

BEAUFORT COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Buckwalter Recreation Center
Thursday, July 10, 2025
2:30 PM

Board Members Present:

Bruce Yeager, *Southern Beaufort County*
Phil Kiser, *Southern Beaufort County*
Carlos Cave, *School District Administration ex-officio*
Jonne Hayes Sr., *Northern Beaufort County*
Mark Rennix, *Northern Beaufort County (via Zoom)*
Alan Arseneau, *Southern Beaufort County (via Zoom)*

Board Members Absent:

Elizabeth "Buffy" Computaro, *Northern Beaufort County*

Staff Members Present:

Heather Clint, *Administrative Manager, Parks and Recreation*
Shane Stager, *Deputy Director, Parks and Recreation*
Darrell Ketola, *Athletics Supervisor, Parks and Recreation*
Brandon Whitner, *Athletics Manager, Parks and Recreation*
Brock Vaughn, *Recreation Manager, Parks and Recreation*
Antoinette Binette, *Aquatics Manager, Parks and Recreation*
Evan Christian, *Athletics Manager, Parks and Recreation*
Robert Rozek, *Athletic Supervisor, Parks and Recreation*
Rodrick Sawyer, *Athletic Supervisor, Parks and Recreation*
Faranica Reynolds, *Assistant Recreation Manager, Parks and Recreation*
Eric Brown, *Director, Parks and Recreation*
Jeremy Way, *Marketing Coordinator, Parks and Recreation*

Guests Present:

Scott Whitehead, *Citizen*

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by **Bruce Yeager**.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were completed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Bruce Yeager asked for a motion to approve the agenda. **A motion was made to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded, and the agenda was approved.**

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MAY 01, 2025, MINUTES

Bruce Yeager asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the May meeting. **Bruce Yeager** mentioned that **Phil Kiser's** name was spelled wrong on page 3. **Bruce Yeager** asked if the pickleball was mentioned during the tennis presentation. **Heather Clint** replied that it was a question asked by **Phil Kiser** during the Fee Waiver / Reduction Request for Scheper Tennis Academy. **A motion was made to approve the minutes with a spelling correction. The motion was seconded, and the minutes were approved.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

PRESENTATION BY BEAUFORT WATER FESTIVAL

Bruce Yeager stated that **Sailey Johnson** was going to make the presentation but went to Beaufort in error. In her stead **Brandon Whitener** was given the results from the Pickleball Tournament. The Pickleball Tournament was very successful this year. They had 44 teams participating in 4 categories: Men's, Women's and 2 sections of Co-ed. The tournament began at 8am and ended around 2:30. One court was left open for public use. **Brandon Whitener** stated that they were very appreciative for the use of the courts.

LOWCOUNTY PICKLEBALL LEAGUE / BRIAN FENLON: SPRING FUNDRAISER REVIEW / REPORT

Bruce Yeager stated that item 8 would be skipped and would go back to it when and if **Brian Fenlon** arrived.

DEPARTMENT REPORT

• **Operations**

○ Patron Check-Ins:

• Buckwalter Recreation Center

May 2024	4074	May 2025	4288
June 2024	4062	June 2025	4558

• Burton Wells Recreation Center

May 2024	647	May 2025	600
June 2024	536	June 2025	491

• Charles Lind Brown Recreation Center

May 2024	364	May 2025	369
June 2024	392	June 2025	370

Heather Clint stated that Buckwalter is going to be a 4000 check-ins per month center. The centers were closed for 1 day in the months of May and June each. **Bruce Yeager** asked why the numbers for Burton Wells went down. **Brock Vaughn** replied that gym was closed for youth basketball in the evening and for summer camps during the day. **Bruce Yeager** asked if there is a

clicker for everyone that came into the facility. **Shane Stager** stated that we are planning to install a traffic counter. **Bruce Yeager** stated that he was surprised as to how the numbers went down. **Heather Clint** stated that May was higher than the 2 previous months. **Heather Clint** also noted some events that our facilities are being used for: Harbor Freight held a hiring event at Buckwalter Recreation Center on the 25th of June. Beaufort County Facility Management held a department meeting at Burton Wells Recreation Center on the 2nd of May. Beaufort County Council held a meeting at Burton Wells Recreation Center on the 23rd of June. **Bruce Yeager** asked if Harbor Freight rented our facility for the hiring event. **Heather Clint** stated that they did. **Heather Clint** also mentioned that our centers are rented out for parties and HOA meetings as well.

