across the board and clear and concise. Bruce asked what is needed to go back to the BOC. Commissioner Stilwell advised just a recommendation as to verbiage. The members need to weigh the importance of each verbiage class. Mary explained she has an expense budget and a revenue budget. It does not matter if she brings in twice as much revenue because it does not mean she can spend twice as much.

A Motion was made by Bruce Pennington and seconded by Carolyn Doshier to make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to have the verbiage changed from taxpayer/non-taxpayer to resident/non-resident.

Bon Cantrell arrived at 7:34 PM.

Discussion:

Mary Stilwell brought Bon up to date on the current discussion about fees and the verbiage associated with same. Bon felt renters indirectly pay taxes and the ultimate goal was to not lose revenue. If they live here, they are buying at local business or playing golf, they are paying taxes and they are more apt to use facilities because they live here. Mary explained she cannot enforce a policy that deals with “indirect” as it needs to be clear and concise.

Mary discussed that the members do not have to rush into any decisions. If the board will be making a recommendation on changing fee schedule verbiage, Mary would like more direction as to age as well, for example if a resident has an older child that comes back home to live while recuperating or until they find a place to live, etc., are they considered a resident. Bon felt that a driver’s license lists the address of whether it is in town or not. Bon felt this topic deserves more thought and discussion and did not feel it was something they could vote on tonight. Mary explained she just wants to know how to enforce the rule, whatever it is or will be. Mary offered to provide a chart to the Advisory Board showing how the fee schedule is currently done, how she is thinking the members want it presented as resident and non-resident and what the potential side effects could be if changed to said status. Mary feels the members do not have to be reactionary because one person has complained. Commissioner Stilwell reminded this could be presented to the Board of Commissioners without the Advisory Board’s recommendation. Commissioner Stilwell feels it is important to keep the P & R Department and the Advisory Board in good light with the residents.

Bruce Pennington withdrew his Motion which had not been voted on.

Mary will also provide the board members with possible fee changes on how the community rentals are done. Mary has not looked at increasing or decreasing fees in three years.

She advised the members to look at the current fee schedule and be comfortable with any suggestions made and asked to table the matter to next month.

A Motion was made by Bon Cantrell and seconded by Sandy Krasnow to table this discussion to the April meeting.

Vote: 4 – 0; Motion carried.

Bruce Pennington left the meeting at 7:40 PM

b. Subcommittee Goals

Mary advised that the Facilities subcommittee has their reports in, the benches have been ordered and are in hand, and the brochure for the benches is done. Mary suggests the other subcommittees follow their lead.

Bon stated he will look at the properties over by the schools. Bon looked at specific properties across from the middle school to see what is available for the future recreation center and for the athletic fields. Bon mentioned the real estate sign was down by Alton Lennon Park. Mary advised she was trying to get in contact with the real estate agent to see if the City can do an appraisal of the property since only the landowner can do a perk test. Mary explained to Bon that an appraisal for that property is in her budget and further explained the presentation by Wes McLeod where the number one and three goals with respect to Parks & Recreation was a larger recreation facility and part of the land use plan is identifying where the facility can go.

Commissioner Stilwell suggested Bob speak with Paige about her appearance at meetings and that she needs to advise him of her absence.

VII. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

Dog Park Survey
Fee Schedule
Budget

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mary advised that with a lot of arm twisting, Parks & Recreation will be allowed to hold summer camp back at the Middle School; however, because of the year-round schedule for athletics and the ongoing maintenance of the schools, they will be unable to use the gymnasium on Tuesdays and Thursdays and the PE equipment is no longer available to them. Because of same, this may require a potential purchase of the equipment for 8 weeks of use. This is another great reason why a new recreation facility is needed to handle the program numbers that the Parks & Recreation Department has. Mary is looking into using Bolivia Elementary which would require transporting the kids every morning and afternoon to and from the Community Center; however, it is a nightmare situation at best and that CIS has used that facility in the past. Mary also advised that one week of summer camp they will not have use of the gym at all because of cheer camp. Mary asked the Middle School if they can rent the PE equipment and is awaiting their reply. She advised she can make arrangements for the Tuesdays and Thursdays but with the maintenance schedule and the possibility of getting kicked out at the last minute for repairs and such, what does she do with 47 children at the last minute. This just shows how

important it is for the growth of the city and the need for a new indoor recreation facility with a view toward growth in the next ten to 20 years. The County has determined that Brunswick County has the probability of increasing 87% in the next 20 years so whatever we build has to be built with that in mind.

Commissioner Stilwell advised that the Library Commission is going to have their second series of Library Awareness by recognizing local author Ken Campbell on April 11th from 6 PM to 8 PM here at City Hall. Light refreshments will be served.

X. Adjourn

A Motion was made by Sandy Krasnow and seconded by Carolyn Doshier to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 PM.

Vote: 4 – 0; Motion Carried.

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Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Bellina, Administrative Assistant