

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

The Zebulon Parks and Recreation Advisory Board will meet Monday, July 21st at 6 PM.

This meeting will begin at Zebulon Town Hall, 1003 N. Arendell Avenue.

Prior to the meeting beginning the Advisory Board will appoint a chair and vice-chair.

Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of Agenda

3. Public Comment

Public comments are limited to 3 minutes. Anyone wishing to speak must sign up by 5:50 PM. Public comment may be limited to 15 minutes.

4. Consent Agenda

A. Minutes: March 17th, 2025 (pages 3-6)

B. Minutes: June 16th, 2025 (pages 7-8)

5. Presentation & Dinner

A. Parks and Recreation Month Recognition

The Mayor will celebrate Parks and Recreation Month with the Advisory Board by reading the Parks and Recreation Month Proclamation.

B. Triangle Trails Update

Triangle Trails will provide the Advisory Board with an update regarding the Wander App.

6. Old Business

A. Land Acquisition Update (pages 9-10)

The Advisory Board will receive an update regarding land acquisition and the land acquisition policy. No action by the Board is required.

C. Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Update (pages 11-13)

The Advisory Board will receive an update regarding the adopted FY 26 Budget. No action by the Board is required.

7. New Business

A. Program Plan (pages 14-16)

Staff will present the framework for a Program Plan and will engage with the Advisory Board to categorize programs which will assist in the continued development of the plan. Staff will return to the Advisory Board in August for further discussions.

B. Holiday Event (pages 17-18)

Staff will provide an update to the Advisory Board regarding plans for a Holiday event. Staff is seeking feedback and engagement from the Advisory Board regarding the staff's proposal.

8. Open Discussion

9. Department Update

A. Parks Update

B. Recreation Update

C. Next Meeting: August 18th, 2025

1. Program Plan

2. FY 26 Action Plan

10. Adjournment

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

The Zebulon Parks and Recreation Advisory Board will meet Monday, March 17th at 6 PM.

This meeting will be held at Zebulon Town Hall, 1003 N. Arendell Avenue.

The following Advisory Board members were present: Brandon Wiggins, Dexter Privette, Marcus Bennett, Quinton Taylor

Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order

Brandon Wiggins called to order at 6:12 PM

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve: Marcus Bennett

2nd: Quinton Taylor

All in favor.

3. Public Comment

Quinton read a public comment that was sent to him from Tiana Perry Reed the day after they spoke at the BOC meeting. She stated, "I'm a resident of the town that was at the last meeting. You and your colleague did an amazing job. You guys really did your research, and I think have your priorities straight! I wanted to make sure you knew we thought you guys were on target! Feel free to share this feedback with the rest of your board if you see fit. Thank you for your service on the board and have a good week!"

4. Consent Agenda

A. January 27th (pg. 2-8)

Motion to approve consent agenda: Quinton

2nd: Dexter Privette

All in favor.

5. New Business

A. Financial Aid Program (pg. 9)

Sheila Long stated the youth financial aid program started as an initiative from PARAB. Sheila reviewed the amount distributed to date and collected donations to date. Sheila reviewed updates the department would like to make to the policy.

- Offer more description regarding extenuating circumstances such as sudden unforeseen change or time frame may not be able to apply for government assistance.
- Make sure it's clear that extenuating circumstances are for Zebulon residents
- Extenuating circumstances are once per year.
- As currently written, special circumstances will go to the Parks and Rec Advisory Board. If they put in requests and don't have a meeting before the program starts, it creates a bit of

an issue where they would have to make a meeting for each request. Updates allow the chair and vice chair to review those applicants who have an extenuating circumstance with a turnaround of two weeks.

Brandon asked about unforeseen financial changes, and are they required to give proof of burden or are we taking their word for it. Sheila stated the policy simply asks for a letter where the applicant can plead their case. Brandon asked if they're only eligible for it once per year or once in general. Sheila stated the policy recommends it once per year, but the advisory board can recommend otherwise.

Dexter asked if only the chair and vice chair would be approving. Sheila stated yes for extenuating circumstances. Sheila said they can make a different approach if they would like. Nick Rummage clarified it's only so that they don't have to call a special meeting.

