

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

The Zebulon Parks and Recreation Advisory Board met Monday, February 26th, 2024 at 6 PM.

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

The following Advisory Board members were present: Erica Parsons, Wendi Watson, Quinton Taylor, Dexter Privette, and Garret Underhill

Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order

Quinton called to order at 6:01 pm

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda: Dexter

2nd: Wendi

All in favor

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.

In summary, Scott Carpenter spoke for public comment. He lives in downtown on E. Horton St. He walks to many places including with his dogs to the park and event to his dentist, etc. He came to speak about parking. 201 E Horton St. and 200 E Vance St. Heard that parks and rec wants to put a park on this street, including the Chamblee house where the first baby was born. When he looks at the master plan he doesn't see anything about this area being turned into a parking. He and his neighborhood wants to see the house preserved and be an area for quiet gathering and to learn about Zebulon. Invites the board to meet with him and speak about this at either a coffee shop or even his house.

4. Consent Agenda

1. November 20th, 2023 Minutes

2. January 22 Minutes

Motion to approve consent: Dexter

2nd: Garrett

All in favor

5. Old Business

1. Code of Conduct

The Board will review the provided Code of Conducts and provided recommendations to staff.

Quinton welcomed Sheila to speak about the Code of Conducts. She provided codes for the community center, parent and spectators, and coaches. We are looking for feedback from the board on these items. Changes made to the community center's is to make sure we use consistent language.

Wendi had a question about the dress code and wanted to know what constitutes offensive clothing. Sheila stated we follow a lot of the rules as the public school system. We use a lot of the same facilities, and this is for fairness and consistency. Stated we can come back and cite the dress code for further clarity.

Erica asked if this is part of what the parents sign during online registration. Sheila stated the parent code of conduct is already attached to online registration and the other code of conducts will be available online. The center's is posted on site.

Staff made no changes to coach code of conduct, but wanted Board feedback on it. Erica wanted to know if there were any changes at all. Sheila stated there were none and just wanted to bring it back to the board to see if there was anything they wanted to update.

For the parent and spectator code of conduct Quinton highlighted that he appreciates the bullet that states the sports are for children and not adults. The Board did not recommend any changes.

Staff will return with the Community Center Code of Conduct.

2. Proposed Budget

Staff will provide the Advisory Board an update on the discussion with the Board of Commissioners at their February Work Session regarding the FY 2025 Operating Budget request. Staff has provided a copy of the drafted budget memo. The Board will engage in discussion regarding the budget.

Sheila stated she presented the proposed budget to the board of commissioners at their last board session and wanted to bring it back to see if they had any additional feedback now that they have had time to consider the information that was shared. Limitations in the capacity of staff, space, and general resources will continue to impact staff's ability to serve the community. Many people want the same access to the community center gym at the same time. Currently play basketball for our rec league six days a week. 39% increase in athletic participation this year. Looking anywhere we can for space to play, especially soccer. 78.6% increase in spring soccer from two years ago. Our budget proposal reflects all of this. We are trying to be as flexible as possible. If we can identify any hole in the schedule, we're trying to use that to accommodate highly requested activities such as pickle ball or open gym. The Community Center has been budgeted to have only one employee in the evenings. We need two in the building so there can be one responsible for working the front with customers and phone, and the other dedicated to the building. It is not safe and overdemanding for only one person in the evenings. For parks maintenance, we are preparing for Little River Park to be developed and further expansion. 3 staff, 120 hours per week. 8 hours each week for travel, training, sick leave, etc.

Sheila included community and coalition support. Wants to bring in part timer or intern helping us build these relationships. People trying to do great things in the community, and we are trying to keep up. As parks and programming continues to grow, we want to be able to keep us with these community efforts.

Wendi stated she appreciates the relationship and being supportive of these community coalitions. Stated Sheila was very detailed in the growth of the community for our budget and is glad she reiterated it this evening.

6. New Business

1. Cost Recovery Policy

The Cost Recovery Policy is reviewed and updated every 3 years. The policy is up for review this year. It will be submitted with the Fee Schedule to the Board of Commissioners during the Budget process. The Board will review the provided Code of Conducts and provided recommendations to staff.

