



City of Boiling Spring Lakes

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

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting Minutes July 18, 2018 at 6:00 P.M. City Hall

Attendance: Bon Cantrell, Chairman, Dory Manz, Vice Chair, Philip Casper, Tom Guzulaitis

Absent: Bruce Pennington (excused)

Commissioner Liaison: Dana Witt

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

I. Call to Order

Chairman Bon Cantrell called the monthly meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to order at 6:00 PM.

II. Approval of Agenda

Mary added to the agenda under New Business, d. USDOT BUILD Grant

A motion was made by Dory Manz and seconded by Phil Casper to approve the agenda as amended.

Vote: 4 - 0; Motion Carried

III. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Tom Guzulaitis and seconded by Dory Manz to approve the June 20, 2018 minutes as written.

Vote: 4 - 0; Motion Carried

IV. Old Business

a. Bicycle & Pedestrian Transportation Task Force

Tom reported the Task Force had been in touch with the Cape Fear RPO (Rural Planning Organization) who indicated a willingness to assist the Task Force with writing the grant and helping in that path for the NCDOT grant. The Task Force will meet tomorrow night, July 19. Bon asked if the NCDOT grant would be tied into the County's grant. Tom explained the NCDOT grant would just be for the City and would have nothing to do with the County's federal grant.

The Parks & Recreation Director explained that with the USDOT grant the County is applying for, a community our size must choose whether to have a bicycle plan or a pedestrian plan. The recommendation from the RPO to the County will probably be a bicycle facility because pedestrians can use the bicycle facilities; however, bicycles cannot use pedestrian facilities. The grant the Task Force will be applying for is the NCDOT Transportation Planning Grant. That grant would allow the City to hire a consulting group to look at the feasibility of bicycle lanes throughout the City and where they should strategically be installed. Importance will be interconnectivity between parks and facilities. Tom explained the City could go back again in the future and ask for a grant for a pedestrian facility but it cannot be done at the same time. Dory hoped that that planning could potentially include East Boiling Spring Road, Alton Lennon, South Shore, Fifty Lakes and Cougar Drive.

The Parks & Recreation Director further explained this is a planning grant not an asphalt on the ground grant. This would allow consultants to come in along with the DOT engineers to plan the potential routes so when the DOT comes in to pave E. Boiling Spring Road or Route 87, we would have a plan that says there needs to be a bike path and you need to put it in. If the bike path is in the planning documents, there will be a much better chance at getting DOT funding as well as Safe Routes to School funding, which is federal DOT and could be significant dollars. However, without this plan, none of these facilities can happen.

Tom noted that if the City get this grant, NCDOT can do it soup to nuts in terms of the planning part. The planners are pre-vetted by NCDOT and once the grant is awarded, the state assists in hiring them and running the program. The City would need to appoint a full time staff member to oversee it. Dory noted there are bike lanes from BSL to Southport and this could help develop that area so Southport could get to the new build potentially. Mary noted the blast zone at Sunny Point hinders some of that. They have a very large blast zone and will not let many things happen in their blast zone. She noted Sunny Point was currently at the public meeting stage of its land use study.

Bon asked if the Planning Board appointed anyone to the Task Force. Tom replied not yet. Mary spoke with Adrian Iapalucci who advised he was trying to become the member on the Task Force.

b. Parks & Recreation Master Plan ~ update

The draft of the Master Plan went to the BOC at their July meeting. We are awaiting the BOC's comments between now and the first part of August and then we will ask the BOC to adopt the plan at their August meeting.

c. Schneider Park Upgrades

No report at this time as storm water issues need to be resolved. This matter was tabled to the October meeting.

d. North Lake Property Acquisition

Bon advised the City sent out letters today requesting donations of both parcels. Mary explained the email she sent to Commissioner Auger in response to his comment at the July BOC meeting. Commissioner Auger's comment was to dispose of current property inventory to fund purchasing the North Lake property. The Parks & Recreation Director explained that of the approximate 54 properties owned by the City, 33 are zoned recreation or have recreation purposes. Out of those, 15 are existing city parks. Spring Lake is actually encompassed by six different parcels. There are 13 parcels that are easements to City-owned lakes. There are four parcels that have no recreational value; however, the parcel at the end of Perch Road does have recreational value. Mary does not have information on the remaining 24 parcels but does know they are zoned R-2 or R-6 and may have been donated by Reeves Telecom for things such as future pump stations when sewers come to the City. Mary noted that in her 14 years, the City has not purchased a parcel of property for recreation purposes.