Quinton and Brandon agree that Sheila should add in the policy that there may be follow-up questions.

Sheila highlighted additional updates:

- Clarification was added to support offering a payment plan should requests be denied. Plans need to be fulfilled before the program ends.

Brandon asked how many we consider each specific time frame? Sheila said as many as we have funding for. Marcus asked if there is a limit to how much money that can be issued. Sheila said there is no limit. Marcus stated he has more encompassing comments that he will circle back on this during the open discussion. Sheila asked if there's any questions about payment plans? There were no questions.

Quinton: motion to recommend adoption of the youth program financial aid policy as presented and including a statement that additional questions may be asked regarding extenuating circumstance requests.

2nd: Marcus

All in favor.

B. Volunteer Appreciation

Sheila shared it was so their action plan to discuss volunteer appreciation. In total just under 300 volunteers support our programming. Sheila stated she would love to open the floor about what the PARAB would like to see how to support or recognize volunteers. Staff would like to work together collaboratively. Impactful recognition.

The Advisory Board engaged in a discussion regarding recognition opportunities. A summary of discussion points included:

- A banquet may be challenging with space and budget.
- A floating event could serve more people
- Find ways to highlight volunteers at existing events and on a "bigger stage"

- Offer plaques, certificates, and/or T-shirts
- A volunteer appreciation family field day could include their family members.
- Effort should be personal
- Don't create something that will require more dedication of time from volunteers.
- Consider hearing from volunteers about how they want to be recognized.

The advisory board wants to revisit the discussion after the retreat.

C. Advisory Board Retreat

Staff is asking the Advisory Board to provide dates they are available in May for a Saturday field trip.

The Board discussed available dates in May. May 17 looks like it may work for everyone.

We will visit Knightdale Station and Harper Park.

6. Open Discussion

Marcus wanted to go back to the financial aid topic. Opportunity and pleasure to meet former NBA head coach now assistant coach Nate McMillan. They spoke about the Nate McMillan Foundation involved in parks and rec. There may be some interest in engaging McMillan's Foundation in Zebulon, and he may be interested in coming to a P&R Advisory Board meeting. There could be more team sponsorship or financial aid support opportunities. Sheila stated our biggest athletic needs would be investment in facilities, staff, resources to build up the community. We are currently limited by facility and staff. Marcus stated he will relay our needs to Nate. Sheila stated if his availability doesn't fit just to coming to an advisory board meeting, we can find a way to facilitate good discussion, even if it is Zoom. Marcus stated Nate lives in Raleigh, so his home is here.

The Board spoke about how awesome this opportunity is and thanked Marcus. Marcus asked if there's anything we can bring back to Nick? Sheila would love to discuss the state of athletics and see if there is room for collaboration there.

Dexter asked about Brandon and Quinton's proposal at the BOC meeting about land acquisition. Brandon stated there was no vote. He stated he wanted to let BOC and town know that we are here and working. They are working together to contribute to parks and recreation, and they are serious about it. The presentation highlighted the importance of acquiring land to accommodate the exponential growth that we're experiencing.

The advisory board engaged in discussion about the next steps, continuing to build a bridge with the Commissioners, and how to see the effort progress. Discussion included consideration of individual meetings with commissioners, recommendation of a resolution, and participation in meetings. Dexter stated that he would like to see action taken and movement on land acquisition.

Motion to schedule a meeting with the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem to discuss the next steps and consider a resolution for the work session on April 17 or a future meeting: Quinton

2nd: Marcus

In favor: Brandon, Quinton, Marcus

Opposed: Dexter

7. Staff Updates

Sheila announced Chloe Chappel has resigned and introduced new staff:

- Carrie Corbett as Program coordinator,
- J'Kyra Brown as new Athletics Coordinator,
- Miranda Saunders as a Maintenance Technician.

