

RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES

July 26, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lane Ogletree-Battle, Brantley Pittman, Ryan Stanford, Rodney Lawrence, David Miles

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Irene Pate, Sherisse Malone

VACANT POSITIONS:

District 2, 3 & 9

CITY STAFF PRESENT:

Holli Browder, Tommy Groce, Ryan McCann, Becky Summerlin, Samantha Thies, & Eli Willard

A meeting of the Recreation Advisory Board was held on Wednesday, July 26, 2023 with the meeting being called to order by Holli Browder at 12:12 pm.

ROLL CALL WAS COMPLETED by Ryan McCann

Holli Browder- greeted all present and asked for introductions as it was Lane Ogletree-Battle's first meeting.

Jeff Battles motioned for the previous meeting minutes to be entered into the record. Brantley seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to accept the minutes as published.

Holli deferred to Jeff to provide an update since he had a previous obligation and needed to leave early. Jeff mentioned the Odis Spencer stadium is now open for events and is a great facility. Encouraged everyone to attend an event so they could see it. New upgrades to sports fields are planned for schools including Eddy and Veteran's Memorial middle schools. Rothschild and Baker middle are already done. The ESPOLST is really helping get things done.

STAFF UPDATES:

Recreation Services (Becky Summerlin):

Pickle ball courts are becoming available in all rec centers with recent equipment purchases. There is one full time and several part time positions open in the division. The Senior Picnic is scheduled for May 25 at 10am at Cooper Creek Park. Aquatics will be opening pools for summer hours soon. The Aquatics Center has a large NAIA swim meet scheduled as well as the biggest

swim event we've ever done- the GRPA state meet, in July. The Senior Meet (ages 14+) will be soon after that.

Director (Holli Browder):

Staffing is pretty good now with lifeguards and support staff all lined up. We had a successful recruiting period. Summer Passes are printed and getting distributed in multiple places. The three outdoor pool renovations are not quite finalized yet. We do know they will be much more colorful, shady and fun designs. We're planning to have the 3 outdoor pools and 2 splashpads ready for the Summer 2024 season. The projects are made possible by the SPLOST funding.

Irene Pate asked which pool is first to be reopened. Holli stated all three should be ready almost simultaneously. The pools are very similar, but with some differences that will make each one attractive in its own way. The hope is that users will try more than one and move across neighborhoods.

Holli added that maintenance is a critical element with the new construction. The goal is to avoid a repeat of what happened previously with the pools. There will be the addition of remote monitoring and control of some of the pool systems in order to react more quickly when needed. Things like the water flow rate, chemical levels, etc. can be monitored. Pool contractors are de-constructing the old pools and analyzing the results so they can see what happened to cause the collapses in the old pools. That way they can mitigate any potential issues.

Becky Summerlin said Cooper Creek Park has had a naming committee meeting to decide on an honorary or memorial name for the clubhouse. It looks like it will be named in memory of Rick Gordon, a former P&R Director and long-time tennis advocate that died recently.

Park Services- Includes Memorial Stadium and Golden Park (Tommy Groce):

A softball tournament is starting this coming weekend. The finals will be played by the following Wednesday. Rain is hampering some of the play up to this point.

Staffing is much better in Park Services at this point. They are onboarding the last 2 corrections officers they needed for park crews now. He only has 1 full-time and 1 part time position open right now.

Much of the back-ordered equipment has come in with more on the way. He hopes it will relieve some of the backlog of work.

Athletics (Eli Willard):

Eli is now the primary contact for NAIA events. Athletics events are more spread out and provide unique challenges for staffing. Spring softball is wrapping up with a short summer season planned. Ultimate frisbee is on the horizon.

Community Schools (Sam Thies):

Summer camp staff training is under way with camp starting soon. Adding Hannan and Clubview schools to the After School Program (ASP) support for the 23-24 school year. The Summer BOOST Grant is providing much needed materials for various programs.

Holli Browder:

There are several projects ongoing for P&R. We purchased 3 sets of outdoor exercise equipment to be installed at Britt David, Cooper Creek, and Rigdon Park at a cost of \$80k-\$100k per location.

We presented a request to council for \$13M including approximately \$3.5M in labor costs-trying to increase the number of P&R workers. WE need many of them to meet the state ratios for the After School Program. Roughly \$10M was for equipment to include vehicles and recreation equipment. We were awarded two full-time and one parttime personnel only.

Park Rangers are coming from the Muscogee County Prison staff. They will be off-duty, getting paid overtime to patrol the parks. The city will be divided into three sections with an officer on duty in each one, 24 hours per day. Shifts will be overlapped to provide coverage during report times and allow for calls to be finished up. The plan is to keep them low-key, but present enough to keep things operating smoothly. Additional cameras are helping.

Brantley Pittman asked if MCP will have the power to cite or arrest. Holli stated they would have the power. He also asked if MCP was paying the officers and Holli indicated they were. She added that the rangers would seek to remove problem people, but MCSO and CPD would handle anything serious. Brantley also asked if the cameras in use were recording to the cloud or locally. Holli said they were cloud recording with live access. CPD also has direct access.

A new collaboration with YMCA, Girls Inc, The Urban League and others is underway. The pilot program will be at Frank Chester. They are offering extended hours at the rec center by augmenting P&R staff with personnel from the collaboration partners.

The state of Georgia has approved our initial grant applications for park space improvements. Final approval is still down the road.

Sherisse Malone asked about swings at the Psalmound Road playground being replaced. Holli said Council has not budgeted to replace it. It's also outside of the census tract for state funding to replace.

Another project is new LED lighting at AJ McClung Memorial Stadium. It will allow for streaming and televising of games. Bibb City soccer fields are getting new irrigation, grading, soil and turf. They are trying to extend the playability of the fields for adults and to accommodate a longer season of play.

P&R will be relocating several divisions to the new downtown City Hall location on 1st Avenue. The moves will be spread out from 6/21 to 7/13.

Brantley asked about the status of the mobile rec center. Holli told us that the truck and trailer have been delivered and were recently used for an event. They are both pending graphic wraps.

Plans are being made to open Comer Rec Center for normal operations. Will be moving staff from Fox to Comer to facilitate this.

Lane Ogletree-Battle said she is looking to get more plugged into community activities. She asked if Primus King was permanently closed. Holli said it is closed as well as Belvedere Park.

Becky Summerlin (Asst. Director):

Becky mentioned the P&R employee appreciation event coming up at the Lake Oliver Marina and invited board members to attend if they liked. She asked **Ryan to forward a copy of the flyer to the board members.**

Adjournment:

With no further discussion, Irene Pate made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Brantley Pittman and the meeting was adjourned at 1:14 pm.

Minutes recorded by Ryan McCann.

NOTE: Items written in **RED** require follow-up by the party's as indicated in the narrative.