

BEAUFORT COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Executive Conference Room
Thursday, April 4, 2019
2:30 PM

Board Members Present: Bruce Yeager, Ron Campbell, Mike Manesiotis, Carlos Cave, Bill Brown

Staff Present: Shannon Loper (Parks and Recreation Director), Matt Watts (Parks and Recreation Deputy Director), Phil Foot (Director of Public Safety), Jennifer Williamsen (Administrative Assistant), Vincent Leon (Parks and Recreation Pool Manager), Antoinette Binette (Parks and Recreation Pool Manager), Mark Rennix (Athletic Supervisor)

Guest Present: Frank Sole – Island Recreation Center

Call to Order: Bruce Yeager called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was said by all that were present. Introductions were made around the room.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Review: The board approved the minutes for February 7, 2019. Mike Manesiotis made a motion to approve the minutes and Carlos Cave seconded the motion. All approved.

New Business:

Island Recreation Update: Frank Sole presented a slide show featuring the remodeled Island Recreation Center. It is 22,000 square feet, which consists of the original building from 1988 and a new extension. The newly renovated center includes gyms and work out equipment. It includes an indoor pool and multiple exercise rooms. Programming includes after school programs, men's basketball leagues, ballet, fencing, swimming and fitness classes. Frank stated that enrollment is up. On average, they are swiping in 350 members per day. The technology of the new dome is much better than the old dome. Swimming enrollment is up too. The hours of operation are 6:00 AM – 9:00 PM for the fitness area and 5:30 AM – 8:00 PM for swimming. Mike commented that the hours are great for seniors. Bruce mentioned that it is a great spot for homeowners as well as vacationers.

Director's Report:

Land Update: Shannon Loper explained there is a new sign up calling the area Hampton Lakes Park instead of Sandhill's Tract. Last Monday approval was received from Council to move forward. There is space there for five fields (320 foot) in one pod and a single field (320 foot) in another pod, this may have to be reduced. There will also be a maintenance storage shed, and possibly pickle ball courts. Bruce asked if the Buckwalter complex would just be a soccer complex. Shannon explained that yes and maybe tennis because of the wetlands only one baseball field would fit there and it is not worth having just one field there.

Shannon also explained that we are waiting for more information regarding conservation easement and right of ways on the other 70 acres that has been donated to see what will fit in each space. For now, we at least know that we can fit six fields on this property which we need. We had put Buckwalter plans on hold up until this point waiting to see the needs but now we can move forward on that. The money for it is already there to proceed.. We should have a master plan by the end of the week. Bruce expressed that the 70 acres by Rose Hill would probably be better for tennis and pickle ball, while the Sandhill's would be better for baseball. Once both pieces of property are ready to go, those decisions will be made.

Lind Brown Center and Pool Update: The plaster is coming up in the pool. It has gotten progressively worse. We received PARD funding in the amount of \$50,000. We did the bid process and got one bid in for \$130,000. We cancelled that bid and put the bid back out. It needs to be done before we open for the season.

United Community Task Force has a contract with us to use the facility at night to work with kids in the neighborhood. They rebuild the kid's confidence and slowly convert them into our programs. There are about 40 kids and it has been very successful. They work in conjunction with Beaufort City Police Department. The other part of the building will be rented back to Bridges until January. Love house uses the front two rooms for after school programs and they will use it for summer camp as well.

Burton Wells Master Plan: Since the last meeting, we took out some of the tent spaces and put in more RV spots. We added two more gyms for a total of three. We also added a BMX park and eight pickle ball courts next to the senior center. A vote is needed to move forward for this to be the master plan. Financial decisions will be discussed later. Phil has taken it to council. We will need very little staff to run the facility. The RV park will generate the most money. We intend to try and work with USCB to use our fields as well. Mike Manesiotis motioned to approve the master plan. Bill Brown seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Pickle Ball Courts: After the master plan was done, we decided we needed to move forward with the eight courts. We had some capitol funding that we decided to use for the courts. We are in the engineer phase and hope to have them done by September. Matt Watts explained that eight courts would be great to host tournaments. Matt has reached out to local pickle ball associations with the hopes of attracting them to the new facility.

Clean Up Day: Clean-up day is April 22, 2019. The hub will be at Buckwalter Recreation Center. Shannon invited the board members to come out and join us in the cleanup.

Home and Garden Show: The show took place last weekend and they had a good turnout. The show pays for our floor coverings which we also use for the National Guard while they are here. In exchange for the coverings they have use of the center for the show. Next year is the last year on that contract. After that we will see how to progress for future shows.

Atax Funding: Shannon explained what we have requested from the town of Bluffton and from Beaufort County to fund the two baseball tournaments this summer (Ozone and Dixie Boys). These funds will cover the cost of the tournament and we expect revenue to be over one million dollars per tournament. The town of Bluffton is supplying an air-conditioned tent for the umpires.

Deputy Director Report

Athletics: Matt Watts went over the enrollment numbers for our spring sports. The programs are growing very fast. We had a huge leap in our co-ed teams this year.

Programs: We have entered a contract with a youth lacrosse clinic. We are working with the high school lacrosse program on both sides of the bridge.

Tournaments: Matt spoke about finding sponsors for the tournament. All the packages are on our website. Any excess money that we make will go into the general fund.

Aquatics: Anny Binette presented programs for the Battery Creek pool and the Beaufort pool. Vinnie Leon presented programs for the Bluffton pool. Programs include BOGA, swimming lessons, water aerobics, and school lessons. Phil Foot explained GEO bonds that will be used to fix our pools. This includes three pools. The amount granted is \$540,000. After more information comes in from the CIP manager a plan will be created to address the highest needs at each pool.

Employee Update: Administrative Clerks have all been filled. One of our full time clerks has been called to duty and will be replaced temporarily while she serves. The athletic manager position has been filled and we have two openings for athletic supervisor. All grounds positions have been filled. Phil Foot spoke about a salary study that was recently done and the findings showed that Beaufort County is paying at 50% of what other counties pay similar positions. He would like that to be higher but it is a funding issue at this point.

Executive Session: Bill Brown made a motion to go into executive session. Ron Campbell seconded the motion. All approved.

Questions: No questions.

Announcements: Next meeting – June 4, 2019 Bluffton

Adjourned: 3:54 PM

