



The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met at Veterans Park, Shelter 1, located at 2136 Central Avenue, Charlotte, NC at 6 p.m.

**PRC MINUTES**  
**February 15, 2012**

**ATTENDANCE**

**PRC Present:** Rob Brisley, Chair  
Kendel Bryant, Vice-Chair  
Elaine Powell, Executive Secretary  
Charlie McRee  
Ed Barnhart  
Doug Burnett  
Norman Mitchell  
Jeff Tarte  
Kristen Shaben  
Brenda McMoore  
Joe Pata  
Sheryl Smith  
Jim Garges, Director

**PRC Absent:** Norman Mitchell  
Phil Carey

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m. by Chair Rob Brisley, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance and introductions of each commissioner.

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Chair Rob Brisley, introduced and welcomed the newest member of the Park and Recreation Commission, **Sheryl Smith**. Sheryl will be representing Central Park Region (1) and is a resident of the Lincoln Heights community.

Jeff Robinson, Division Director of Park Operations recognized Greg Clemmer, Park Superintendent to welcome the PRC to Veterans Park. Greg Shared information with the PRC on the amenities of Veterans Park and the changes and improvements over the years, including the new sidewalks, shelter, playground, spray ground, tennis courts, and basketball courts. Mr. Clemmer also shared the story of how the park came to be named Veteran's Park. During a

training mission over the area, a military pilot lost power to his plane, but managed to steer the plane away from a community and crashed the plane in the undeveloped park land. His wife asked that the park be named after him, but a compromise was met and the park was named Veteran's Park.

### **Proclamations and Awards: None**

### **Public Appearance - None**

### **Program Presentation – Therapeutic Recreation Section – Metrolina Paralympic Sports Club:**

Chair Rob Brisley recognized Karla Gray, Therapeutic Recreation Manager, for a program presentation on Metrolina Paralympic Sports Club. Karla explained that this sports program was launched in 2007 to develop community-based sports clubs that recruit and involve youth and adults with physical and visual disabilities in sports and physical activity and for injured service members and veterans. The Paralympic Sports Club Metrolina incorporates TR Section programs, partnership programs, other community programs and regional programs. Karla shared information on each of these programs; particularly, sled hockey, tandem cycling, handcycling, archery, kayaking, and track and field. Karla concluded her program with information about the recent \$20,000 donation from BP and Mark Oil and used for the purchase of sports equipment. Questions and answers followed from the Commissioners. (**Note:** The entire PowerPoint presentation is included in the February, 2012, PRC Minute's Binder, **section 4a**, housed in the Director's Office.)

### **Appointments –Advisory Councils – Applicants**

**Central Region:** ***Motion was made** by Commissioner McRee to appoint **Brian H. Nolen** to a first full term, expiring 6/2015, which was seconded by Commissioner Pata and approved unanimously.*

**Cultural Arts:** ***Motion was made** by Commissioner Brisley to appoint **Ryan Deal** to a first full term, expiring 6/2015, which was seconded by Commissioner Barnhart and approved unanimously.*

**North Region:** ***Motion was made** by Commissioner Powell to appoint **George Richardson** to a first full term, expiring 6/2015, which was seconded by Commissioner Bryant and approved unanimously.*

**Senior Citizens:** ***Motion was made** by Commissioner Brisley to appoint **Patricia Love and Rosalind Taylor** to first full terms, expiring 6/2015, which was seconded by Commissioner Pata, and approved unanimously*

### **Director's Report**

**8a - 2012 Project Update:** Lee Jones, Division Director of Capital Planning, and Gwen Cook, Landscape Architect, provided an update on the Department's 2012 projects. Top 10 discussed were:

- American Legion Memorial Stadium
- Clarks Creek GW and I-485
- Four Mile Creek GW – Matthews
- Four Mile Creek Parking Lot
- LSC Steps at East Blvd
- McAlpine Creek GW, Toringdon Connector
- McDowell Creek GW – Alexander Chase Neighborhood Entrance

- Mecklenburg County Regional Sportsplex (Matthews)
- Romare Bearden Park

American Legion Memorial Stadium: Lee Jones reminded the board of tomorrow night's Stakeholders Community Workshop (February 16, 2012) at which the stakeholders will receive an update since the first workshop in November, 2011 and next steps. The meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. at the Armory Building on Armory Drive. In addition, Capital Planning met with the Elizabeth Neighborhood Association to update them.

