

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Minutes

November 19, 2020

Members Attending

RJ Hogan – Chair
Will Bordeaux
Andy McGlinn-Z
Hunter Holland-Z
Erika Robertson-Z
Emily Morgan-Z
David Eason
Zach Gilbert-Z
Ingrid Corbi-Z

Members Absent:

Marissa Bryant
Shirin Jenkins

Others Present:

Davina Bell
Margaret Isbell – Admin

CALLED TO ORDER

RJ called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 2020 MINUTES

Zach made a motion to approve the October 2020 minutes, Ingrid seconded the motion, all approved.

PROJECT UPDATES

Updates for ongoing projects are included in the October 2020 Monthly Report emailed to the board. All four walls for the gym at Maides are up and they are working on the roof. Due to rain there was a delay but the project is still moving along.

For the gym at the MLK Center, staff will be presenting to council some options as far as the design goes. The plan is to present at the November 30 agenda meeting.

URBAN FORESTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Parks staff are preparing an RFP (request for proposal) posted in January to hire a consultant to develop a well-defined plan on how to inventory, manage and incorporate the current tree plan with the goals of the community. Plan will address planning, planting, conservation, storm damage mitigation and/or maintenance of community trees and reflect the goals and objectives established by staff, the tree commission, other partners and city council.

This is a picture of what we have now and how it is currently managed, what we want to have and how we want to manage that once it's completed. Ingrid ask if this was part of the Tree Initiative, it is not.

RECREATION STAFF DEI EFFORTS

Over the course of the last 18 to 24 months Davina's staff and herself have been accessing how they can improve access to parks and programs, and the diversity of the programs as well. Most of the staff has participated in a Racial Equity Learning Cohort, this was offered through the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Association (NCRPA). There are still some staff members finishing up the cohort this month.

This ties in with the city's Rise initiative but Davina's staff was ahead of the game. There is a group of 5 supervisors who are serving as their committee to help guide and keep them on track on being more

diverse, equitable and inclusive in the city's programs and services. Davina will keep the board updated on how this is going and what is happening in the program. Davina advised the board she will need their help in facilitating conversations and being a part of what staff has going on.

At this point the committee has created mission and vision statements as well as goals. Davina and Steven Schmitter, the supervisor of the Fitness Center, made a presentation to the Executive Management Team (EMT) in October. This is the higher-level staff directors and staff that report directly to the City Manager, on what we are doing. EMT is open to and supportive of staff efforts. This also ties into the city's Rise Initiative.

The next full staff meeting to discuss DEI is this Friday, November 20. This is something staff will continue pursuing to ensure best practices are in place related to DEI.

Zach asked if there was a role for the board to participate in. Davina will make sure to keep the board posted. There is a plan to reach out to stake holders. In January Davina will have a better plan as to how the board can help. RJ asked if this was taking the Rise Initiative to the next step, Davina answered with this did not start out as a formalized process, it started out to get the communities more involved in underutilized facilities such as Maides Park. How do we get a diverse group of people at Halyburton Park. Some of this all started out with general conversation with staff. This all started out about 18 to 24 months ago. This is a more formalized plan of action.

Emily mentioned that UNCW has a new Diversity Officer. They have started a Diversity and Inclusion fellows program to engage faculty, staff and students. Faculty and staff are being compensated to come up with initiatives to enhance UNCW DEI efforts. One of the big pushes is to reach out to the community. There are groups of people at UNCW with funding looking for ways to get directly involved with DEI efforts in Wilmington. Emily is willing to help with any connections if our DEI gets to a point where that would be helpful.

Davina, Andrea Talley and Morrell Fox have met with Leah Mayo and Ashley Wells back in July to discuss, this was before Dr. Roseboro was appointed, a better partnership between the University and Parks & Recreation, specifically Athletics, but across Recreation Centers and programs. Davina will touch base with Emily.

OLD BUSINESS

Adopt-a-park: Davina asked if everyone has selected their park(s) they will adopt. Davina will put together a list of staff contacts that she will share with the board in the coming weeks. Hunter asked if the parks that want to be selected should they look at the parks that are currently offering programs.

Pools: For Northside Pool, the contract with NC Swim has been executed for their winter programs to be held. For Legion, we were just provided information from the YMCA contractor regarding the leaks that caused the pool to be shut down for most of the summer. City staff will review to determine a course of action to make the necessary repairs.

YMCA Contract: Is up for renewal. City staff and YMCA staff are currently in negotiation to finalize the details to get the contract executed. Davina will keep the board updated. Since there is no meeting in December, Davina may hold an executive meeting with RJ and Shirin. Ingrid asked about having an on-site visit of the pools that are in question. Davina can set that up, sometime in December. She will get with Billy Whitehurst and Andrea Tally to join and answer any questions the board might come up with.

Comprehensive Plan: Today, Davina met with the other two members of the review team to select firms that they are going to invite to do a presentation and interview. Three firms have been chosen

out of four submitted. Davina hopes to have interviews sometime in December and decision on the firm to be made in January, last update was done in 2009. Hunter asked if there was a report from 2009.

NEW BUSINESS

Joint meeting with County Parks & Gardens likely in February 2021, probably by Zoom. Having staff come in and talk about what is going on at the centers, sometime in March 2021.

Davina wanted to thank the board members for being actively engaged in the programs and items brought to the board.

ADJOURNMENT

RJ made a motion to the board to adjourn the meeting, Zach made the first motion, David made the second motion to adjourn, all approved.