



The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met at Latta Plantation Park on May 13, 2014 at 5:30 p.m.

**PRC MINUTES**  
**May 13, 2014**  
**Team Building and Picnic**

**ATTENDANCE**

**PRC Present:**

Rob Brisley, Chair  
Elaine Powell, Executive Secretary  
Ed Barnhart  
Doug Burnett  
Brenda McMoore  
Charlie McRee  
Norman Mitchell  
Joe Pata  
Tristan McMannis  
Jude Harding

**Staff Present:**

Jim Garges, Director  
Michael Kirschman, Deputy Director  
Patsy Houston  
Lola Massad  
Peter Cook  
Lee Jones  
James Alsop  
Chris Matthews  
Jeff Robinson  
Joey Grahl  
Tom Lawing

**PRC Absent:**

Kendel Bryant, Vice-Chair (Vacation)  
Vacant Central 1  
Vacant Northern Towns

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chair Rob Brisley, which was followed by general introductions and dinner.

### **Welcome and Introductions:**

Director Jim Garges welcome everyone to the meeting.

### **Proclamations and Awards - Tom Lawing - Retirement**

Lola Massad, Community and Recreation Center Services Division Director, recognized Facility Manager Tom Lawing, and his family in attendance, for 32 years of service to the Park and Recreation Department. Tom will retire effective June 1. Joey Grahl, Recreation Manager, presented Tom with a service award and recognized his outstanding performance for the department. He will be greatly missed.

### **Director's Report**

**FY15 Budget:** Director Garges shared that the County Manager, Dena Diorio, has recommended most of what was requested by the Department, including a new park planner, 17 – 20 additional maintenance staff, funding for deferred park repairs as well as funding for the Senior Center merger. This kind of support from the County Manager is earned by the Department's performance in doing what we say we will do.

**Robert Haywood Morrison Gardens Dedication:** Director Garges shared that he attended the dedication of the Robert Haywood Morrison Gardens. This garden, located at the corner of Morehead Street and Harding Place on Little Sugar Creek Greenway, was a partnership between the Park and Recreation Department, the Carolinas Healthcare Foundation, the Trail of History and the Robert Haywood Morrison Foundation. The opening included the unveiling of a statue of Jane Wilkes who helped found Charlotte's first hospital in 1876 and also helped create one of the nation's first hospitals dedicated to African-Americans. The two hospitals eventually merged with what is today Carolinas HealthCare.

**Health Director:** Director Garges shared that he has met with the new County Health Director, Dr. Marcus Plescia. Dr. Plescia is very supportive of community health and the role Park and Recreation plays.

**Elaine Powell:** Director Garges gave a shout out of support and appreciate to PRC Elaine Powell for running for the Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners at large position. While Elaine, sadly, did not win, Jim expressed sincere gratitude for giving it her all and sharing with so many citizens the importance of Park and Recreation. Elaine truly makes a difference in people's lives. Next time, Elaine!

**Public Hearing - Budget:** Director Garges reminded the Commissioner of the June 11, 2014 Public Hearing. This is when the BOCC will receive comments on the County Manager's recommended budget. This meeting will take place in the Chamber at 700 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street at 6 p.m. in the Chamber. Jim expressed the importance of having members of the PRC sign up to express their support of the budget. Citizens should be able to sign up to speak at this meeting beginning April 26, 2014. Go to the County's website for more information.

### **PRC Reports and Requests**

Commissioner Powell reported a successful transfer of tadpoles from a neighbor's pond which was being drained. Special thanks to Stephen Hutchinson, Latta Nature Center Manager for his help.

Commissioner Mitchell reminded the group of the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Wall of Fame dedication and Reception on May 15, 2014 at 5 p.m. at the Dr. Charles L. Sifford Golf Course at Revolution Park. Honorees include Dr. Charles L. Sifford, Mr. James Black, Mr. Donald Littlejohn and our very own, former Park and Recreation Commissioner, the late Beverly Lawston.

### **Team Building**

Following the meeting, commissioners and staff participated in Segway tours and team building activities led by Latta Nature Preserve staff.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.