

Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes September 20, 2023

Location: Northwest District Park - 2413 Woody Store Road, Siler City, NC 27344

Attendees: Tracy Burnett, J. Stamey, Caitlin Murphy, Guadalupe Perez, Tammy Phillips, Kent Barlow, Megan Lynch, Joy Hewett, Anne Geer, Commissioner Franklin Gomez-Flores

Welcome

- Tracy welcomes everyone.
- Tracy introduced our new committee member, Guadalupe Perez.
- Committee members gave brief introductions of who they are.

Tour Northwest District Park

- Tracy showed everyone around the park and pointed out the different amenities.
- Pointed out community partnerships, such as the amphitheater that was built by two local Eagle Scouts.
- Tracy talked about different programs and activities that are offered at the park, such as the summer day camp, soccer practice, and facility reservations for county residents.

Approve Minutes

- Kent called the meeting to order.
- Kent made a motion to approve the minutes from 6/21/23.
- Anne seconded the motion.

Advisory Committee Annual Report Presentation Comments

- Tracy gave an overview of the report and requested any changes and edits be made.
- Anne suggested changing language to include trail easements.
 - Megan mentioned that with private owned property, easements are not always possible.
- Joy suggested more natural trails be recommended.
- Kent suggested for accomplishments section to include grant information and distribution of funds.
 - Tracy mentioned how grants and fund information has its own slide on the power point.
- Anne would like to see broader goals that include adequate funding to accommodate population growth.
- J. explained cost recovery formula for all our programs determines rates.
- Anne would like to see more than just conserving natural resources.
- Kent asked about the art program status.
 - J. said the new art position will start in January 2024.
- Kent would like to expand the program offerings.

- Megan mentioned we must have more facilities to offer more programs. Suggested we think about facilities before expanding programs.
- Northwest District Park is the only park without a master plan due to infrastructure already being in place.
 - J. mentioned how the master plans are only good for a certain amount of time, we have others in progress. Would like to finish those before starting another one.
- J. and Tracy explained how different municipalities have control over parks and recreation in those areas.
 - J. talked about how Chatham County Parks & Rec is filling in the gaps where other municipalities are lacking. Usually Parks & Rec is more focused on natural resources and outdoor education. We are one of the only counties in NC that has a larger focus on recreation.
- We have the Grants to Towns program where we allot funds to Pittsboro, Siler City, and Goldston. This year, Town of Siler City was awarded ~\$41,000 to go towards their master plan. The master plan is open to public input, this is where comments can be made about what would like to see implemented in the community.
- Tracy announced the next Board of Commissioner meeting is Monday, October 16th.

Parker's Ridge Park Updates

- Tracy asked everyone to look at the Parker's Ridge Park map in the meeting packet.
- Phase 1 includes all the infrastructure, sewer, water, roads. Includes the playground, trails, dog park, shelter, maintenance building.
 - J. explained how getting the infrastructure in place first is important. Grants are not easily attainable for infrastructure.
- J. explained the SUP (Special Use Permit) is a new requirement that we must apply for because the park is a place of assembly. SUP is due to zoning change. Includes traffic impact analysis and other analyses.
- Anne asked if this is the final plan.
 - Tracy said it is pretty close.
- Tracy said we are hoping to bring the plan to the Board of Commissioners at the November meeting.

Trails and Open Space Updates

- Tracy gave updates on what is going on with the trails and open space plans Ben has been working on.
- The Haw River Trail Feasibility Study is open for public comment until Friday, September 22, 2023.
- Ben will be presenting at the Board of Commissioners meeting on October 16th.
- The Haw River Trail State Committee is involved in the Haw River Trail Study.
- Hoping for grant opportunities for the Haw River Corridor.
- Deep River State Trail: Ben has applied for a grant through NCDOT for trail and open space. Ben will have an update on this grant in November.

- Talking with local landowners about the possibility of relocating the Triangle Land Conservancy Canoe Access to a place that will be better suited for that particular purpose.
- J. said the Briar Chapel funds can only be used for Briar Chapel.
 - Tracy mentioned how we are working on a new maintenance building for The Park at Briar Chapel.
- Tracy explained how the recreation exaction funds are allotted by districts.
- Anne asked if the county is getting any revenue from VinFast.
 - Commissioner Franklin Gomez-Flores said the county receives the property tax.

CIP Discussion

- CIP is the Capital Improvement Plan. Submitting CIP request for restrooms at 15/501 and US 64 Access Points.
- Chicken Bridge Paddle Access is a future goal.
- Anne suggested that Wolfsped pay for a park in Siler City.
 - Guadalupe agreed.
- Commissioner Franklin Gomez-Flores asked if there is a way to split funds with growth of Siler City.
 - J. said we give money to Siler City, Pittsboro, Goldston.
- Megan suggested the county revisit the amount of funds that Parks & Rec is distributing to towns.
- Commissioner Franklin Gomez-Flores: The County will receive property tax from Wolfsped. Would like to see some of the county portion be allocated to Siler City. Long-term investment in a park in Siler City.
 - Kent summarized the idea that Siler City gets tax portion from Wolfsped. County gets portion as well. Instead of giving Siler City the Grants to Town money, we give them more of the Wolfsped property tax revenue.
 - One lump amount instead of yearly funds. Economic investment in the long run.

Others

- Megan CIP comment: South Bynum River Access, there is no parking. Can we look into this?
 - J. said it got changed by the DOT and efforts have been made to change the parking situation with no luck. There is nothing we can do to make this public access parking.

Adjourn

- Kent motioned to adjourn the meeting.
- Megan seconded the motion.
- Meeting adjourned at 7:56pm.