

Newport Recreation Advisory Commission

February 19, 2015

6:30 PM

Approved March 19, 2015

Present Members:

Robert Lewis, CD Whitlow, Bernice Wooten, Kim Nead and Robert Harrell

Absent Members:

James Brooks (ex)

P.K. Johnson (ex)

Guest:

Vickie Edmondson

Tim Nunn

Missy & George Clements

Joey Wichtl

Staff:

Angela Christian, Town Manager

Kelley Caldwell

Town Council:

Councilman Mark Eadie

Councilman Chuck Chinn

The February 19, 2015 meeting of the Recreation Advisory Commission was called to order by Chairman Robert Lewis at 6:30. He then called for the adoption of the amended agenda **Ms. Kim Nead moved to adopt the agenda as amended, Ms. Bernice Wooten seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous.**

Chairman Lewis then gave the members' time to review the minutes of the January 15, 2015 meeting. **Ms. Bernice Wooten moved to approve the minutes as written. Mr. C.D. Whitlow seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous.**

Old Business:

Comprehensive Recreation Plan: Town Manager, Angela Christian suggested the Comprehensive Recreation plan be removed from the agenda. She suggested she arrange for students at ECU to handle this. Ms. Christian also noted a Master Plan becomes critically important for future development of Recreation Properties in the Town. It was additionally noted our last Master Plan was compiled around 1999. It is time for an updated plan. **Mr. Brian Harrell moved to remove the Comprehensive Recreation Plan from the agenda indefinitely. Mr. C.D. Whitlow seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous.**

New Business:

Citizens Comments: Chairman Lewis called on Mr. George Clements, President of Newport Babe Ruth. Mr. Clements proposed putting in two practice fields, one for Little League and one for Babe Ruth, at the Smith Park open space. He suggested a partnership with Little League for man power and financial assistance. He stated there was a need for backstops and pitching mounds, but he understands Town approval is necessary. Councilman Eadie stated he understands the Council's position was the space could be used for Little League practice as a suitable alternative;

otherwise he would not have approved the Community Garden's location. Chairman Lewis stated the space was approved for Little League use with the understanding they would install the backstops. Tim Nunn, Little League representative, said Little League will be utilizing the space this year. Mr. Clements suggested the Little League use the space located behind the third base line and the Babe Ruth use the space closest to the prison due to the distance of flying balls. Mr. Clements noted we are losing numbers each year and he hopes with Little League practicing out there it could be beneficial for everyone. Chairman Lewis suggested Mr. Clements put together a proposal for financial assistance and bring it back to the Recreation Advisory Commission. Mr. Nunn, Vice President, Little League stated they will be using the field for their Major teams.

Financial Report Kelley reported the Community Garden shows an increase in funds received. Ms. Holly Campbell turned in fees for three plot rentals. Balance in the Recreation fund is \$ 4,088.17 and \$5749. in the Garden Fund.

3/3 Basketball discussion: Mr. Brian Harrell shared the "Gus Macker 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament" information package as a general guide line for a tournament we could sponsor and use as a potential fund raiser. Mr. Harrell suggested play would take place outside on Town courts. Councilman Eadie suggested this could be bigger than the RAC could handle and suggested a subcommittee be put together to take on the project. Mr. Eadie named several individuals whom should be contacted. Chairman Lewis and Mr. Brian Harrell will put a committee together and will report back to the RAC.

CIP Discussion: Ms. Angela Christian reported the Town was informed recently by the State DOT of their grant award for 24 bicycle helmets. We will be partnering with the Police Department to conduct safety training along with handing out the helmets. The helmets will be delivered around April 30, 2015 for distribution within twelve months. She suggested partnering with some back to school programs.

Mrs. Christian continued explaining we are in the budget process now and some of the things she is looking at in Capital Improvements is refurbishing of our park and facilities. The playground equipment is old, parts have become obsolete and replacement parts are difficult to locate. While she will be writing grants for some funding, most of the funding for the refurbishing will come from the budget. The cost for playground equipment replacement is estimated at \$30,000 to \$35,000. This cost is for the largest piece of equipment which serves the 5 year to 12 year age group.

Mrs. Christian stated the park bathrooms are in need of dividers, separating the sink from the urinal in the men's room; the long term plan is to replace light fixtures for safety and replace the fixtures with stainless steel. These are big ticket items that will take time to implement.

Moving forward, she noted the upcoming Council retreat on February 24, at Ft. Benjamin. This is an open meeting and everyone is invited to attend. Mrs. Christian noted an agenda item for that meeting is discussion on Christmas decoration replacement and a Winter Festival. She hopes to have a winter community celebration including the faith based community. She also mentioned she is considering summer programs and hiring a part-time recreation coordinator. Mrs. Christian will share information she takes from the Council on these issues in our March meeting.

Glow- Run Little League special Event- Kelley Caldwell mentioned the Newport Little League applied for a Special Event Permit to hold a Night Run in Newport on April 17, 2015 at 7:00PM. The organizer, Julie Miller, has met with the Police Department to confirm the route and their assistance. As a requirement of the Special Event Policy, Newport Little League must carry a separate Insurance policy for coverage of \$1,000,000. for a public event held in Town. Mrs. Vickie Edmondson is here to represent Little Leagues request for assistance. Mrs. Edmondson presented two quotes, one for \$365 and \$315. She also checked with Little League, they will not allow this event to be a rider on their current policy. Mrs. Edmondson stated the run is a fund raiser for new lights on the Little League field, they are in the process of getting sponsors to cover the cost of tee shirts and other expenses of the fun-run. She is requesting financial assistance from the Recreation Advisory Commission in the amount of \$315. **Brian Harrell moved to fund the Insurance request of \$315. C.D. Whitlow seconded the motion. Vote: 4 yes, 1 abstain, motion carries.**

Council Comments: Councilman Eadie offered congratulations to the Recreation Commission. He noted that a member from the Newport Vikings Pop-warner Football and Cheer will attend the recreation meetings in the future. Mr. Eadie mentioned he recently spoke with Patrick Kneally of Morehead City Chick-fil-a who is looking for partner's in Newport. Chick-fil-a offers a sandwich program where an organization buys the sandwich for \$2.50 and resells them for \$4.00. The store will also hold "Spirit Nights" as fund raisers for organizations that qualify.

Councilman Shinn expressed his appreciation for the Members involvement in the Recreation Advisory Commission. He also thanked Little League and Babe Ruth for working together, stating that cooperation and coordination is key. If there is anything he can do to assist, let him know.

Mr. Tim Nunn asked to address questions raised last month with regard to the lighting. He mentioned the price for the lights was "turnkey" at \$75,000, no additional expenses for the transformer. He will need the Town's permission if the power company deems it necessary to put the transformer on the ground as opposed to on a pole. Mr. Nunn stated Little Leagues registration numbers are up and he appreciates the Commission's support.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm. Next meeting is March 19, 2015 at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelley Caldwell