

Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
March 7, 2022 at 6:00 pm
Civic Center
Minutes and General Account

Members present: Daniel McDaniel, Doug Sampson, Jim Pendry, Charles Clapp, Jr., Amy Reese, Denise Bowie

Members absent: Jay McQuillan and Phyllis Bridges, alternate

Council Member Representative present: John Capes

Staff present: Scott Coakley, Parks Superintendent, Anna Hawryluk, Town Planner, Matthew Johnson, Town Manager, Nancy Avery, Interim Town Clerk

Call to order -Coakley called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

Approval of minutes from January 7, 2019 meeting

Sampson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. McDaniel made a second to the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Selection of chair – Coakley asked for nominations

McDaniel nominated Jay McQuillan as chair for three year term.

Sampson made a motion to appoint McQuillan as chair. McDaniel made a second to the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Selection of Vice Chair

Pendry nominated Doug Sampson as Vice Chair. Clapp made a second to the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF)

Coakley stated the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund grant is money offered by the State of North Carolina with a dollar for dollar match. It is a good grant and parts of Wrenn Miller Park were built with PARTF funds. The deadline for application submittal is May 2, 2022. It requires the Town to have a current Master Plan which was done in April.

Recommendations from staff on a project for the PARTF application are:

- A. Dog park, natural paly area and trail, shelters at the dog park and main area
- B. Dog park and shelter for dog park, shelter at basketball court and basketball
- C. Natural play area and trail, shelter at main area and volleyball relocation and renovation
- D. Dog park and shelter for dog park and volleyball court along with relocation and renovation of the volleyball court and basketball

E. Dog Park, natural play area and trail, shelter at the Dog Park and basketball court, volleyball relocation and renovation and basketball

We are looking for guidance from this committee for an option for this grant to take to Council for approval.

Sampson asked for cost estimates.

Hawryluk provided costs as follows:

- A. \$378,206
- B. \$332,936
- C. \$190,640
- D. \$337,936
- E. \$403,576

The Inclusive playground is not listed because there is another grant we plan to apply for. You will not see an option that included baseball fields which was added later after public input at the Council's request. The Finance Director has reviewed and is okay with all options financially.

Coakley said if the Town can receive a grant for the all- inclusive playground and a PARTF grant at the same time, it will go a long way towards these changes in the Master Plan. He said he thinks it is a better option to go ahead and move and renovate the volleyball court.

Pendry asked the difference in cost if the baseball fields are included.

Hawryluk said the difference in cost is in the millions and would not meet the criteria for PARTF because it is renovation and not new.

Coakley said drainage infrastructure under the ball fields will have to be redone as it was built in 1974.

Pendry asked why we could not put natural grass there if that is what we have at the golf course. Coakley said we could but a championship field has artificial turf that can be played on whether it is raining or not and can be used for championship play.

Pendry asked if the Town has a preference between the fields and an exercise area.

Coakley said the preference is option A which was done in response to community input when doing the master plan..

McDaniel asked what the citizens thought would happen to the baseball fields.

Coakley said he thinks the idea was that they would be moved.

Hawryluk said for the PARTF grant we would focus on an area that does not have baseball fields

Johnson said we have known that the baseball fields need renovation and right now they only work for teams with players under five years old. We asked the local league its thoughts and they said multi-use fields for all players is what is needed. We are trying to do an application for the grant that does not include the current baseball field area.

Pendry asked if the baseball fields were expanded, would it be source of income down the line.

Johnson said no, most recreation is not a money maker for towns. It is more of an amenity or quality of life. I does not seem reasonable to him to spend lots of money renovating two small baseball fields that are used only a few months of the year. The residents that provided input for the survey wanted different recreational facilities such as walking paths. You need a quad area to have excellent ball fields that is set up just for baseball.

Coakley stated we have been struggling with the fields and he has reached out to other recreational directors and most said their numbers are really down and most fields were donated over time and they are giving them back because they do not have staff to maintain them. He had a school on the fields last week for the first time. Most teams consist of twenty kids and they have only been able to get nine kids and are shutting down. Fields were rented 17-18 times last year. The growing trend is that baseball numbers are coming down.

Pendry said you could have people playing soccer or picnicking on the baseball fields so it would be multi- use.

Coakley said we could explore that, but maintenance is required either way.

Capes said even if we rebuild the fields, it is still based on limitations, such as twelve years to aging out. The fields are so close and not laid out well.

Coakley said that is correct and renovation would be out of the Town's pocket totally.

Reese asked if the volleyball court is where the inclusive playground will be. If so, will it need to be moved?

Coakley said yes, that is correct, it would have to be moved.

Sampson asked Coakley if he is looking for an option tonight.

Coakley replied yes we need a decision tonight. Points are required for the PARTF grant. The community indicated they really wanted a dog park.

Reese asked how often are PARTF grants are offered.

Coakley said annually.

Motion of support for PARTF grant project

Reese made a motion to apply for option E. McDaniel made a second to the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Other business

Hawryluk gave an overview of the Bicycle and Pedestrian grant and committee appointment. Earlier this year, we submitted an application for a planning grant and received it from DOT. We are putting together a committee that will meet four times a year. If you or anyone you know is interested in serving, let me know. This plan will look at current plan and possible areas for improvements and suggest projects. Council will appoint members next week.

Coakley informed the committee that the estimates for a pre-fab restroom at Wrenn Miller Park came back a lot more than anticipated. They are working with the architect on another direction.

Asked board how often they would like to meet.

Adjournment

McDaniel made a motion to adjourn at 6:48 pm. Clapp made a second to the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.