

**TOWN OF MINT HILL
PARK AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MINUTES
June 9th, 2015**

The Park and Recreation Committee of the Town of Mint Hill met in regular session on June 9th, 2015 at 8:00 a.m. at the Mint Hill Town Hall.

ATTENDANCE

Chairman: Ron Freeman

Members: Sandy Barnett, Roger Bowden, Ray Thompson, and Michelle McDonald

Deputy Town Manager: Lee Bailey

Town Engineer: Steve Frey

Program Support Assistant: Candice Everhart

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Freeman at 8:00 a.m., who declared a quorum and asked everyone to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance and observe a moment of silence.

Approval of Minutes of April 14th, 2015: Mr. Thompson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. McDonald and unanimously agreed, to approve the minutes of April 14th, 2015 meeting as presented.

Old Business: None.

New Business: *Mr. Bailey stated that we were going to review the agenda in the order of item A, C, then B.*

- A. Madness Report:** We have not had time yet to cover the financials, but we did make a profit this year, Mr. Bailey reported. Sheryl Smith really threw herself into this for about six months. She dealt with vendors and bands. Steve Frey helped us out with the parking layout this year. We had satellite parking this year. Most estimates we received ballparked Saturday at 15,000 people and over the course of three days, approximately 25,000.

Were there any issues asked Mr. Thompson. No. We had a debrief and more or less the only issues we saw were customer service issues that we can always work better on for the next year, stated Mr. Bailey.

Mrs. Barnett said she liked the drop-off lane we had this year. Mr. Bailey said this is the first year we did that and it was able to be used as well for handicap. People who couldn't park closely could at least drop off those unable to walk as far.

- B. Follow Up On Long Range Planning Session:** Mr. Bailey stated, at the Veterans Park, we spoke about no bicycles on the trail due to safety hazards. My plan is to have Public

Works staff get with Park Security and see if they have observed any complaints through July. We will have staff gather examples of policies from neighboring jurisdictions. We discussed building an amphitheater and hosting June Tunes and Movies at the parks. There was discussion about this at the Commissioners Retreat. They had all positive feedback and agreed it should be at Veterans Park due to Madness being there as well as parking. The Elected Officials agreed to look online at other Towns and submit pictures and design ideas to the Town Manager. The AFMAC update I have is that I've reached out to Lisa Guilani and she suggested that I contact directly with Bill Dixon. I haven't heard back from him yet so I am waiting to hear back from him on an update. There has been no activity on the Purple Heart Monument since the last planning session so we will follow up on that. There hasn't been an update about the monument at the Police Department either. I will get with Brian on that since he has been in touch with the contractor. We talked about having traffic counts out at the Parks entrances. Now through August we will have the Police Staff and Public Works Staff place those traffic counters to gather some weekday and weekend data.

Mr. Bowden asked if the counters are already up. Mr. Bailey stated they are not. We will place them out a couple of week days and weekends now through August.

If you turn to page two and three, these are some excerpts from the Board of Commissioners Retreat that I wanted you all to see, stated Mr. Bailey. One thing is the radio tower that the deadline is July. They do have an unofficial grace period to the Charlotte Radio Group through December. We do have some options if they don't take it down by December. There was a quick discussion about Veteran's Park about whether it should be reservation or first come first serve and they wanted to leave it the way it is. They spoke about weddings, memorial and funeral services, etc at the park and they determined that it is just too hard to give 30 day notices on some of those. As far as following the rules we have set for Major and Minor Events it would be tough. The topic of a splash feature was mentioned at Wilgrove Park and they want to pursue this later due to some cost and research on that. The discussion of a Greenway System was addressed. Brian and I gave them our stance on that which is the County handles greenways and we as a Town has tried to make the sidewalk project a priority for us as pedestrian travel. The Brief Road Park was brought up and there will be an RFQ written up and should take approximately two to three years to develop.

Mr. Bowden said, I remember a discussion about creating a Legion field out there and the concern that it may take up too much space. Could the committee remind me if we recommended a Legion Field?

Mr. Freeman stated, there was discussion from the public stating they would like to see a Legion field. We didn't necessarily say we needed them. That was something I had heard from the public.

