



The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met at Elon Recreation Center, 11401 Ardrey Kell Road, Charlotte, NC at 6 p.m.

PRC MINUTES
March 12, 2013

ATTENDANCE

PRC Present:

Rob Brisley, Chair
Kendel Bryant, Vice-Chair
Elaine Powell, Executive Secretary
Jim Garges, Park and Recreation Director
Ed Barnhart
Doug Burnett
Travis Dancy
Jude Harding
Tristan McMannis
Charlie McRee
Norman Mitchell
Joe Pata

PRC Absent:

Brenda McMoore
Sheryl Smith

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Chair Rob Brisley, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance and introductions of each commissioner.

Welcome and Introductions:

- a) Division Director **Lola Massad**, Community and Recreation Center Services, introduced **Joey Grahl** (South Corridor) Recreation Center Manager. After regards, Joey introduced **Carla Hoover, Elon Recreation Center Facility Manager** who introduced Elon Recreation Center Staff present for the meeting. Introduced were **Trinette Mumford**, **Craig Schmidt** and **Shannon Nolan**. Noted by Carla was the specialty of services at the site. Recreation Assistants of the facility participate in the creation of programming and have related degrees, which allows for robust offerings and support. Elon is the largest after school site for **Serve it Up Tennis**. Carla recounted the level of programming four years ago, when there were virtually no youth programs, and how this programming has been “built up from the ground”. Starting

with **SmartStart Sports**, Elon has also added **TAPP Programming** to grow the pre-school program. Amongst the many site partnerships, Elon shares a unique relationship with the Community School of the Arts. Also featured at the site are Yoga, Zumba and fencing.

Elon will be one of the three sites to begin hosting the Youth Disc Leave and also hosts Youth Girls groups and events for a large senior population that facilitates yoga and a book club. Elon staff are very hopeful that the Youth Disc Golf will take off.

Director Garges **requested** Carla share a brief history on the physical site and structures of the Elon Recreation Center. Carla shared, in addition to other information regarding the request, that Elon Recreation Center is the previously site of the Elon Boys home.

Chairman Rob Brisley **requested** Carla share a little bit about the High School Rugby leagues, tournaments and events at Elon. Carla shared that the event was a large scale success and commended **Greg Clemmer** and the **Park Rangers** present to assist with field coordination, which did an excellent job.

Commissioner Pata **indicated** there were over 1,000 players (plus families) which indicates the base for Rugby and its programming are growing. Commissioner Pata also noted that Elon will be hosting a college event. Commissioner Pata and James Alsop, Staff Liaison to the Athletics Advisory Council were invited to a congratulatory dinner event. Commissioner Pata indicated he is encouraged by the completion of the Matthews Sportsplex Complex and our ability to draw similar events in the future.

Director Jim Garges **commended** the staff at Elon and encourages them to continue the good work. Although the site is somewhat distant in proximity to Center City Charlotte, the sites use every square inch of their building to put together great programming.

Commissioner Barnhart requested information on what happens when the **Foxhole** goes out. Per Director Garges - it is already scheduled for a park in the master-plan. Budgeting has slowed down the process, but sometime in the future this site can expand. Carla indicated a map in the lobby depicts both the previous and future states of the site.

Reference Documents:
No Attachments

- b) Commissioner Ed Barnhart recognized the South Park Region Advisory Council and members present, which included citizens **Mike Mulder, Henk Van Etteken, Hermes Goudes** and Staff Liaison **Patricia Poteat**.

Proclamations and Awards:

None

Public Appearance

- 1) A Public Appearance was made by the Charlotte Tennis Association. Represented were Carla O'Connor, Todd Upchurch and two volunteer members of the Charlotte Tennis Association. **All three speakers are in opposition to the Proposed Increase in Tennis Fees.** A summary of their objections are on file in the **presentation "Tennis in the Parks"** as well as a transcript of the appearance, which are both available upon request.

- 2) A Public Appearance was made by members of the Charlotte running community.
- a. **Coach Kurt Niedenzu** appeared **in opposition** to the **suggesting paving of the course area at McAlpine Park**.
 - b. **Runner Tom Deming** appeared **neither in opposition or support** of the **McAlpine Greenway proposed changes**, but to advocate for continued inclusion of the running community in discussions. A transcript of the appearance is available upon request.

