



Parks, Arts, Recreation & Culture (PARC) Commission  
Thursday, August 4, 2011  
5:30pm

Cornelius Town Hall Meeting  
21445 Catawba Ave  
Cornelius, NC 28031  
www.corneliuspr.org

## Meeting Minutes

### I. Parks, Arts, Recreation & Culture Meeting

- a. Call to order: Chair Trimbur called the meeting to order.
  - 1) Present: PARC Commissioners, Del Arrendale, Karen Tovar, Chris Jones, Bruce Trimbur, Travis Dancy, Town Commissioner Chuck Travis, Ryan Hager, Recreation Superintendent, Mindi Stoner, Recreation Coordinator and PARC Director Troy Fitzsimmons.
- b. Introductions: The board welcomed three new PARC Commissioners: John Bradford, III (seat 1), Nicolle Lewis (seat 7) and Dan Kelly (seat 8).
- c. Public Appearances: none

### II. Approval of minutes (attachment)

- a. The minutes from the July 7<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved as submitted.

### III. PARC Commission Issues/Presentations set for a specific time:

5:45 Cornelius Lake Norman Youth Athletic Association affiliation – Superintendent Hager reported that the CLNYAA board had some division on who they wanted to affiliate their baseball program with (Pony or Little League). PARC's main interest is keeping partnership with CLNYAA and making sure recreational baseball and softball is offered to citizens. It does not matter to PARC who they affiliate with. As of Tuesday afternoon, CLNYAA has met and decided the following: baseball ages 5-12 will be affiliated with Little League, baseball ages 13-16 will be affiliated with Pony and softball will be affiliated with the North Meck Philly League. CLNYAA has provided the proper documentation to satisfy the town that this change was approved by their board.

Chair Trimbur stated there was a question if they actually went through the board process. Superintendent Hager responded that yes they have. The most recent agreement expires December 2014, so we wanted to make sure they will still provide what we want. They have met our requirements. Commissioner Arrendale asked why we revisited this if we have a contract with them for 3 years. Superintendent Hager responded that we want to make sure there is a youth baseball/softball program. Some people feel strongly about being affiliated with Pony vs. Little League.

6:00 Health Survey – Britney Beeler, Intern, and Julie Jackman, Worksite Wellness Coordinator with the Mecklenburg County Health Department presented their conducted CHANGE (Community Health Assessment and Group Evaluation) Tool and suggested recommendations for the Town of Cornelius PARC Department's Community Action Plan. The ultimate goal of this assessment was to provide an outline of top community health priorities in order to encourage healthy living and well-being. In addition, its intended to assist in making healthy living a priority via policy and environmental changes that support healthy lifestyles. The Mecklenburg County Health Department is a great resource in providing us with information on health services and assisting with building coalitions. As our department continues to pursue health initiatives that promotes healthy lifestyles within our community, this assessment will be viewed as a proactive approach providing validity for funding in making Cornelius a healthier place to live, work and play.

### IV. PARC Commission Subcommittee Recommendations & Reports

- a. Items to be placed on record – none
- b. Commissioner Reports

1) Commissioner John Bradford – Commissioner Bradford reported that he participated in National Night Out and heard great feedback from residents. They seemed to like the new venue because there was more room to spread out. He stated he was excited to be on the board and was happy to be here.

2) Commissioner Karen Tovar – Commissioner Tovar welcomed each new commissioner and thanked them for being a part of the board. She reported that a few commissioners met last Friday to join in on a walk-through of Robbins Park. Commissioner Tovar also reported that the Southern Lacrosse Showcase was coming to Elon Park in Charlotte October 15-16. She is looking forward to getting Cornelius to the point where we can host tournaments like this.

3) Commissioner Chris Jones – Commissioner Jones thanked Director Fitzsimmons for including the commissioners in the Robbins Park walk-through. He encouraged the rest of the board to participate in opportunities such as this. He reported that he was a part of a previous discussion regarding social activities where the board could meet together outside of the normal meeting room. There is an event by the Rotary called the Wine Spectacular on October 1st. The PARC Commissioners could get together and reserve a table.

4) Commissioner Tedd Duncan – absent

5) Board Chair Bruce Trimbur – Chair Trimbur informed the board of an article mentioning that former Director Paul Herbert is now working with Harrisburg Parks and Recreation. He stated he was happy for him and proud that he's moved on to this endeavor. Chair Trimbur also informed the board of another article titled "Davidson Park Space" stating that Davidson had paid \$3.7 million for 243 acres. The Town will now have 600 acres of continuous park space. Director Fitzsimmons added that the Charlotte Observer ran a similar story online showing a map. Chair Trimbur reported that he was involved in the walk through and punch list for Robbins Park. After the walk-through he took his wife through the natural trail and stated that it is incredible. You can get into new greenway from there. He added that it will be something we will all have to brag about. It is a remarkable asset. Director Fitzsimmons responded that it really is unique to this area and we plan on expanding it further.

6) Commissioner Del Arrendale – Commissioner Arrendale stated he was interested in an update on the coyotes. He reported that he, along with the CIP subcommittee, is working with Director Fitzsimmons on the CIP. It's an interesting process identifying what needs to be done, evaluate a priority for that and then get it approved through the budget process. The CIP process is really important. We all need to understand the process and importance of us being supportive of the budget.

7) Commissioner Nicolle Lewis – Commissioner Lewis reported that she was interested in the benefits of a farmers market and asked if there is there a current initiative to focus on that. Chair Trimbur responded that there is one at Jetton on Fridays. Commissioner Lewis added that the farmers market in Davidson has integrated an arts aspect to it. She also reported that she would be interested in a tour of the park facilities to learn more about all the park gems she's not currently aware of. Director Fitzsimmons responded that perhaps in September when it cools off we can schedule another tour.