Commissioner Witt was aware that someone was interested in purchasing a city-owned parcel that she believed was zoned recreational and the purchaser wanted to change the zoning. She asked if Mary knew the status. Mary knew of the parcel referred to but did not know the status. She believed it would only take a public hearing before the BOC to change the zoning. The P&R Director noted that when the City received the property donations from Reeves Telecom, there was nothing in the donation or the deeds that a parcel has to be held for recreation value in perpetuity. If it does not have that specific statement in the deed, the City can buy and sell property as anyone else can. Bon noted the importance of the BOC taking action on the purchase of that parcel of property. Even if not used for recreation purposes, as an investment for the future once sewers come into the City.

e. Pets in the Park Ordinance

The Parks & Recreation Director apologized for not providing the minutes from previous meetings a few years ago related to pets in the parks. Bon suggested tabling the matter. Commissioner Witt suggested looking at other municipality ordinances and come up with a new ordinance for the City allowing pets in the parks which can be presented to the BOC. She also suggested getting information from the Police Department with respect to pets in the parks. The Parks & Recreation Director will put together the information. Tom mentioned as long as bags were provided for picking up after your dog, most people would clean up. Dory noted she would

attend more City events at the parks if she were allowed to bring her dog. Mary noted the cost to place a post to hold the bags and small garbage receptacle with signage should cost approximately \$800. Rolls of bags could cost around \$60.

f. Report at BOC Meeting (review and remind)

Bon noted that Bruce is scheduled to cover the report at the August BOC meeting.

VI. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

VII. New Business

a. Vote New Chair and Co-Chair

The members discussed who wanted to step up to the chair and co-chair positions. Dory agreed to stay on as co-chair but to step up as chair was not possible at this time because she has family health obligations she needs to attend to.

A Motion was made by Phil Casper and seconded by Tom Guzulaitis to nominate Dory Manz as vice-chair of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.

Vote: 4 – 0; Motion carried.

Bon noted that Tom had a lot on his plate chairing the new Task Force and thought it may be a burden to take on chair of the committee. Tom and Bon discussed hours devoted to being the chair of the committee. Phil said if need be he would be willing to step up. Bon advised that his term was up June 30, 2019, and if the members wanted, he would continue as Chair until that time.

A Motion was made by Tom Guzulaitis and seconded by Dory Manz to nominate Bon Cantrell as chair of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.

Vote: 4 – 0; Motion carried.

b. Upcoming Parks & Recreation Events

Mary did not have a list of events as yet but did note that the Alton Lennon handrail was repaired and new bumpers were placed around the dock.

Mary also provided the end-of-year financials to the committee and noted her department exceeded the revenue budget and the return on investment in parks and recreation is well above State average. This means there is money being spent in parks and recreation, but there is money coming back to the community as well.

c. Subcommittee Reports and Goals

- Facilities; Communication; and Department Subcommittees

Facilities Subcommittee: The handrail at Alton Lennon park was repaired as Mary just noted. We are waiting on the Schneider Park storm water issues to be resolved. We will know something about the Muse Park grant in September. Mary explained the General Assembly added an additional \$4.2 million to the PARTF grant bringing the total over \$22 million which puts the City in an even better position of getting the grant. Bon would like to start discussions on recreation ideas for the parcel on Perch Road. Phil asked if a splash pad was ever considered for the parks which Mary stated no, but splash pads are mentioned in the Master Plan as an amenity for the new facility.

Communications Subcommittee: Phil has been posting about the available positions on the Advisory Board but no one has applied to date. The members discussed how to get the word out other than the City's website, Facebook and NextDoor. Tom suggested a banner be placed at City Hall stating there are volunteer positions available on the committees and for it to be mentioned at the BOC meetings. Mary can help Phil put together information to see if the *State Port Pilot* would be willing to do an article about the open positions.

Department Subcommittee: Dory asked Mary about the renovations to the Community Center. The Parks & Recreation Director noted she was in the process of developing a punch list. The outside of the Community Center was painted in the spring along with the installation of new shutters. Community Center was closed the first week in July where the entire inside was painted. The Community Center will also get a new roof. Dory inquired about the upstairs room. Mary advised it was finished, up to code and is her new office.

d. USDOT BUILD Grant

Approximately three weeks ago, Mary received an email from Kirstie Dixon, the Planning Director of Brunswick County about a very large USDOT BUILD Tiger grant that was available and the County wanted to apply. The best chance of doing what the grant was designed for was to connect Oak Island mainland to Boiling Spring Lakes. The grant is geared toward economic development and would connect two commercial corridors designed to increase access to healthcare, increase access to walkable and livable communities and to address the food desert scenario, which Boiling Spring Lakes definitely has. The County plans to write the grant, administer the grant, build the grant and the cities involved within the jurisdiction would be required to maintain what they build. This is a win, win, win for Boiling Spring Lakes, Pine Forest Plantation and Oak Island mainland.

Pine Forest Plantation is a new super-development located at the corner of 211 and Midway Road. It is a 55 and over planned community which will feature a healthcare campus, residential living, recreation, shopping and restaurants. The deadline to submit the grant is unfortunately 8:00 PM tomorrow night and everyone is scrambling to get it completed. By design, the grant window is very short, very small, because the USDOT wants to make sure that the projects they fund are shovel ready. The grant would pay for engineering fees and any storm water management fees.

The physical structures would be a 10 ft. wide asphalt multi-modal walking/biking surface as well as elevated boardwalks through any wetlands area.

