

Town of Swansboro
Swansboro Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
July 16, 2025

- I. Call to Order & Roll Call:** The Swansboro Parks and Recreation Advisory Board met at the Swansboro Recreation Center for a regular board meeting on Wednesday, July 16, 2025. Debra Pylypiw called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

Deb P. reminded the board and attendees that meeting procedures and guidelines will be followed. There is a comment section at the end of the meeting where the public can make comments limited to five minutes. It is limited to comments and not a discussion.

Members present were Debra Pylypiw, Matthew Prane, Elena Messenger, and Jennifer Steele. Members absent were Bets Love and Ryan Swanson. Anna Stanley and Sara Elliott were present on behalf of the Town.

II. Adoption of Minutes

- a. April 16, 2025 Meeting Minutes- Matthew Prane raised concerns about the minutes, noting he had prepared notes to discuss but did not want to go through all of them during the meeting. He explained that he wanted the minutes to better reflect that discussions about the pool project had just begun with nothing determined yet. He specifically mentioned ensuring clarity that the pool would not necessarily be an above-ground pool, and he wanted the minutes to flow more like the actual discussion without implying that any final decisions had been made. Director Stanley will review the audio again and make edits as needed. Deb Pylypiw suggested tabling the approval of the minutes until the next meeting to allow for review of the changes. The board agreed to this suggestion.

III. Reports

- a. **Monthly Report:** Director Stanley presented two monthly reports since they did not meet last month. The reports were attached to the agenda packet. Elana Messenger asked about information being compiled for the manager and board of commissioners regarding pickleball, and Anna confirmed she would address this in her updates. Elana Messenger inquired about the reason for the increase in May's followers. Anna S. replied that PirateFest and Arts by the Sea posts were made during May. Elena M. also asked staff if QR codes were used at events so that patrons could scan the code and follow the Facebook page. Director Stanley replied that they did not at this time, but they had purchased A-frame signs to use throughout events to post QR codes that patrons could scan for event information, surveys, and could add Facebook as well.
- b. **Upcoming Programs/Events:** Sara E. reviewed June programs and events since the advisory board did not meet in June. Arts by the Sea was held on June 14, 2025, and the wine tasting had to be canceled due to weather conditions. A plan has been made in case of inclement weather. The Independence Day Celebration was held on July 3, 2025. Many people felt that it was the largest attendance the event had. The food vendor lines were long, and vendors were pleased with how well they

did. Sara E. reviewed the upcoming events. July is Parks and Recreation month, with several free events. Some of the programs offered are Music Bingo, Summer Canvas art display, Doggie and Me, and Tye Dye Tuesday. A new program has been created called Safety Town. It is a weeklong program for children entering Kindergarten where they learn safety skills at home, school, and community. The fire department assisted in the planning of the program; they built small buildings to represent the Town and was held at the First Baptist Church. Fire Chief Randall and Sara are looking how to expand the program for next year, possibly opening to other age groups. Many organizations participated in the event including several Onslow County agencies, Jacksonville, Onslow County, and Indian Beach Fire Department, and Master Gardeners Club. Other upcoming programs offered are Paddles and Pizza, a theater trip, and the toddler programs. Sara mentioned that in August Tiny Trekkers and Sprout Scouts would not be offered. A second session of Sprout Scouts has been added due to popularity. It was asked that a third session be added, but staffing limitations prevent this. Sara reviewed upcoming events in September to include National Night Out, Tunnel to Towers, and Barkfest. Deb P. stated the Book Club ended in June and 26 people immediately signed up for next year, which will begin in September.

- c. **Updates:** Director Stanley provided additional event updates. Arts by the Sea was going well until about 2 PM when storms came through and had to cancel the wine tasting but have learned from this and have contingency plans for next year. The Independence Day celebration recorded an impressive turnout exceeding 10,000 attendees. Planning for next year's event, which will mark America's 250th anniversary, is already underway. Fireworks have been secured for July 3, 2026. The decision to hold the Independence Day festivities on July 3rd continues, dictated by the fireworks company's availability.

Budget Updates:

Budget Update for FY 2024-2025: Anna reported that last year's budget has not been closed out yet. She expects to provide a full annual report on expenses versus revenues at the next meeting.

Budget Update for FY 2025-2026: Despite efforts, requests for increased full-time staff were not approved. However, they secured a much-needed increment in the part-time staff budget, restoring the \$10,000 cut from the previous year along with an additional increase. Furthermore, program supplies and playground repairs received budgetary increases. Although the request for treadmill replacements were denied, Anna will continue with this request as an initiative to replace older equipment progressively. Approval was granted for several park and building amenities items including new trash receptacles, pet waste containers, an air hockey table, wind screens, banquet chairs, and the replacement of several adult swings for the parks. Capital projects that were not approved included the tot lot replacement (currently 20+ years old with obsolete parts), land

acquisitions, park enhancements, waterfront implementation plan, and tennis court resurfacing. Pickleball courts were reallocated \$150,000.