A. General Department Update

- a) Programs & Events
- b) Athletics & Parks

Sheila shared a summary of staff needs for the department based on statistics for program participation in different fiscal years, difference in population vs. programs offered. When we talk about the program plan, we will discuss how we work to fill service gaps. We haven't been able to grow anywhere near where we've grown in the past and that's because our capacity has not grown at the same rate as the population. We have focused on maximizing the resources we have, but we are reaching the point we can't grow capacity in some areas much more without additional resources. The summary reviewed park maintenance level of service changes and the growth in work orders. The summary also reviewed facilities and the organizational chart. It also highlighted what the general purpose of staff positions. This summary was originally prepared for new management.

LRP continues to move along. Getting close to 100% designs where we can get bids and do groundbreaking during the summer. Went back and forth a bit on bathrooms, original design only one male and female bathroom. 2 bathrooms will not be enough, going to go over budget.

B. Action Plan:

- a) April: Spring Fest Engagement Opportunity

Sheila spoke about shirts and offered an opportunity for PARAB members to join our activities at the event. Sheila stated If you want to have an individual meeting with me during the month of April to let her know.

- b) May Meeting: May 20th

May, do department update. Amy bringing program planning policy.

- i) Department Update
- ii) Program Plan

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Marcus

2nd: Quinton

All in favor.

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

The Zebulon Parks and Recreation Advisory Board will meet Monday, June 16th at 6 PM.

This meeting will begin at Zebulon Town Hall, 1003 N. Arendell Avenue.

The Advisory Board members in attendance were Brandon Wiggins, Quinton Taylor, Marcus Bennett, Wendy Watson, and Garrett Underhill

Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order

6:10 PM – Meeting called to order by Brandon Wiggins

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to remove budget update presentation from the agenda: Wendi Watson

2nd: Marcus Bennett

All in favor

Motion to approve amended agenda: Marcus

2nd: Wendi

All in favor

3. Presentation

A: Site Tour

Nick Rummage and Amy Hayden will lead the Advisory Board on a tour of Harper Park and Knightdale Station Park in Knightdale, NC.

While transitioning to the tour, Marcus stated he would like to connect Nate McMillan, NBA coach, with staff and the advisory Board for a future meeting. Nick recommended Marcus contact Sheila to schedule a meeting. Suggested that if a summertime meeting would be needed for Nate, that the July scheduled meeting may work.

Harper Park

Nick gave an overview of the park as they walked through as a group. Highlighted points and discussion included:

- \$230,000 private investment built the playground.
- Poured in place play surfacing mixed with areas of mulch
- Accessible playgrounds and play surfaces.
- Design and use of pickleball courts

- Pointed out that park funding can be achieved with public and private funds.
- The park is 4.7 acres and is approximately the size Zebulon would look for to establish neighborhood parks.

Knightdale Station Park

Members explored the park individually and met back at the amphitheater to discuss.

Highlighted points and discussion included:

- The park is 66-71 acres and compared the size to Zebulon Community Park.
- Community Park is slightly smaller but the design and use is different.
 - There is an opportunity to expand what is developed and to redevelop the park in phases.
- There are a lot of open spaces.
- The parks infrastructure is designed to support community events.
 - Limited to no impact on major transit routes.
- There are multiple ways to enter and exit the park.
- The park supports general park users, programs athletic events, and special events.
- The park is surrounded by development including restaurants, offices, shopping and neighborhoods.

4. Adjournment

Motion: Wendi

2nd: Garrett

All in favor.

7:40 PM meeting adjourned.

Land Acquisition Update

Background

Master Plan

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Play Zebulon, was adopted by the Board of Commissioners September 13, 2021 following community engagement and input from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. The plan identifies land acquisition as a priority and identify zones for future parks based on service gaps.

How We Play: Master Plan Check In

How We Play was an evaluation and engagement initiative consistent with the Play Zebulon: Parks and Recreation Master Plan to study how our community uses our parks and play spaces so we can create the recreational experience our town deserves. This process took place in the Fall of 2023.

How We Play allowed us to check in with our growing community and confirmed that Play Zebulon remained consistent with community needs.

Regarding land acquisition, the process found that continuing to address growth by providing additional neighborhood parks, as well as large community-based facilities that offer new opportunities remained a community priority.

