



The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met at the Reedy Creek Nature Center located at 2900 Rocky River Road, Charlotte, NC, on September 9, 2014 at 5:30 p.m.

**PRC MINUTES  
September 9, 2014**

**ATTENDANCE**

**PRC Present:**

Rob Brisley, Chair  
Elaine Powell, Executive Secretary  
Ed Barnhart  
Norman Mitchell  
Jude Harding  
Sheryl Smith  
Joe Pata  
Charlie McRee  
Tristan McMannis  
    Jim Garges  
    Leslie Johnson

**PRC Absent:**

Kendel Bryant, Vice-Chair  
Doug Burnett  
Brenda McMoore  
Aubin Guinness

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Executive Secretary Elaine Powell, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance.

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Each of the Park and Recreation Commissioners, staff and visitors introduced themselves.

**Proclamations and Awards**

**Program/Staff Presentations: Nature Preserves and Natural Resources**

**Filming Guidelines:** Chris Matthews, Division Director of Nature Preserves and Natural Resources, gave a short presentation on filming in nature preserves and parks. His presentation included a copy of the department guidelines (which includes the fees approved by the Board of County Commissioners) and the permit required by everyone, in any park or nature preserve, who wish to photograph, video or film. Chris shared the process used by the department when

considering the issuance of a filming permit. This process includes meeting with the producer, understanding what they need, completing the necessary paperwork, providing the fee schedule, determining where they will be filming and review of the desired location by nature preserve staff. No filming is allowed in sensitive areas of the nature preserves. All filming locations must be left as found.

Commissioner Powell asked for information regarding revenue from filming. Chris Matthews responded that all revenue from filming goes into the general revenue account. Filming revenue is unpredictable and difficult to budget.

(**Note:** The guidelines and permit as well as a PowerPoint presentation are included in the September PRC Minutes Binder, **Section 13a**, housed in the Director's Office.)

### **Appointments – Advisory Council – Applicants**

**Athletics:** **Motion was made** by Commissioner Pata to appoint **Andrew Brown** to an unexpired term, expiring June, 2017 and to defer appointment consideration of **Sreekanth Namaha** based on his residence outside of Mecklenburg County, which was seconded and approved unanimously.

**Golf:** **Motion was made** by Commissioner Mitchell to appoint **Deloris Taylor** to an unexpired term, expiring June, 2017, which was seconded and approved unanimously.

**North:** **Motion was made** by Commissioner Powell to make a special reappoint of **Aaron McKeithan** to a fourth full term, expiring June, 2017, which was seconded and approved unanimously.

### **Public Hearings: - Naming of County Park Property**

Mike Campbell, Central Region Park Manager, introduced guest from the Wilmore and South End Neighborhood Associations. The Wilmore Neighborhood Association submitted the required petition to name the park property at the corner of Kingston Avenue and South Tryon Streets to “Wilmore Centennial Park at South End” in honor of the neighborhood’s centennial. The president of the Wilmore Neighborhood Association shared that this name speaks to how they are partnering and building a sense of community with the South End neighborhood.

Director Garges said these types of parks are needed and the goal is to grow them in terms of acreage. He supported the naming and moving the request forward to the Board of County Commissioners.

Commissioner Powell asked if any alternate names had been recommended. The president of the Wilmore Neighborhood Association, Justin Lang, said that throughout all of their presentations and discussions, they have not met with opposition to the name or alternate name suggestions.

Commissioner Barnhart inquired about the size of the park and if a land swap was possible for a larger piece of land. The response from Director Garges was  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre and that a land swap could happen as it has happened in other circumstances.

Commissioner Mitchell asked what some of the amenities would be in this park.

Director Garges answered that in the beginning it would probably be gardens and benches, but the Department and neighbors will work with Ted Duncan of Stantec to come up with a good plan that would work now and accommodate future growth.

Mike Campbell noted that all the requirements of the naming petition were met except that the name is somewhat duplicative of the current Wilmore Park, however, if this becomes an issue, the current Wilmore Park could be renamed. This acknowledgement and option to rename the current Wilmore Park is included in the petition. Director Garges urged this process to begin in the near future.