Program Presentation -:

Park Operations

Greg Clemmer, Park Operations Superintendent, provided the Park and Recreation Commission with updates on the following:

1. Park and Recreation transition from Park Watch to Park Rangers,
2. Utilization of iPads to increase efficiency,
3. Playground Guardian and updates on changes in the inspection process, and the
4. Park Ops Weekly Minute.

Questions & Answers followed by Commissioners.

Commissioner McMannis **requested** information on whether the Playground Guardian software geo-tags the location of the inspector.

Per Greg Clemmer – the software does not geo-tag, however with the inspection schedule structured as it is, staff are required to be on-site and through other means assurance can be provided that staff were on-site for the inspection. In addition, all iPads within this pool are linked, thereby reducing/eliminating instances of misuse or errors.

Commissioner Powell **inquired** whether this (transition) is a state requirement or something the Department did independently to increase efficiency.

Per Greg Clemmer – The decision was made by the Department independently because it is the “right and due-diligence” thing to do.

Commissioner Bryant **inquired** whether the increased efficiency (use of iPads) is helping in Park Operations meetings, etc.

According to Greg Clemmer – it has, and has made it easier to quickly communicate and transmit information.

Chairman Rob Brisley **inquired** whether you can take a picture with the iPad of the playground equipment and that would be part of that inspection.

As advised by Greg Clemmer – Yes.

Chairman Brisley and Commissioner Pata both inquired regarding the expansion plan.

Superintendent Clemmer indicated he would provide that information.

Chairman Rob Brisley **inquired** whether regarding summer recruitment and Part-time hiring for 2013

As reported by Greg Clemmer Park Operations engaged a new avenue this year by attending the recent CPCC Career Fair and overall attracted 200+ applicants through the experience.

Reference Documents:
No Attachments

Appointments – Advisory Councils – Applicants

Senior Citizen: ***Motion was made** by Commissioner Mitchell to appoint **Pat Love** to a unexpired term on the Senior Citizen Advisory Council, expiring 6/2015, which was seconded (Barnhart) and approved unanimously.*

Central Park Region: ***Motion was made** by Commissioner McRee to appoint **Howard Sweet** to a unexpired term on the Central Park Region Advisory Council, expiring 6/2015, which was seconded (Powell) and approved unanimously.*

Public Hearings

None

Advisory Council – Committee Reports

a) Fees and Charges Advisory Council

Mario Chang, Park and Recreation Budget Administration

On March 12, 2013 a recommendation from Park and Recreation Budget Administration was presented to the Fees & Charges Sub-Committee of the Park and Recreation Commission regarding a proposed increase in fees associated with tennis facilities, McDowell Nature Preserve Campground, and specified aquatic fees. Members of this Sub-Committee were notified in advance of this meeting and at the conclusion of the Sub-Committee meeting, support was offered to present the recommendation to the Park and Recreation Commission for its approval. The summation of this report is contained in the presentation ‘Fees and Charges FY2012’.

Commissioner Barhart **requested** information on how the new fees were derived.

Mario Chang and James Alsop indicated formal data collection and evaluation of fee structures and tennis facilities (rates) of comparable sites in the State provided basis and targets for new rates.

Chairman Rob Brisley **requested** information on the timeline of moving from the General Fund to the Capital Reserve Fund for Tennis.

Mario Chang provided an overview of the timeline and reasons for this transition.

Commissioner Harding expressed **concerns** regarding the Capital Reserve Fund for tennis and the past and current utilization towards their intended purposes of maintaining and improving tennis facilities.

Commissioner Pata expressed **concerns** regarding the timing of fee increases and the methodology, specifically, the absence of fee increases for a long period of time, resulting in a larger fee increase at one time.

Director Garges and James Alsop indicated there have been no fee increases since 2005. The current fiscal and budgeting cycle as well as the costs to maintain, repair and improve tennis facilities necessitates the sharp increase. Both additionally support Department obtained data that indicates the proposed increases are fair and in line with comparable facilities in the State.

Commissioner Harding expressed the **concerns** in general from the tennis athletic community regarding the fee increase and condition of facilities. Commissioner Harding provided to Director Garges and the PRC a [datasheet](#) titled “Fee Rebuttal” for review.