- **Athletics**

Current League - Summer

- **Beaufort Youth**

Basketball	2024: 145	2025: 129	(-16) Registration Closed
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- **Beaufort Adult**

Co-Ed Softball	2024: 164	2025: 157	(-7) Same # of team's registration closed
Baseball	2024: 71	2025: 105	(+34) (+ 1 team) registration closed
Kickball	2024: 58	2025: 23	(-35) registration ends July 11 th 2025

Upcoming Fall - Sports

- **Beaufort Adult**

Baseball	2024: 68	2025: -	Registration 9/1/2025 – 9/26/2025
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Beaufort Youth

Baseball	2024: 228	2025: 51	(-177) Registration ends 7/25/2025
Softball	2024: 87	2025: 31	(-56) Registration ends 7/25/2025
Soccer	2024: 494	2025: 170	(-324) Registration ends 7/25/2025
Flag Football	2024: 110	2025: 40	(-70) Registration ends 7/25/2025
Cheer	2024: 37	2025: 13	(-24) Registration ends 7/25/2025

Bruce Yeager asked what percentage of participants came from last week or late registration. **Brandon Whitener** stated that the percentage is about 30%. **Bruce Yeager** asked if they pay the late registration fee, and if it was \$10.00. **Brandon Whitener** stated that it is \$20.00.

Current League – Summer

- **Spring Bluffton Adult**

Adult Softball – Bronze	2024: 16 teams	2025: 14 teams	(-2) Season Finished
Adult Softball – Co-ed	2024: 4 teams	2025: 3 teams	(-1) Season Finished
Adult Softball - Gold	2024: 5 teams	2025: 5 teams	(-) Season Finishes 7/16
Adult Softball - Silver	2024: 9 teams	2025: 8 teams	(-1) Season Finishes 7/10

- **Summer Bluffton Youth**

Basketball	2024: 486	2025: 455	(-31) Registration Closed
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Bruce Yeager asked what the age group is for Basketball. **Evan Christian** replied the ages were 7-16. **Evan Christian** also stated that this year we had enough girls for a 13-16 Girls Division. **Bruce Yeager** asked if the games are at night. **Evan Christian** stated that the games are 5:30, 6:30 and 7:30 in the evenings.

Upcoming Fall Sports

- Bluffton Youth

Soccer	2024: 939	2025: 363	(-576) Registration ends 7/25/25
Baseball	2024: 278	2025: 117	(-161) Registration ends 7/25/25
Softball	2024: 155	2025: 51	(-104) Registration ends 7/25/25
Flag Football	2024: 310	2025: 169	(-141) Registration ends 7/25/25
Cheer	2024: 65	2025: 22	(-43) Registration ends 7/25/25

- Bluffton Adult

Beach Volleyball	2024: 42	2025: 47	(+5) Registration 6/1/25 – 7/20/2025
Kickball	2024: 82	2025: 81	(-1) Registration 6/1/25 – 7/20/2025

New Programming and Tournaments Updates (Sports)

- Diamond Youth Baseball District Tournaments
 - Rookie and AA in Bluffton (Rookie – Bluffton, AA – Bluffton American)
 - Ozone in Beaufort (Hilton Head)
- Diamond Youth Softball District Tournaments
 - 8U and 10U: 8U Bluffton, 10U Beaufort
 - 6U and 12U: 6U Bluffton, 12U Beaufort
 - 8U Bluffton Softball advanced to World Series in Tioga, LA, July 16-21, 2025
- Dixie Boys (14U / Jr. Boys (13U)
 - State Tournament July 10 – 13 in Seneca, SC
- MLB Pitch, Hit, and Run
 - Oscar Frazier Park, July 19th
- Top Gun Softball Tournament held at Oscar Frazier Park 6/28/2025
 - Upcoming Tournaments 8/16 (Bluffton and Beaufort) 9/13/2025, 11/22/2025