The County has amassed letters of support in three weeks from Secretary of the NCDOT, Congressman David Rouzer, Senator Richard Burr, Representative Frank Iler, Senator Bill Rabon, pretty much every business in our commercial corridor, Pine Forest Plantation, Oak Island, our City which a Resolution would go in front of the BOC in August because the BOC had already met, the BSL Board of Commissioners and the Mayor. The City would be looking at 8 to 10 miles of paved surface and elevated boardwalks within our jurisdiction. With these types of facilities, the City would maintain them but those maintenance fees could be in the capital improvement plan. The City would have until 2025 to finish the grant if we get it so we would be looking at 2030 to 2035 before the City would ever spend any money to maintain it. The City could put away \$1,000 a year forever and cover all of that.

The Parks & Recreation Director noted there was one really tough scenario with respect to this greenway project. The North Carolina Department of Agriculture's Plant Conservation Program owns 54% of our community. This is 54% of the community the City does not collect taxes on and residents and visitors to our City cannot access. The City is lucky that the nature trail behind the Community Center was there before the Plant Conservation came to BSL so they were allowed to keep it. Mary is now in negotiation with the Plant Conservation with how bad do you want us to get rid of that trail. The City will close the trail but you have to give us access to connect our two links. The Plant Conservation's border on that side of 87 is our City limit. The Plant Conservation board met today. Mary was hoping that by 9 AM tomorrow she would have an answer from Plant Conservation whether they will give access to 3,493 feet of their property or the City would lose the potential of a \$15 million grant.

Dory asked the length of the trail at the Community Center. Mary advised it was 1.5 miles out and back and goes through a very sensitive area of the preserve. Mary has done what she can do pushing the Plant Conservation Program. The Parks & Recreation Director called Brunswick County Commissioner Mike Forte who lives in BSL and was a former city commissioner. He started the political process of moving up the chain to Rabon, Iler, Troxler and going as far they need to go to say to the Plant Conservancy that you are robbing this community of what could be a potential \$15 million project for 3,493 feet of access.

Mary noted if we do not get the letter of support, the County would submit the grant. The chances might not be that good because there would be no linkage between the two areas, but that does not mean it would not get funded. If we do not get funded, we have a shovel ready project for the next time the Tiger grants come out. Dory noted it does not mean the Conservation cannot decide differently in the future. At Mary's last communication with them, she was told that the Conservation department was not interested in writing a letter of support for the project. Her last comment to them was, if you will not support the grant and trail linkage, would you support the grant helping us map out an alternate linkage. With that being said, there can be access on farm land owned by the Robinettes that buffers the preserve. It is outside of the city limits, but is still within the county.

The P&R Director explained the greenway would start at this building, cross Rt. 87 via a signaled crosswalk which costs tens of thousands of dollars and would fall under this grant, down the commercial corridor, right at West North Shore, go back around the dam to Virginia Road to the Community Center, then down Bladen towards Columbus or New Hanover, then the little piece of land that is owned by the state. Most of that area is owned by the State; however, it is all right-of-way for us, especially on the county-named streets and none are Powell Bill funded.

The P&R Director stated to Commissioner Witt this was something the City needed to get their heads around. Years ago, there was a Preserve Advisory Board when the state started buying up all the property which included the City Manager, Mary, a BOC liaison and several residents and we required the State of NC to meet on a quarterly basis with the Advisory Board and report what they were doing. What is still happening is the state is continuing to buy up property, taking those parcels off our tax rolls while not allowing residents to gain access at all. Mary would like to see the Preserve Advisory Board come back.

The greenway trail is conceptual at this point but we had to have something to submit with the grant. The rough estimate of this project is \$12,000,000 to \$15,000,000. Mary asked the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board if they would be willing to sign a letter supporting Brunswick County in their submission of the grant for this project. Pamela read into the minutes an email from Bruce Pennington supporting the project. Bon, Dory, Tom and Phil were in favor of supporting the project.

A Motion was made by Phil Casper and seconded by Dory Manz to support Brunswick County in submitting the BUILD grant.

Vote: 4 – 0; Motion carried.

Mary prepared a letter showing the Advisory Board's support of Brunswick County pursuing the grant which she read to the committee and Bon signed as Chair of the Advisory Board.

VIII. Next Meeting Agenda Items

- Bicycle & Pedestrian Transportation Task Force
- Parks & Recreation Master Plan
- North Lake Property Acquisition
- Pets in the Park Ordinance
- Brunswick County BUILD grant / Greenway project

Bon asked Commissioner Witt if there was any more discussion about wakeboarding on the Big Lake. Commissioner Witt noted it has been tabled indefinitely. Mary noted that neither she as Parks & Recreation Director nor the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board were asked to participate in the discussions about wakeboarding. She suggested the board members pay attention to the BOC agenda for the topic comes up again.

IX. Announcements

The Advisory Board wished Mary Green a Happy Birthday and thanked her for all she does for the committee.

X. Adjourn

A Motion was made by Tom Guzulaitis and seconded by Phil Casper to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 PM.

Vote: 4 - 0; Motion Carried.

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Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Bellina
Administrative Assistant