Sheila shared recommended changes based off of experiences over the last three years. Sheila highlighted updates to fee waivers and scholarships, stating that payment plans can be made for extenuating circumstances for those not qualifying for financial aid. Seeing an increase in people that live outside the town limits with financial hardship that still want to participate. Something we would do for anyone going through financial hardship that for some reason doesn't qualify. We try to work with them to find a way. Sheila provided Erica an example of how this would work out with a family wanting to register for t-ball. Having a payment plan option identified in the policy represents a more holistic approach.

Quinton asked if financial aid was being taken advantage of and if this is precautionary or reactionary to that. Sheila stated it has not been taken advantage of, just want to make sure we're holistic in our approach and this is a good time to highlight it in the cost recovery policy.

Erica asked what the family rate is. Sheila stated it varies depending on the program. Sheila gave an example of a family based art class where a family may register together vs individually. Mainly for art based, family intended classes. Erica asked if the family rate can be applied to sports. Sheila stated it's not common, but can be looked into. There are different leagues, sports, age groups for sports so it could be difficult giving a family rate for that. It's easier for general programs where the whole family will be taking that specific class. It is possible that the Advisory Board could continue to expand the financial aid program to include support for families with multiple families.

Erica asked for basketball if we've ever tried collaborating with East Wake Academy to use their court. Sheila stated we've tried but we haven't had a lot of success due to their own use.

Sheila spoke about our rental rates and reduced rental rates for 501cs.

Approval to recommend to BOC for adoption:

Motion: Wendi

2nd: Garrett

All in favor

2. Refund Policy Review

The Refund Policy is reviewed and updated every 3 years. It will be submitted with the Fee Schedule to the Board of Commissioners during the Budget process. The Board will review the provided Code of Conducts and provided recommendations to staff.

Sheila stated we have one change that we would like to make for athletics and programs. We recommend someone be eligible for a full refund past the deadline as long as there is someone on the waitlist that can fill the spot. If there is no one to fill the spot, then this won't be possible.

Approval to recommend to BOC for approval:

Motion: Wendi

2nd: Garrett

All in favor

3. Retreat

Staff is proposing a retreat for the Advisory Board to be held this spring. Staff is seeking input on whether the Advisory Board would prefer a Saturday Morning retreat 9 AM-12: 30 PM or a weekday from 5-8:30 PM.

Erica stated she gets tired near the end of the day and would be more alert on a Saturday morning. Garrett stated he's good either way. Quinton stated he would go for the morning as well. Wendi stated anytime is good with her as long as she has advanced notice. Dexter stated it seems that the consensus is mornings. Sheila said she will get to work on this.

6. Open Discussion

Quinton asked if anyone went to the dance event, Dancing with the Stars. Sheila stated that Commissioner Baxter and Amanda Cruz participated.

Erica stated she walked at the Community Park and the shelters look good. Nick stated we need more participants in 8U Softball, still looking for 4-8 more girls. We do have a 12U team as well. Erica asked if bingo events are still really popular. Sheila answered yes, we get up to 80-100 participants.

Quinton stated East Wake Collective is officially closed after two and a half years. Stated a new tenant is coming in a couple of weeks that he thinks is an antique store. After some discussion

about the upcoming businesses, Sheila asked if we could focus the conversation back on Parks and Recreation related items.

8. Staff Updates

1. Department Update

Full fledge proceeding forward for spring athletics. Have an opening in a Parks Maintenance position which will be posted in a few days.

Preparing for spring concert series, summer camps, and additional spring/summer events/programs.

Working with a couple different coalition efforts. Youth Service Network provider: we are working with WakeMed, Empowered Citizens, and others for youth mental health. Designed to be a network. As we worked with these different groups, there has been a need to be intentional in how this network is coming together. Working with Caro Nova and Wake County to do an assessment. Goal is to work within this network to get more people engaged. Looking forward to that relationship, doing asset mapping to identify gaps in services, figuring out how to improve links. Stated that if the board is interested in being a part of this, it is open to the entire community. Showed where on the Town website you can find the Youth Service Provider Network sign up.

4. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: Garrett

2nd: Wendi

All in favor