

RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE RETREAT

September 10, 2016

RENEE PASCHAL, County Manager

CHATHAM PARK: Chatham Park is totally within Town of Pittsboro, which will get the recreation exaction fees from it. The development will build some of their own recreational and park facilities that are expected to be public. The county will be involved at least a bit in reviewing elements of this as it develops. We can expect extensive greenways and trails that county could link to in the future. There are opportunities for town, county and developer partnerships.

MASTER PLAN: Related to a Parks & Recreation Master Plan, the county is in the process of a developing a Comprehensive Plan that will cover general recommendations related to parks and recreation. It will be completed in the spring of 2017.

The previous Master Plan was never approved by the Board of Commissioners when it got first hung up by the county commissioners and then the recession hit. The County Manager is supporting putting funding in the next budget for a Master Plan update, but up to the Board of Commissioners to fund after July 1, 2017.

FUTURE PLANNING: The concern is borrowing funds for parks given the many other huge facility needs. A capital reserve fund is a viable option, but need to identify a revenue source. Bond referendum has been used by other localities but it is still debt. The county can get grant writing help if the department needs it for specific grants. It's important to make sure that the grant project matches up with the grant requirements.

CHRIS BLICE, School System

CURRENT PARTNERSHIPS: Chris provided an overview of feedback from principals on how schools are already working with community and athletic groups on public use of school facilities. Fee schedule was increased but still lower than every county in our area, except Randolph. Chris noted that some barriers or concerns related to such issues as liability and vandalism have to be addressed with any sharing of facilities.

FUTURE PLANS: Chris said that they are open to more discussion about future partnerships. The new elementary school is a more likely option than the new high school. Too much demand on high school facilities and the costs are higher.

He encouraged the committee to develop a vision about what the needs are and what might be possible. Then see if the school system can help. Land size may be a limiting factor too. The committee discussed looking at some models across the state.

JENN BEADLE-MUNLEY, NC State Recreation Resources

MASTER PLAN: The master plan should be a great promotional tool and easily accessible by the public. Components include such things as current status, needs of residents, evaluation of existing facilities, estimated future land needs, needed facilities, and costs. She recommends forming a steering committee of 10 to 12 that is very diverse. Given the age of existing plan, we could start from scratch or use the existing one as a foundation to update. The planning process must be open and transparent, with frequent public updates.

NEXT STEPS

NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: The committee identified that given the fast track of the elementary school, identifying some needs that the school might address. This would also involve working with Recreation Resource Services to identify possible models of county-school partnerships. Visit some of these sites, such as southern Lee County.

MASTER PLAN: Begin collecting some RFPs for the Master Plan from other local governments. Discuss what we want to include in the RFP.

GRAND FUNDING: Jenn identified some options. Look into which of these seem to be a good fit. See if Health Alliance or other groups in the county might want to do a joint grant proposal around recreation and health needs.