IV. New Business

- a. **Non-Profit Tourism Assistance Grant:** Anna Stanley reported that the town had been awarded \$20,000 from the Onslow County Non-profit Tourism Assistance grant for festivals, which was the full amount requested. This was noted as unusual, as typically only \$10,000 was awarded. Anna expressed plans to use some of the additional funding for increased television advertising.

b. **Special Event Application**

Little Pink Houses of Hope-Little Pink Houses of Hope offers free vacation retreats to breast cancer patients and their families. They are also partnering with Swansboro Paddle Boarding to host this event. Ocean Cure, from Wilmington, leads kayaking and paddleboarding for families. The event will be held on August 20, 2025, 9:00am-1:00pm at Bicentennial Park. The fee would be \$40 for an open space permit. Little Pink Houses of Hope is asking for a waiver of fees for the event. A Non-profit letter and certificate of insurance will be received prior to the event.

Recommended Action: Recommendation to waive fees. A motion was made to waive the fee for Little Pink Houses of Hope was made by Elana Messenger and seconded by Matthew Prane. The motion passed.

c. **Swansboro Aquatics Community Survey: Presenter: Matthew Prane-Pool Committee Chair**

Matthew Prane, Pool Committee Chair presented a draft survey aimed at gauging community interest in a potential aquatics' facility. He explained that during his last meeting with the Pool Committee, which the mayor and commissioners attended, it was determined that more specific information was needed beyond what was gathered in the comprehensive master plan survey. He explained that the survey's purpose was to determine the level of interest, preferred programs, and design requirements for a possible pool project. Matthew emphasized that programming must precede design - they need to know what programs people want before determining the type of pool to build. He noted that the survey is set up through Google Forms and would be distributed online.

Board members provided feedback on the survey:

- Sara Elliott suggested changing the Google account requirement setting; this will allow more people to complete it.

- Elana Messenger recommended adding a question about what type of membership people would be interested in (annual, drop-in, punch card, etc.)
- Anna S. also suggested adding a price range question to gauge what people would be willing to pay.
- Board members recommended clarifying question #11 about supporting construction of a facility that requires a membership.
- Deb Pylypiw suggested rephrasing the question to ask, "How would you support the construction of this facility?" with options like grants, taxes, membership fees, and sponsorships.
- Several typos were identified.

Matthew P. will incorporate the feedback and finalize the survey, which will then need to be presented to the Town Commissioners. Once approved, it will be distributed through the Parks & Recreation social media platforms, which have over 18,000 followers, as well as potentially through QR codes at the Recreation Center and other events.

V. Old Business

- a. Pickleball Courts: Director Stanley has received an estimate range for two options under consideration: 1) converting the skate park into three dedicated pickleball courts, or 2) building six new dedicated regulation-size pickleball courts. Preparations are underway for a presentation to the Town Manager covering stormwater permitting and related costs. Additional quotes are still needed for the necessary concrete work related to the skate park conversion. Anna is advocating to build six new dedicated courts as the more viable option, even though it will be more expensive, citing better long-term benefits and potential for increased revenue through tournaments and programs. Quotes have been received from two companies: one in Raleigh and another, Calico Racquet Courts—a Morehead City-based company experienced in constructing similar facilities at Park City RV Park. Once a direction has been given, Anna will prepare a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a design-build approach, rather than basing selection solely on price.

VI. Comments

Members of the public raised several points and questions:

- Expressed concern about surveying both town residents and non-residents, suggesting that tax implications make it important to distinguish between the two groups.
- Recommended researching costs at surrounding pools and in similar sized towns rather than using examples from larger cities like Raleigh.

- Highlighted the importance of considering the local poverty rate (23-25% in Swansboro and surrounding areas, 17% in Onslow County) when determining potential membership costs.
- Suggested that the board should seek more direct input from town residents about their support for a pool project.
- Emphasized the need to consider affordability for various demographic groups, including young marines and schoolteachers.

VII. Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Matthew Prane and seconded by Elana Messenger. The meeting was adjourned at 6:34 PM.

After official adjournment, Anna Stanley noted that she and Sara Elliott would be out of town for the regular August meeting. It was discussed that either the August meeting would be canceled, or a special meeting would need to be called on an alternate date. The board agreed to call a special meeting on August 13, 2025.