

Newport Recreation Advisory Commission

January 15, 2015

6:30 PM

APPROVED FEB. 19, 2015

Present Members:

Robert Lewis, P.K. Johnson, CD Whitlow, Bernice Wooten, Kim Nead and Robert Harrell

Absent Members:

James Brooks

Guest:

Members of Newport Little League

Lighting Committee

Staff:

Kelley Caldwell

Town Council:

Councilman James Mc Coy

Councilman Chuck Chinn

The January 15, 2015 meeting of the Recreation Advisory Commission was called to order by Vice Chairman Robert Lewis at 6:30. He then called for the adoption of the amended agenda **Mr. P.K. Johnson moved to adopt the agenda as amended, Mr. Brian Harrell seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous.**

Vice Chairman Lewis then gave the members' time to review the minutes of the November 20, 2014 meeting. **Mr. P.K. Johnson moved to approve the minutes as written. Mr. C.D. Whitlow seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous.**

Introduction of New Members: Vice Chairman Lewis introduced Kim Nead as a returning member to the Commission. Mr. Brooks was not present.

Elections: Vice Chairman Lewis noted it was time to select a Chairman as he has been "acting" Chairman since Mr. Sammy Hammond's resignation. He then opened the floor for Chairman Nominations. Mr. P.K. Johnson nominated Robert Lewis. Mr. Lewis noted that he would accept the nomination as long as everyone understood his intention to move from the area in the summer of 2015. No others were nominated. Mr. C.D. Whitlow second the nomination. Nominations were closed. **Vote was unanimous for Robert Lewis at Chairman.**

Chairman Lewis then opened the floor for Vice Chairman Nominations. P.K. Johnson nominated Mrs. Bernice Wooten, there were no other nominations. Brian Harrell seconded the nomination of Bernice Wooten as Vice Chairman. Chairman Lewis closed the nominations. **Vote: Unanimous for Bernice Wooten as Vice Chairman.**

Old Business:

Comprehensive Recreation Plan: Chairman Lewis suggested the Comprehensive Recreation Plan be table until the February meeting. **Mr. C.D. Whitlow moved to table the CRP until the February 19. Meeting. Mr. Brian Harrell seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous.**

Partnership with County: Chairman Lewis met with Darlene Leonard of Carteret County Recreation Department. He noted she handles all special recreational events in the County including Ft. Benjamin. He proposed a partnership using county staff and Newport Recreation funds for events we would promote. Ms. Leonard will let Chairman Lewis know when they have events that need promoting. Chairman Lewis also spoke with the County Athletic Director, Anne

Marie about 3/3 basketball tournaments. She asked that a detailed proposal be put into writing and presented for consideration. Mr. Brian Harrell will be putting a proposal together.

Mr. C.D. Whitlow expressed his concerns over the availability of the practice fields at Ft. Benjamin. Chairman Lewis, having worked for the County, explained the field reservation process. Mr. Whitlow stated he would also like to see more Newport sports representation at our Recreation meetings. We need to know if they need anything or if we can help them in anyway.

New Business:

Citizens Comments: No comments.

Financial Report: Vice Chairman Lewis reported the balance in the recreation fund is \$4,309.57. The Community Garden fund balance is \$5,795.44.

Little League Lighting discussion: Chairman Lewis called on Little League representative, Tim Nunn to begin the discussion regarding lights for the ball field. Mr. Nunn stated the Newport Little League field lighting is in need of replacement. He noted several safety issues. He also noted a few games were stopped by referees because there was not enough light to play ball safely. The League has a few lighting bids, the least bid being from the Torrence Lighting Company for \$75,000. This is a "turnkey" price. Mr. Nunn noted the wood poles would be removed, and replaced with four metal poles. The light fixtures and bulbs would be energy efficient and the power would be underground. Mr. Nunn stated the Newport Little League has begun to fund raise for this project. Mrs. Vicki Edmondson, Chairperson of the Lighting Committee noted the League has already raised \$10,992. Fund raisers are ongoing and planning continues. The League representatives have met with First Citizens Bank; the option to secure a loan is a possibility. The terms would be 5 years at \$15,000. Per year. The Committee is not willing to commit to the loan without raising more funds. Mr. Nunn feels this is a much needed upgrade to the ball field that will benefit the Community as well as the Little League. Councilman Shinn asked Mr. Nunn if the contract price included the cost of any needed electrical switches, or electric panel boxes. Mr. Nunn was not sure, but assured Councilman Shinn he would look into his concerns. Mr. Nunn thanked the Commission for the opportunity to share their ideas. Chairman Lewis thanked the representatives for sharing their lighting plans.

CIP Discussion: Chairman Lewis then called on Kelley Caldwell in Angela Christian's absence. Kelley stated CIP Discussion will be addressed with the manager in February; everyone should be thinking about improvements for recreation and be ready to discuss.

Kelley also mentioned Mrs. Christian has had conversations with road-race organizers and will continue to move forward with the process. Mrs. Christian also wants you to know the Community Garden project is continuing.

Kelley also shared Mrs. Christian has been in contact with the organizers of Ft. Benjamin Family Fun day. The planning has begun and the date is set for Saturday, April 25 from 3pm to 7pm. The Special event will feature the Newport Fire and Police Departments. She suggested the Commission consider partnering with Ft. Benjamin for this event. Chairman Lewis stated he would contact Darlene Leonard about Family fun Day and let her know we are interested in co-sponsorship.

Council Comments: Councilman Mc Coy made a recommendation to have someone from the Commission appointed to the Community Garden. He also suggested reaching out Holly Campbell as a participant with the Garden. He noted a great deal of time and effort have been spent on the Garden, he wants to see the garden continue.

Mr. C.D. Whitlow suggested that we take advantage of the Neusiok Trail for runs and walks; it needs to be advertised. It's a beautiful trail spanning from Oyster Point Recreation to Hwy 306.

Councilman Shinn expressed his appreciation for the Members involvement in the Recreation Advisory Commission. He thanked the Little League for bringing the Lighting of the Little League field to the RAC, he looks forward to hearing more. He agreed with Councilman Mc Coy regarding the Garden; adding Holly's involvement is vital as well as the RAC's full board involvement in all the recreational areas of town. Mr. Shinn welcomed the new members to the Commission.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm. Next meeting is February 19, 2015 at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelley Caldwell