FY 2026 Budget Feedback

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

In the Fall of 2024, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board began Fiscal Year 2026 budget discussions. The Advisory Board's feedback recognizes a need to ensure the facilities are available for our future residents and that we are continuing to invest in our current park system. They presented land acquisition as a top priority to the Board of Commissioners at the March 2025 Work Session.

Community FY 2026 Budget Survey

In the Spring of 2025, the Town of Zebulon engaged the community to learn what the residents prioritized in the budget. The Town Manager presented the findings to the Board of Commissioners at the May 22nd Work Session. The top two priorities from the community survey were to renovate our existing parks and to build new parks/greenways.

Acquired Property

Since the Master Plan's adoption, the following property has been acquired by the Town of Zebulon:

- Downtown: Acquired in Fiscal Year 2024. Use is to be determined.
 - 200 E Horton St (.4 acres)

- 200 E Vance St (.46 acres)
- Community Park: Acquired Spring 2025 for future expansion. **NEW!**
 - 305 & 307 S Arendell Ave (1.88 acres)

Happening Now

Land Acquisition Policy

The Town of Zebulon is developing a parkland acquisition policy to help guide community, staff and leadership when identifying and acquiring parcels for park development. The policy will use community survey feedback and anticipated development areas to update our vision map.

Initial Feedback from the survey has indicated:

- Survey themes: regional/community facilities/parks, affordability, and connectivity
- Top 2 Desired Features
 - Regional, Community-Wide Parks
 - Expand Existing Parks
- Top 3 New Park Considerations
 - New Facilities
 - Bike/Ped/Trail Access
 - Affordability
- How far will you walk to parks?
 - 0.5 – 1 mile
- How far will you bike to parks?
 - >1 miles
- If you could add a recreation program, what would it be?
 - Concerts/Music Events
 - Pickleball
 - Disc Golf
- Top 3 recreation facilities you would like in Zebulon next?
 - Greenways/Trials/Walking Loops
 - Swimming Pool/Splash Pad
 - Playgrounds

Once a draft is complete the Parks and Advisory Board will review the document and make recommendations. The Board of Commissioners will review the final draft for consideration of adoption.