**Motion was made** by Commissioner McRee to recommend the naming of the park property at the corner of Kingston Avenue and S. Tryon Street to “Wilmore Centennial Park at South End”, which was seconded by Commissioner Smith and approved unanimously.

### **Director’s Report**

NRPA Congress: The conference planning is in full swing mode and looks like registration is at an all time high. Some highlights are:

- Onsite Institutes
- Presentations by Park Staff
- National Community Volunteerism Award to Tony Zeiss
- Reaccreditation
- The Exhibit Hall

Jim encouraged everyone to take advantage of all the opportunities and praised staff for a job well done!

Commissioner Mitchell asked for an information sheet on the department to have on hand at the conference. Jim responded that we would make this available.

Tobacco Ban: The BOCC public hearing was held on September 2, 2014 and it was hoped that the ordinance would be brought to a vote at the September 17, 2014 BOCC meeting, however, this has been delayed until October due to concerns with some of the language, tobacco use at golf courses and concerns expressed by one of the towns that this is a health policy that reaches out above the town’s control. Also, Commissioner Fuller would like more time to talk to all the town mayors. Jim advised that he would keep the PRC informed.

- Commissioner Barnhart asked for clarification regarding enforceability? Jim responded that it would be a “health policy”, but enforceable.
- Commissioner Pata asked if the ordinance would be one or two ordinances. Jim responded that the health policy would be one policy but would include both a smoking ban and a tobacco ban. The tobacco ban would be enforced in parks.
- Commissioner Mitchell asked if CHS has addressed the issue of where they will direct family members of patients and staff to smoke when the health policy is in place. Jim responded that he has not received a direct response, but that if the policy goes into affect, they will not be able to direct people to the greenway.
- Commissioner Barnhart also expressed concern over the lack of response from CHS on how they plan to handle smokers; the fear being that they may not handle it and the Department’s Park Rangers will be left to enforce the policy. Commissioner Barnhart felt they should respond with a place and a policy. Jim felt that was fair and will pass this request along.

Land Acquisition: The Department continues to work on acquiring as much property as possible, with assistance from the Trust for Public Land.

Torrence Creek Greenway: The Torrence Creek Greenway opened today and was well attended by many, including several PRC, Leslie Johnson, Karen Bentley, Jill Swain and other elected officials.

Newtown Playground Build: This playground build at Park Road Park is scheduled for the end of October. There will be three volunteer shifts a day. Please contact Lori Saylor at [lori.saylor@mecklenburgcountync.gov](mailto:lori.saylor@mecklenburgcountync.gov) to volunteer.

### **PRC Chair Report**

Executive Committee Nominations: Commissioner Mitchell deferred to the October 21, 2014 meeting.

Assault on McMullen Creek Greenway: Commissioner Barnhart asked that we possible address this in the South Charlotte Weekly with safety tips when using the greenway alone. Jim responded that this was a good idea and will consider a response after the Department presents the crime report to the Executive Team and the BOCC.

### **Consent Items**

***Motion was made*** by Commissioner Pata to approve all consent items, including the August 12, 2014 PRC minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Smith and approved unanimously.

### **PRC Reports and Requests**

Renaissance Golf Course: Commissioner Mitchell expressed concern regarding repairs needed at the Renaissance Golf Course by the City of Charlotte. Jim explained that part of this golf course is built on an old land fill, from before there were many regulations on dumping. As a result there is severe movement in parts of the course resulting in damage to the course. The city is responsible for those repairs but struggle due to budgeting issues for the repairs. There last repair resulted in some damage to a recently repaired golf path. The Department is going to work with Tim Richards from the Department of Engineering and the Director of LUESA, Ebenezer Gujjarlapudi, in order to access the situation and work towards setting responsibilities and keeping lines of communication open. This will be important to correctly building an approved 3-hole learner course at Renaissance as well as addressing future repair issues.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7 p.m., which was followed by a nature hike led by Pepe Chavez.