

# **Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Minutes September 16, 2020**

## **Members Attending**

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

## **Members Absent:**

Shirin Jenkins

## **Others Present:**

Davina Bell  
Margaret Isbell – Admin  
Dick Jones – YMCA  
Andrea Talley – COW

## **CALLED TO ORDER**

RJ called the meeting to order.

## **APPROVAL OF AUGUST 2020 MINUTES**

Andy made a motion to approve the August 2020 minutes, Erika seconded the motion, all approved. David asked about the Live Nation contract. It was going to be deferred to the next meeting.

## **WILMINGTON TREE INITIATIVE UPDATE**

Next Thursday at 11am at Empie Park there will be a Kickoff Meeting. To comply with the gathering restrictions this will also be available on the City's Facebook page as a live feed. There will be a tree giveaway, date, time, and location still to be announced. The goal is to give away 1,000 trees. The committee is working on a drive-through open and pre-registration due to COVID-19. At the end of October there will be a tree planting on the city's south side, this is being done due to a significant number of trees lost due to Florence. Cape Fear Trees worked with Aaron Reese to identify specific locations to plant these trees. There will also be some education events, more information can be found on the city's website under the Parks & Recreation page. Additionally the committee will be working with Williston Middle School Beautification committee to discuss a possible tree stewardship program for kids. Staff has reached out to NAACP and Voyage for representation from the community for the committee.

## **ADOPT A PARK**

This is one of the items that was discussed last meeting to have the board be more engaged. Maps were provided for the board members along with the list of all the city parks. RJ asking for contact information for the parks they would like to work with. Rule out the parks that have no events or activities associated. Davina suggested that because of all the Athletic programs at various locations. They can work with Andrea Talley on this. Roberts Strange Park has 3 facilities that can be part of this Adopt A Park.

## **NSEA SWIM/YMCA POOL PROPOSAL – PRESENTATION BY DICK JONES\*\***

For the last 3-4 years the YMCA has operated the city pools, managed, and maintained. This would be from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Robert Strange Pool has been the only pool operating as this time. YMCA is asking that Robert Strange Pool remain open through the end of October. The cost

to have the pool open would be \$32,000 - \$33,000, which includes chemicals, utilities, and staffing. Typically we don't see the cost for the utilities, but the city staff does. It will be used and open to the public. There are times in the morning during the week and afternoons during the week as well as on Saturday's. YMCA did this last year at Northside Pool and placed a bubble over to offer year round operations.

At the end of the year we generated more then enough revenue to cover all of their costs and return half of that back to the city. For example; if the YMCA has \$10,000 left after all expenses are paid, they keep \$5,000 and return \$5,000 back to the city. Based on how this summer has done, due to COVID-19, they expect to have enough funds to cover the operating costs to remain open until the end of October. They are not asking the city for additional funding. RJ asked about how long the contract is with the City? Per Davina, this is the last year of a 5 year contract. RJ asked about how lap lanes are handled.

They are currently under "reservation" only. He asked about the reservations, was it more city residents or others? Per Dick, it was more city residents. Andrea asked if the YMCA was willing to take care of the utilities for the months of September and October, per Dick, they will not be doing this. Zach questioned if they find they get to the staffing for the summer, would they take a look at the overage of hours. Yes, if they see where no one is using the pools during the hours of 2pm – 4pm they would not have the pool open during this time.

Dick Jones recommends extending the contract for Robert Strange Pool to operate through the end of October. David made a motion to approve, Andy seconded and motion, RJ abstained. Passed.

Two years ago the city agreed to operate Northside Pool year round. It was closed in March due to COVID-19 and has been closed due to ongoing maintenance problems. The proposal is to cover the pool add heat. They have been working with NC Swim to develop a proposal to operate a year round facility. There is a draft budget, this would take care of the staff, utilities, and chemicals. This would be about \$130,000. Does not have hot showers, no heat in the locker rooms. Adding AC and Heating, hot water and improve the entrance to the facility.

YMCA is preparing to make a recommendation to operate Northside Pool year round beginning on November 1<sup>st</sup>. Erica has been in the "bubble" at the YMCA and the air quality is very poor. NC Swim has put in \$150,000 to use the pool year round. Have they spoke to Waves of Wilmington? Per Dick, they have along with NC Swim. Erica would not be in favor of supporting this proposal. RJ is also very skeptical as well and would not support this idea either.

Davina asked Andrea to give an update on Northside Pool. She wanted to confirm that the bubble was not damaged, it was the pump house. NC Swim came in and put up the bubble, but they did not get it running until January or February then it was closed in March due to COVID. Since then there have been a lot of repairs done such as repainting the lap lines. They had cracks since the pool is sitting on ground water. The pool is not in the ideal location due to the ground water causing the pool to "float". However, having water in the pool year round this would cause issues to maintain.

Zach had a question about the funding for these projects, what if there was another catastrophic issue, are these funds already set or where would they come from? Davina answered, the plan was to use some of the funds allocated for the natatorium to handle the repairs that are needed. That idea came from Dave Mayes who is the director of public services. The money the city has is allocated over the next 10 years. We have \$150,000 each year, for the next 10 years allocated.

RJ recommended that Robert Strange Pool open year round and is a central location, several board members agreed to this as well. Erica will post a Google document and share with everyone with questions that the board has.

Ingrid made a motion to table this decision until they have more information, Andy seconded the proposal to table.

### **OLD NORTH STATE BASEBALL PROPOSAL – PRESENTATION BY ANDREA TALLEY\*\***

Andrea was approached by the owners of Footprint Baseball, who own all 8 teams in the Old North State Baseball League, it's a non-profit summer baseball league. They are interested in using Godwin in the summer. They want to make some upgrades to Godwin in exchange for free rental fees. They have proposed two scenarios, at the time Andrea started talking with them we were not sure if the Sharks were coming back next year. With that said, we are looking at scenario two. They would have both a summer college league and an independent minor league team playing every night at Godwin.

In the past few years we've had a few different baseball teams playing at Godwin. These teams typically play two nights per week and on Saturday's. This is the home of New Hanover High School girls softball team. We have experienced issues with upgrading Legion Stadium. This is an opportunity to upgrade Godwin Stadium without putting any of the city funds. They are asking for 10 years of free rental fees and paying up to \$100,000 in upgrades. They are asking for \$10,000 of free rental fees for each year for 10 years. The city has given a counter offered for a contract of 3 years.

Andy asked about parking, Erica asked about seating. Since this is a concrete stadium, one of the items they want to improve is the parking and installing stadium seating. There is a long gravel lot where there maybe 3 rows of cars being able to park, there would be about 75 – 100 cars. If this is a minor league they would need more parking then a high school team at Legion. Part of the contract would include concessions. The Sharks get all of their revenue from concessions, not much from admission. Andy also brought up the ABC license, the organization would be responsible for obtaining their own license.

This organization was established in 2018. Some of the teams are Triad Tribe, Deep River Muddogs, Carolina Coyotes, and Lumberkings. Andrea made a suggestion to have more talks with the Sharks and she will do additional research.

Andy made a motion to table, Ingrid made the second motion to table until next meeting.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

No old business to discuss.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Introduction of new member, Will Bordeaux.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

RJ made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Andy made the first motion, Emily made the second motion to adjourn, all approved.

*\*\*Items requiring a vote*