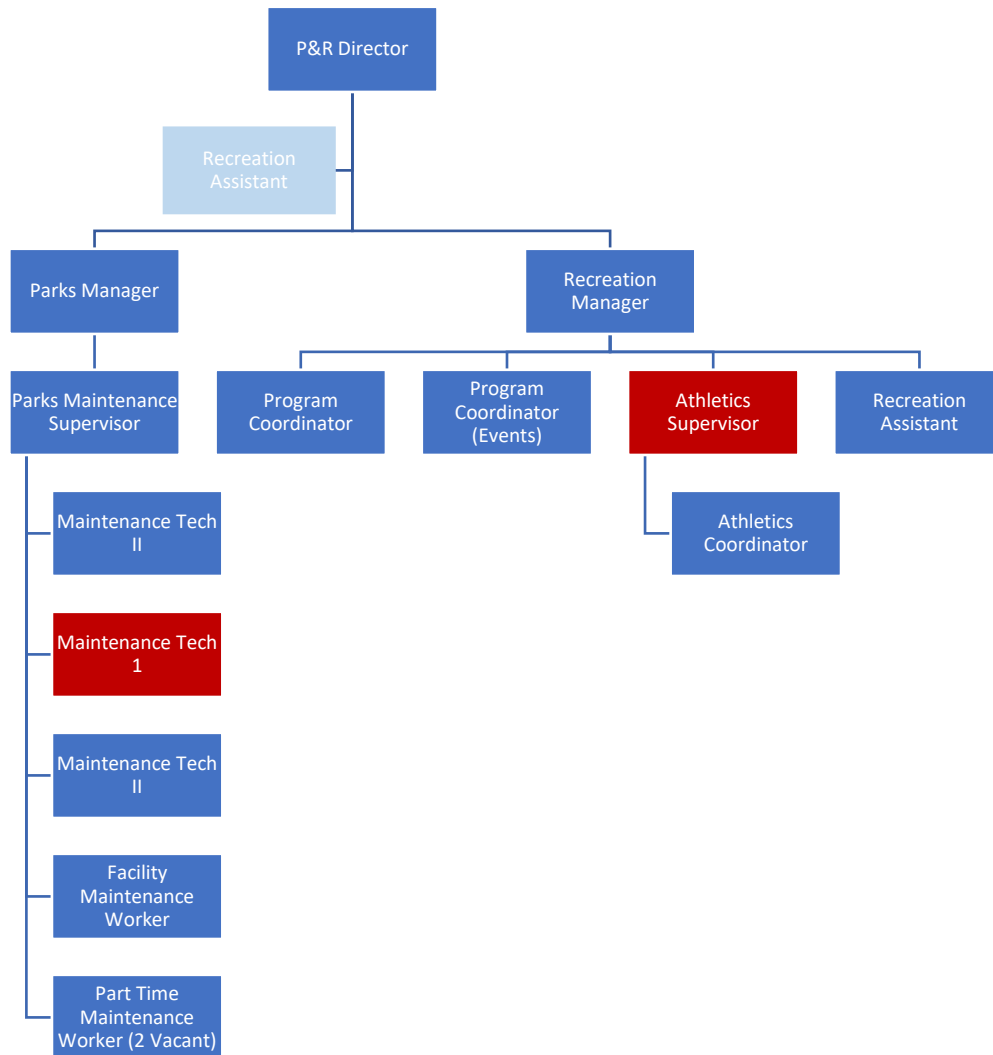
FY 2026 Budget

The Board has adopted a budget with \$1.5 million for land acquisition.

Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Update

Background Greenway Development

Revised Organization Chart



Key Changes

- Recreation Assistant is Vacant
 - Redistribute Admin task across the Org. Chart
 - Use part time staff to fill gaps
- Repurpose recreation assistant to create Athletic Supervisor
 - Move Athletics to the Recreation division
- Hire a Maintenance Technician
 - Additional Greenway
 - Little River Park Development

- Athletic, program, event, and rental support

Program Plan

BACKGROUND

As the Town of Zebulon's population increases, demographic and recreational needs change; parks, green spaces, facilities, and programming opportunities need to be adaptable and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure community needs are being met. Opportunities are available to evolve programming in line with the Zebulon Parks and Recreation vision, along with guidelines to follow when establishing programs within the Town of Zebulon.

Program planning standards help to set goals, define operational policies to ensure consistency, effectiveness, and efficiency, as well as evaluate program success. The standards recommended in this manual are tools for establishing a wide variety of programs which reflect the outcomes desired and expected by Zebulon citizens. This is a living plan that is reviewed and updated at least annually and is the department's guide to ensure the recreation needs of the citizens are being met, or at minimum on track to meeting this goal.

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The Parks and Recreation Master provides guidance to develop a program plan. The program plan for the Department provides general direction for recreation programming and includes both short- and long-term planning goals. The following action items were recommended for consideration:

- Identify priorities for increasing programming to include:
 - Environmental Education
 - Fitness/Wellness
 - Youth Sports
 - Youth Programs
 - Seniors
 - Special Events
 - Cultural Arts
- Implementation plan:
 - Start with an incremental development of new programs for the first couple of years with a limited number of programs being directly offered by Town staff.
 - Continue contracting for the majority of programs for the first couple of years to lower the financial risk.
 - Start with growing programs that can be offered in existing facilities or parks and do not require extensive capital investment.
 - Enhance key performance measures to gauge program success.
- Programming should include virtual options in addition to traditional in-person offerings.
- Determine the role of other organizations and recreation providers in the area. Establish key partnerships with other providers to expand program offerings.
- Clearly identify areas of programmatic responsibility to ensure that there is not overlap in resource allocation.

- Establish clear staffing and operational budget requirements to support the program plan.