Evan Christian stated the following results from the above Tournament update: The Rookie and AA Baseball was held in Bluffton. The Rookies went straight to the State Tournament. Bluffton American won the tournament. Both those teams got knocked out in the State Tournament. The Rookie team won 1 game and lost 2, the AA team went 2 and 2. The Ozone Tournament was in Beaufort. Hilton Head won that Tournament. We did not host the minors, but Hilton Head won that also. Bluffton hosted the 8U and 10U Softball Tournament. The 8U won the tournament and the State Tournament and will play in the World Series in Louisiana next week. Bluffton won the 10U tournament but got knocked out in the State Tournament. 6U and 12U were hosted in Beaufort. Bluffton 6U went straight to the State Tournament and were State runners-up. Beaufort 12U won their division but lost in the State Tournament. 15U Beaufort team went straight to the State Tournament and were State runners-up. Dixie Boys are playing now in Seneca. We are hosting MLB Pitch, Hit and Run on July 19th. There are around 72 participants currently, registration end the 18th of July. **Bruce Yeager** asked if this was the first time the event was held here. **Evan Christian** replied that it was. We hosted Top Gun Travel Softball Tournament, One on the 28th of June. There are 3 more coming up. There is 1 in August that will be held in Bluffton and Beaufort. The September and October events will be in Bluffton. **Bruce Yeager** asked if they were travel tournaments. **Evan Christian** replied that they were. They start at 8:30 in the morning and run until 11:00 at night. **Bruce Yeager** asked if they pay our standard fee for the field rental. **Evan Christian** said they do. They pay for the umpires, balls and trophies. **Jonnie Hayes** asked what benefit Beaufort has seen from these tournaments. **Evan Christian** responded that the teams coming in are staying local, the exposure to the area. **Bruce Yeager** stated that we have not tracked any economic data, but we have girls softball tournaments playing locally, which is a good thing. **Evan Christian** commented that the softball tournaments are only for one day so there is not impact to hotel but there is an impact on food and beverage. **Jonne Hayes** asked if this was something that we would build on. **Evan Christian** replied that it was and that we would like to get baseball. **Bruce Yeager** asked if the tournaments conflicted with any of our programming. **Evan Christian** replied that it did not. **Jonnie Hayes** posed a question to **Eric Brown**, if in the future there would be field availability for other programs that want

to have tournaments. **Eric Brown** replied that we work around our seasons. **Bruce Yeager** commented that we have not had an increase in field since Oscar Frazier, but improvements have been made on the fields the little kids play on.

- **Senior Program Update**

Centers:

- Bluffton Center
- Booker T Washington
- Burton Wells Center
- Dale Center
- Lind Brown Center
- Port Royal Center
- Scott Center
- St. Helena Center

The Booker T. site is still closed for remodel – the participants are at Dale Center for the duration. We expect to return sometime in mid / late July.

“Boots on the Ground”, a special event for everyone in the senior program, was held on May 13th at Burton Wells – it was a HUGE hit (pictures included)

Seniors attended an event hosted by South Carolina Dept. on Aging in Columbia and gave positive feedback.

Highlighted field trips from the past two months: trips to farmer’s markets, peach picking, shopping at the flea market in Jacksonville and the Turtle Rescue Center on Jekyll Island.

- Meals served and delivered for May & June
 - Home Delivered Meals (HDM): 3,700
 - Group Dining: 2,500

Shane Stager reported on the Senior Program. There was one large senior event held in May. They are still going on field trips. Scott Center renovations are set to start in August. There are 2 new Senior Centers planning to start in the next quarter. **Bruce Yeager** asked how many total participants there were in the program. **Shane Stager** replied that all the centers are basically full. There are times that we have had to turn people away as we are at capacity for transportation. **Bruce Yeager** asked if there were participants that drive themselves. **Shane Stager** responded that there are.