What is a Legion field and what is its purpose, asked Mrs. Barnett. The way I worded it in the RFQ is a 'full-sized field'. A full-sized field is roughly 300' to the foul poles. It is

very difficult to find that in the Charlotte area. It is equivalent to a high school field, stated Mr. Frey.

A legion field would mostly be for high school, adults, and travel teams, asked Mrs. Barnett. Correct, stated Mr. Frey.

What I've heard from the public is that we don't have enough rec space. Rec and travel are two different things. When I read this RFQ, I was concerned. Are we phased out where we aren't taking care of our taxpayers needs first before we jump on a field that won't service our families with young kids, asked Mrs. Barnett. Mr. Frey stated, the RFQ doesn't bind us to anything. All it does is helps us to call in the correct type of consultants. This is a request for qualifications only. It brings in people who are qualified to build a park.

Mrs. Barnett said, I get nervous that if we're not a part of that integral planning phase, the plans could start to go in a direction not similar to this initial plan. Mr. Frey stated, I understand. What I would like to do is form a stakeholders group. They would be the 'voting board' for lack of better words and it would be comprised of staff, board members, maybe someone from MHAA.

A legion field would end up being like the soccer fields we have at Veterans park. They are off limits to everything but soccer and are closed two months out of the year. To me that doesn't make sense. Things tend to have a snowball effect and I wouldn't want to see this park become something the public doesn't want because it took off too quickly, stated Mr. Bowden.

The legion field you just mentioned though would still be multi-purpose correct, asked Mr. Freeman. It can be. You can design a baseball field to have a rectangular outfield for football, etc. We will end with a document and some maps and a conceptual layout before we step into the design layout. We will have a majority consensus to what this park will and will not include, stated Mr. Frey.

My other concern is when you're choosing a design firm, be sure to look for someone who has experience designing a walking trail that goes in with the rest of the field. That was something this board was adamant about having a 5K trail out there, stated Mr. Bowden. A walking trail will be the easiest part of building this park actually. It definitely will not be an afterthought, but it will be something easier to work around later, stated Mr. Frey.

What I will demand of our consultant is that they earn their keep and bring their expertise of work. We had ten submittals for the design RFQ and I believe all ten of them are qualified. They don't only work in Charlotte, but all over the Southeast. You are all more than welcome to come to my office and look through any of these submissions and their examples. We are under tight rules to not show any favoritism until it's voted on, stated Mr. Frey.

Who is going to manage the legion field if it's built? As far as travel teams and times, etc, asked Mrs. Barnett. That is yet to be seen, stated Mr. Frey.

Back to tying all of these ideas together and ensuring that we don't overlook anything, I'm a strong advocate of getting public input and hearing all ideas, stated Mr. Frey.

When will that happen, asked Mrs. Barnett. That would be after a consultant is selected. The committee consists of Brian Welch, Lee Bailey, myself, Ray Thompson at the suggestion of Ron Freeman, and Garret Trussell that will be selecting three consultants to present to the Board of Commissioners, answered Mr. Frey.

Mrs. Barnett asked, did the Commissioners or Mayor have any recommendations about what they would like to see out at the park? I haven't heard anything directly from them, but I know they are very open to public input, answered Mr. Bailey.

Mr. Freeman asked, have the Public Works department looked into the water spouts for dogs at Veterans Park?

Mr. Bowden said from his recollection of last meeting that Garret was supposed to be looking into that. I will follow up with Garret, stated Mr. Bailey.

In reference to bicycles at the park, I was running and there were some bikes racing. The security was very good about getting them to stop, stated Mrs. Barnett.

Mr. Freeman said, when you have someone my age riding their bike around it's not an issue, but when you have a child flying by it can be dangerous.

Mrs. Barnett said, the park security told me that it depends on how crowded the trails are that he may be more lenient or strict. Mr. Bailey stated we could look into getting a sign that flips up and down. Therefore when the trail is very crowded the park security could flip the sign down to say 'no bikes allowed'.

Mr. Bowden stated that there should also be guidelines that you should wear a helmet if you're going to be on a bicycle.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Bowden made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Thompson and the Committee unanimously agreed. Chairman Freeman adjourned the meeting at 8:45 a.m.

Candice Everhart
Program Support Assistant