Programming Philosophy Objectives:

- Provide recreation program and service opportunities to all ages, incomes, abilities, gender, and ethnic groups in an equitable and inclusive manner.
- Provide recreation program and service opportunities in areas of interest that are identified as a need in the community.
- Partner with other providers to bring a full spectrum of recreation programs and services to the community.
- Recreation program and service offerings will be delivered on a community wide basis and a neighborhood level where appropriate.
- Recreation and program service offerings will respond to identified community needs in a cost effective and efficient manner.

Program Classification System

A key aspect of developing a program plan is determining the long-term role of the Town in the delivery of recreation programs and services based on three classifications. The placement of programs into these three classifications does not indicate the overall importance of these activities in the community but rather the role of the Department in providing these programs.

- Core Programs – are the program categories that are a primary responsibility of the Parks and Recreation Department to provide as Town based activities.
- Secondary Programs – are the program categories that are a lower priority to be provided directly by the Department but may be offered by other individuals or partner organizations through direct contract with the Town.
- Support Programs – are the program categories that are not a priority for the Department to be provided directly to the community but where the Town may provide support through facilities and promotion of activities for other organizations.

Framework for the Program Plan

The framework of Zebulon's program plan will include:

- An inventory of facility, staff, and partners
- An inventory and analysis of existing programs
 - Identify gap
 - Identify strategy to grow level of service
- Outline program development, implementation, and evaluation

Advisory Board Feedback

Staff is requesting to engage the Advisory Board in classifying program categories. Please select which program classification you feel best fits each program category. We will consolidate responses and have discussion.

Program Category	Core Programs	Secondary Programs	Support Programs
Youth Sports			
Youth Programs			
Special Events			
Fitness/Wellness			
Seniors			
Self-Directed			
Cultural Arts			
Adult Sports			
Environmental Educ.			
Teens			
Aquatics			
Special Needs			
General Interest			
Social Services			
Education			

Holiday Event

Background

With the Parks and Recreation Department's requested FY 2026 budget. Staff presented that the recreation division intended to focus heavily on right sizing services to respond to growth. Staff seeks to maximize reach by refining efforts and considering the impact of programs. Staff will enhance and/or adapt existing program efforts and consolidate overlapping experiences. The division proposed to offer 2 flagship events, options for consideration are:

- Spring Fest and Candy Cane Lane
- Spring Fest and a Christmas Parade
- Spring Parade and Candy Cane Lane

The operational impact of events such as street festivals and parades are substantial for other town departments while also impacting businesses, transit, and residents. Offering Candy Cane Lane and the Christmas Parade is not sustainable. The infrastructure of our streets and Zebulon Community Park cannot safely support a parade in the manner it was offered traditionally.

Elements of Past Holiday Events

Candy Cane Lane

- Youth performers
- Bounce houses
- Kid Activities/crafts (civic groups)
- Music/Bands
- Santa
- Vendors
- Food trucks
- Downtown business booths
- Tree lighting
- Caroling
- Princess singalongs & photo opportunity

Christmas Parade

- Youth performers
- Decorated floats
- Car clubs & tractors
- Bands
- Candy/Swag distribution
- Civic groups
- Santa
- Business exposure

The Board of Commissioners are interested in seeing traditional experiences to be considered in the Holiday event. There is an overlap in the experiences offered in both Candy Cane Lane and the Christmas Parade. Staff is preparing a proposal to offer a hybrid experience.

2025 Holiday Event Recommendation

- Outcomes:
 - Maximize Community Experience
 - Minimize Impacts on Resources
- Hybrid: Focus on Candy Cane Lane & Integrate key elements of Christmas Parade:
 - Regional draw
 - Staff is experienced in managing logistics and command coordination
 - Offers more visitor experiences
 - Extended event hours
 - Engage more performers
 - Seek opportunities to enhance civic group involvement/support

- Expand the marketing/outreach
- Explore event planning/implementation partners

The Board of Commissioners asked staff to speak with the Chamber of Commerce and the Zebulon Main Street Board to see if and how they may be able to assist. Staff has met with both and there is interest in working together in an advisory capacity while evaluating how it is best and appropriate to involve each organization based on goals and capacity.

Staff is seeking to engage the Advisory Board in discussion and make recommendations regarding moving forward with the 2025 holiday event.