- **Aquatics**

Battery Creek:

- Pool Hours:
 - Monday – Friday: 8am – 1pm / 2pm – 7pm
 - Saturday: Closed for June and July
- Youth School Swim Lessons: ended in May
 - Monday – Thursday: 9am – 1pm
- Patron Check Ins:
 - May: FINS: 355, public: 795 total 1,150
 - June: 633

Beaufort Pool:

- Pool Hours:
 - Monday – Friday: 8am – 1pm / 2pm – 7pm
 - Saturday: 8am – 1pm (lap swim)
- Youth School Swim Lessons: ended in May
 - Monday – Thursday: 9am – 1pm

- Programs:
 - Water Aerobics: Belinda Flohr: Wednesday 10 am – 11:15 am
- Patron Check Ins:
 - May: 713
 - June: 792

Bluffton Pool: Opened June 2, 2025

- Pool Hours:
 - Monday – Friday: 8am – 1pm / 2pm – 7pm
 - Saturday: 8am – 1pm (lap swim)
 - 1st Saturday of the month inflatables: 1pm – 4pm
- Programs:
 - FINS Swim Team: Monday – Friday: 5pm – 7pm
- Patron Check Ins:
 - May: Closed
 - June: FINS: 406, public: 638 total 1,044

Alvin Settles Pool:

- Pool Hours:
 - Monday: Closed
 - Tuesday – Saturday: 10am – 7pm
 - Sundays: 1pm – 7pm
- Camps and birthday parties are welcome. – register ahead
- Patron Check Ins:
 - May: 1,034
 - June: 3,703

Anny Binette stated that Fins went back to the Bluffton Pool in June. **Bruce Yeager** asked if Battery Creek Pool was the next pool for renovation. **Anny Binette** stated that the next pool for renovation was Beaufort Pool. **Bruce Yeager** asked how the response to the pool has been. **Anny Binette** replied that everyone is happy. **Jonnie Hayes** asked if the high schools had reached out for fall swim. **Anny Binette** said that they have and have started scheduling for the pools. **Bruce Yeager** asked if the schools get priority over the FINS. **Anny Binette** stated that that was correct. The Alvin Settles Pool did open earlier this year due to Beaufort Pool being closed due to pump issues. In June a lot of the check-ins were from the 5 camps that come to the pool.

- **Recreation**

- **Events:**
 - Unity in the Community Recap
 - Beaufort Police Movie Days past and upcoming
 - Back to School Bash coming August 9th
- **Camps:**
 - Bluffton Center Camp has been 100% full
 - Burton Wells Camp is 70% full
 - Scott Center is 80% full
 - Charles Lind Brown closed
 - Bluffton Lacrosse Camp
 - Beaufort Lacrosse Camp

- Challenger Soccer Camp
 - USCB Basketball Camp
- **Programs: Upcoming**
 - Wrestling at Burton Wells
 - Art Classes at Charles Lind Brown
 - Dance Classes at Bluffton Center
 - **Programs: Current**
 - Altitude Academy at Charles Lind Brown
 - Kids Jam at Charles Lind Brown
 - Ton it Thursday at Charles Lind Brown
 - Line Dancing at Charles Lind Brown
 - Karate at Buckwalter
 - Country Line Dancing at Buckwalter
 - Zumba at Buckwalter
 - Chair Yoga at Buckwalter
 - Jungle Body at Buckwalter
 - Gentle Yoga at Buckwalter
 - Table Tennis Club at Burton Wells
 - **Programs: Completed**
 - Beginners Pickleball Tournament