Commissioner Tarte questioned the priority ranking of the Memorial Stadium project. Jim explained the BOCC project ranking methodology and his opinion that the process needed reviewing, particularly to be able to re-prioritize remaining projects in order to address changes, such as Memorial Stadium. Jim said that even though Memorial Stadium was not a project in the \$250 million bond referendum, based on current circumstances, it would be today. Jim said, \$3.8 million dollars has been allotted from the Capital Reserve budget to correct the safety issues of Memorial Stadium, which should be completed by the end of 2012. The next step will be to complete a Master Plan and move forward with renovation. It is unknown at this time how many bond dollars will be sold, but, Jim reminded that that 20% of the funding will have to be raised privately. Jim said that his approach would be to first bring his recommendations before the PRC and let the PRC's recommendations go to the BOCC.

Additional questions and discussion included:

Commissioner Smith: Asked about the completion of Lincoln Heights Park. Jim explained that, with the current project prioritization process a neighborhood park like Lincoln Heights might take 10 years to rise to the top of the project list, which is why the Department made Lincoln Heights the benefactor of the 2011 Hats Off for Parks event and were able to complete Phase I as a community build. The 2012 Hats Off event will benefit Hucks Road Nature Preserve.

Commissioner Powell: Concern regarding losing \$3.8 million investment in repairs in the renovations.

Commissioner Bryant: What will be discussed at the February 16 workshop? Jim said they would be getting an update similar to tonight's update to the PRC and next steps.

Commissioner Brisley: Is the Department keeping the Elizabeth Neighborhood in the loop? Yes, they are considered a key stakeholder.

Commissioner Barnhart: Who will make the decision between option 1 (keeping the historical components of the stadium) and option 2 (enlarging the playing field but losing the historical components)? Jim said the Historic Landmarks Commission is one of the key stakeholders and would be advocates for the historical value of Memorial Stadium.

**8b – NC Community Sailing and Rowing Center:** The agreement has been signed to allow the center to be open the same hours as the parks. The Department will continue to monitor for safety. Commissioner Barnhart asked that the Department take a look at the center's fee schedule.

**8c – Concealed Carry:** This statute will be discussed the County Executive Team and will be bundled with other ordinance changes due to the upcoming DNC. The new law creates few changes for the Department except how we will address the law versus County policy. Jim said he would keep the PRC posted on when it will go to the BOCC. Commissioner Powell asked that we make sure any changes to the camping ordinances would not affect prevent camping by our environmental educators.

**8d – Loblolly Pines:** Cutting has begun.

**8e – Dilworth Baseball Association:** Jim met with the Dilworth Baseball Association to discuss their request to enlarge the footprint of the Weddington Field in Freedom Park to match the new regulations for older little leaguers. Jim said he was against the plan because 1) it would put the right foul line too close to the sidewalk, and 2) it will require removing a serious number of trees once the fence is installed. Jim said he wants to make sure all the Freedom Park neighbors understand the issue and what is being suggested. Jim asked that they present to the Central Region Advisory Council at a future meeting and it may also need a true public meeting.

**8f – Beaver Damage:** The Natural Resources Division of the Department is currently addressing a Beaver issue at Davie Park where 196 trees have been damaged by beavers. Trappers will be hired to get in front of the problem.

### **PRC Chair Report/Commissioner Updates**

**Safety Drill:** A mock child rescue safety drill is planned for February 26, 2012 on Toby Creek Greenway. It will involve 911, police and fire.

### **Consent Items:**

***Motion was made** by Commissioner Tarte to approve all consent items, including the January 10, 2012, PRC Minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Pata and approved unanimously.*

### **Staff and PRC Reports and Requests**

**Zeiss Green Naming Request:** Gwen Cook, Landscape Architect, asked the Commission to endorse naming the circular lawn area near the “Spirit of Mecklenburg” sculpture of Captain James Jack on Little Sugar Creek Greenway at the intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> Street and Kings Drive to *Zeiss Green on Little Sugar Creek Greenway* after Dr. Tony Zeiss, President of Central Piedmont Community College. Gwen said Dr. Zeiss formed and led the Little Sugar Creek Action Committee for the past 12 years and engaged many community leaders to advocate for the LSC GW project. In addition, his involvement, along with others in the May 20<sup>th</sup> Society resulted in the Spirit of Mecklenburg sculpture of Captain James Jack becoming the first of 21 historical statues planned to make up the *Trail of History* along LSC GW. Gwen gave the Commissioners the opportunity to sign the naming petition. The Greenway Advisory Council endorsed the naming at their February 13, 2012 advisory council meeting. (**Note:** The application and petition is included in the February PRC Minute’s Binder, **Section 13**, housed in the Director’s office.)

***Motion was made** by Commissioner McRee to endorse the naming of the circular lawn area near the Spirit of Mecklenburg sculpture on Little Sugar Creek Greenway at the intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> Street and Kings Drive to *Zeiss Green on Little Sugar Creek Greenway*, which was seconded by Commissioner Barnhart and approved unanimously.*

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.