Commissioner McRee **requested clarification** that the fee structure was per court and not per player, which was confirmed as accurate.

Commissioner Pata **indicated** he is in agreement that cost recovery is important, but disagrees with the timing of these new fees and disagrees with the length of time since the last increase.

Commissioner Powell **requested** confirmation that the Aquatic fee increases would not negatively impact Senior Citizens and was instructed it would have little to no impact on programming for Seniors, by Genni Reel, Aquatics Manager.

Commissioner Burnette **requests** an overview of how the timing on fee increases is derived, which will be provided by Mario Chang.

Reference Documents:
7.a Fees and Charges FY2012.ppt

Motion was made by Commissioner Powell to accept the recommendation of Park and Recreation Budget Administration to increase fees for **McDowell Campground**, and to accept the recommendation of support from the Fees & Charges Sub-Committee. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Bryant.

Motion was made by Commissioner Mitchell to accept the recommendation of Park and Recreation Budget Administration to increase fees for **Aquatics**, and to accept the recommendation of support from the Fees & Charges Sub-Committee. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Bryant.

Motion was made by Commissioner Mitchell to accept the recommendation of Park and Recreation Budget Administration to increase fees for **Tennis**, and to accept the recommendation of support from the Fees & Charges Sub-Committee. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Bryant.

The motion to accept the recommendation of Park and Recreation Budget Administration to increase fees for McDowell Campground, Aquatics and Tennis was carried 10-1, with a vote of 10 in favor, 1 opposing (Harding), with Park and Recreation Commissioners Brenda McMoore and Sheryl Smith absent from the vote.

Director's Report

b) Director Jim Garges reported to the Park and Recreation Commission the meeting with County Executive Team to discuss the Proposed Smoking Policy took place on February 20, 2013. Director Garges indicated the County Executive team is supportive of polling the community to determine their thoughts on the matter. Questions therefore will be added to the Customer Service Survey, to garner feedback on this proposed policy.

Commissioner Powell **inquired** how many citizens will be surveyed.
Per Director Garges the County requirement is at minimum 1,000 citizens.

Commissioner Burnett **indicated** Pineville is doing some form of online survey for their park departments and inquired whether we could or would be doing something similar.

Director Garges **advised** that departments should be careful regarding data integrity and obtaining the validity of public opinion; this is not always supported by basic online survey tools.

Commissioner Barnhart **inquired** “Can we do both?” (Statistically valid and general public opinion).
Director Garges advised he would look into the available methodologies.

Commissioner Burnett **requested clarification** on whether the proposal was a Smoking Policy or Tobacco Use Policy?

Director Garges indicated it was a Tobacco Use Policy. However, the policy does include “smokeless” forms of tobacco.

Commissioner Mitchell **requested clarification** on whether the policy will still cover all park facilities, including golf facilities.

Director Garges indicated as proposed, it would still include golf facilities.

- c) Director Jim Garges indicated the **FY14 Budget Season-Kickoff** had and shared in short form a few of the challenges the County will face this cycle as well as the requested Budget Reduction Scenarios.
- d) Director Garges confirmed each member of the Park and Recreation Commission has received an Advocacy Packet and reiterated the importance of making contact with assigned County Commissioners and well as staying engaged with the citizenry on key issues.

Reference Documents:
No Attachments

PRC Chair Report/Commissioner Updates

Chairman Rob Brisley provided the following updates:

- 1) Revision of PRC Advisory Council leadership assignments,
- 2) Roberts Rules of Order for Meetings, to be reviewed by each Commissioner,
- 3) A reminder of the Group photo for April 9, 2013

Consent Items:

- (10) ***Motion was made*** by Commissioner Pata to approve of the February 12, 2013 PRC Minutes. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Harding and approved unanimously.
- (11) ***Motion was made*** by Commissioner McRee to acknowledge the Correspondence for the Park and Recreation Commission for February 12, 2013. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Pata and approved unanimously.
- (12) ***Motion was made*** by Commissioner McRee to accept the Minutes of the Park and Recreation Commission Advisory Council(s) submitted for February 12, 2013. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Pata and approved unanimously.

Staff Reports and Requests

None

PRC Reports and Requests

None

Adjournment

Motion was made by Commissioner Harding to adjourn. *This motion was seconded by Commissioner Bryant.*

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.