Brock Vaughn gave the following update: Unity in the Community just concluded a few weeks ago. It turned out to be more of an expose about some of the newer programs that are being held at the Charles Lind Brown Center. There were about 200 people that came through. There was Line Dancing, Fitness Classes for the public to see. There will be a Repack the Backpack event in August, for the kids in the area to come and get school supplies. There was a Police Movie Day, which had about 100 kids. There will also be another one on the 23rd of July. **Bruce Yeager** asked if there were several Police Officers that come to the event. **Brock Vaughn** replied that there were about 10 Officers in attendance. Camps: Bluffton is full, with a waitlist of about 30 kids, Beaufort at 70% full and Scott Center at 80%. We are having a Lacrosse Camp both North and South of the Broad. Bluffton Waves, a travelling Baseball Team, and USCB are holding camps at our gyms as well. The Art Class at the Charles Lind Brown Center and the Wrestling at the Burton Wells Recreation Center should be starting soon. There is also an Altitude Aviation Academy program that is happening at the Charles Lind Brown Center. The gentleman running the program is a pilot and aircraft mechanic. He has a flight simulator that he opens it up to the kids and teaches them about aviation. He is also teaching them about ground controls and aviation mechanics. The Pickleball Clinic at the Charles Lind Brown Center ended in the middle of May. **Bruce Yeager** asked how many participated in that program. **Brock Vaughn** stated that there were 11, the maximum for the program was 12.

ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATE

- **Director's Report**

Eric Brown stated that **Alex Hunt** is no longer with Parks and Rec. Our new Athletic Manager North of the Broad is **Brandon Whitener**. Recreation is a new component for us. The Altitude Aviation Program will eventually be on St. Helena. **Bruce Yeager** asked if the gentleman running the program was in the military and might be leaving. **Eric Brown** stated that he was not. **Eric Brown** stated that the Booker T Washington site has a new playground, and the center will open soon. We are looking forward to Recreation having other programs in that facility as well. Bluffton Pool is open, and discussions are in the works for which pool is next for renovation. Wesley Felix and Agnes Major should be starting soon on their construction. Construction will last for a year on those locations. There will be a new parquet floor at the Charles Lind Brown Center. Scott Center will have a summer camp program as well as an afterschool program after the renovations. The Senior Center is also going to be refurbished. Southside Pickleball is up and running. RFP will be going out for Shell Point. **Eric Brown** discussed the annual retreat with the lead staff. **Jonnie Hayes** asked if the facility on St. Helena was going to be a recreation facility and what outdoor fields would be there. **Eric Brown** stated that the facility would be at the Wesley Felix location, and the recreation facility would not have a gym.

- **Partnership & Facility Updates**

- **Facility Updates:**

- Bluffton Pool (renovations)
 - Re-opened early June; some punch list items remain
 - New pump targeted for late August to minimize closure impact
- Beaufort Pool
 - The pump was replaced
 - Alvin Settles opened early to accommodate
- Southside Pickleball (Complete)
 - Grand Opening occurred 5/9/2025
- Agnes Major Center, Wesley Felix (new construction planning)
 - Community meeting for both communities early May
- Senior / Community Center
 - Booker T. Washington Center – renovations nearing completion. Planned re-opening mid/late July
 - Scott Center – renovations nearing start, planned to start early August once camps are complete
 - Bluffton Center - renovations nearing start, planned to start early August once camps are complete
- Charles Lind Brown (renovations)
 - Planned to start early August
- Additional CIP projects approved for FY2026, but pending discussions with CIP Department

- **Misc. Updates**

- Beaufort County Parks and Recreation R.I.S.E Retreat:
 - A successful R.I.S.E retreat for Parks and Recreation Management staff was held at Burton Wells Recreation Center May 21, 2025
- FY26 Budget approved
 - FY25 - \$1.492M (non-personnel)
 - FY26 - \$1.435M (\$57K reduction) (non-personnel)
 - Additional personnel funding approved
- Fee schedule evaluation underway (still in the research phase)
- Athletic Manager (Beaufort)

Shane Stage mentioned that the 2026 budget was approved. **Bruce Yeager** asked if this was the operating budget. **Shane Stager** stated that it was. The personnel budget was increased to add more recreation staff. We have started our fee evaluations as mentioned at the last meeting and will get that to the Board when completed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bruce Yeager announced the next meeting will be on the 4th of September at 2:30, at the Burton Wells Recreation Center. **Bruce Yeager** also stated that he appreciated all the hard work and dedication given by all in the department.

ADJOURN

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded, and the meeting was adjourned.