8) Commissioner Dan Kelly – Commissioner Kelly reported that he talked with Director Fitzsimmons about getting concessions into Torrence Chapel Park. We could generate some revenue there. We could potentially use existing storage space and find a renter. Being a softball commissioner, I'm frequently asked why we don't have concessions. Director Fitzsimmons added that we are currently looking into this. Bids were due yesterday for mobile concession services within the parks. The thought was to see what the mobile concessionaires had, and they would be able to move from park to park. We received two bids but haven't opened them yet. That is a potential revenue source. We also asked for healthy options to be included in their proposals. We are hoping to get a concessionaire on board by September 1st. We will have concession operations out at WAC. Commissioner Arrendale asked if they will be staffed by volunteers and have a third party bringing in the concessions. Director Fitzsimmons responded, yes.

9) Commissioner Travis Dancy - Commissioner Dancy reported that he, Director Fitzsimmons and Superintendent Hager met with Top Gun Sports which is a reputable organization regarding tournament operations at WAC. They are going to submit a proposal that will be more comparable to Nations Baseball's proposal. He also reported that next week is the National Wheelchair Basketball Association Tournament of Champions. Superintendent Hager added that on August 11-12 PARC will be hosting eight official women's tournament games at Bailey Middle School. We are glad to keep some of the games here in Cornelius. Commissioner Dancy added that it is a great event and we're very excited. We're hoping to have this event every year. There are volunteer opportunities for anyone interested. Commissioner Arrendale asked for an idea of how many people this event will bring in. Commissioner Dancy responded that there are 250 athletes with seven countries represented. We could easily have over \$500,000 in economic impact. The German team is already here practicing. Japan gets in late tonight. There are three primary host hotels 2 of which are in Cornelius. We have already received tons of calls from families wanting to come. The semi-finals and finals will have a live web broadcast. That will be great exposure for our gyms. Town Commissioner Travis asked if there is something, as a PARC Board, we can do to promote people to stay in our town. Commissioner Dancy responded that Visit Lake Norman does a lot of hospitality work, registration, athlete bags, signage, including information on Huntersville parks. Director Fitzsimmons stated that would be something good for us to try to put together. Town Commissioner Travis added that it would be an opportunity for a captive audience. Commissioner Arrendale suggested that we have a subcommittee that focuses on PR and could develop something like this for Cornelius. Commissioner Dancy added that John Anderson has been great. Chair Trimbur suggested we add a PR Subcommittee as a future topic of discussion new business.

c. Town Commissioner Report - Town Commissioner Travis stated it was nice to have new commissioners join our board who have young children. We are glad to see that. We are thrilled to have you all here. He reported that the town board approved construction for the Veteran's Monument this past week. Groundbreaking has already occurred. It will be dedicated on Veteran's day this year.

Town Commissioner Travis also requested an update on the coyotes. He stated that feedback from residents is that the greenway is a ghost town.

#### d. Standing Committee Reports

1) Director's Report – Director Troy Fitzsimmons reported that the fireworks cancelled during June's Symphony in the Park event have been rescheduled for August 20<sup>th</sup> at 70's night in the Park.

Robbins Park Grand Opening will be the morning of September 17<sup>th</sup> and will have a nature theme component.

Adult softball registration began July 25th and as of today it is full with a couple teams on the wait list. Town Commissioner Travis asked how long the registration was open. Superintendent Hager responded it was open for about 2 weeks. We can only accommodate a certain amount of teams due to limited field space.

Director Fitzsimmons reported that we are laying sod at WAC. We're also laying footings for light poles. It is still looking good for an October completion date.

PARC has been in the midst of reorganization. Ryan Hager was promoted to Recreation Superintendent overseeing the programming staff. Ryan Wertz took over the Athletic Supervisor position. PARC is still in a transitional phase right now.

PARC staff is starting to get really involved in Robbins Park, cleaning up, etc. We received eight bids for cleaning services for Town Hall and the Arts Center. The current contractor retained the contract and a \$3,800 annual savings was achieved over last FY due to the competitiveness of the bids.

Stephan Hutchinson completed his Eagle merit badge completing and installing benches at Bailey Road Park disc golf course totaling nearly \$3,000 worth of donated labor and materials.

Director Fitzsimmons updated the board on the coyote issues. A meeting was held last week with Mecklenburg County Natural Resource and NC Division of Wildlife staff. There is a lot of concern and people are scared. We talked about what we could do to help reduce the anxiety surrounding the coyote sightings. We developed a PR piece to help people understand them better. We will have to learn to coexist out there. This piece explains the history of coyotes and what to do if you're approached by or see a coyote. This was distributed throughout Mecklenburg County yesterday and we received it today, so it will be forwarded to our media outlets. We're trying to make it more of a positive experience versus something to fear.

Also, effective December 1<sup>st</sup>, a law was passed allowing concealed handguns in parks, but in the last hour it was modified to prohibit handguns at recreational facilities except for being locked in a trunk, glove box, etc. while at the facilities. We currently don't allow any handguns under any circumstance in the park so we may have to modify our rules and regulation signage. We'll be taking a look at it.

**V. Old Business** – Superintendent Hager stated that contrary to previous reports, all middle school sports will be played this year thanks to a private donation.

**VI. New Business** – none

**VII. Adjournment**

Chair Trimbur adjourned the meeting.

**Next Meeting** – September 1, 2011, 5:30pm

<b>Upcoming Meeting Dates</b>
Thursday, October 06, 2011
Thursday, November 03, 2011
Thursday, December 01, 2011
Thursday, January 05, 2012