



Parks, Arts, Recreation & Culture (PARC) Commission
Thursday, December 1, 2011
5:30pm – 7:00pm

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

MINUTES

1) Parks, Arts, Recreation & Culture Meeting

- a) Call to order – Meeting was called to order by Chair Trimbur at 5:37pm.
Commissioners Present: Chair Bruce Trimbur, Karen Tovar, Chris Jones, Tedd Duncan, Del Arrendale, Nicolle Lewis, Dan Kelly, Travis Dancy and John Bradford (via phone)
Staff Present: Director Troy Fitzsimmons, Recreation Superintendent Ryan Hager, Athletic Supervisor Ryan Wertz, Special Events Coordinator Rhonda Hollingsworth, Karen Ulmer
- b) Introductions - Josh Brock, Town of Huntersville Athletic Supervisor; Michael Culbreth, PARC Commission applicant
- c) Public Appearances – None.

2) Approval of minutes (attachment)

Minutes from October 27, 2011, meeting were approved as written.

3) PARC Commission Issues/Presentations set for a specific time

5:40-6:00 – Lacrosse program proposal, Xtreme Lacrosse

John Mott, Founder and Director and John Lindekens, Operations Manager

Mott volunteered for Town program for many years. He saw other programs grow and flourish with better instruction and uniforms while town programs were lacking and kids began leaving town program. He modeled his program after program he grew up with. Xtreme is the only program in the state that provides team helmets. They also provide full uniforms. He showed a slide comparing what other teams in the league are charging for their leagues, ranging from \$150 to \$295. Xtreme is \$150. He noted the equipment cost is important. No kid in Xtreme ever has to buy a helmet and they are very expensive. Counting equipment, Xtreme is actually \$60 cheaper than the Town's program. Also, they bought equipment packages from Dick's, which allows participants to rent equipment for only \$50 per year. Players pay a uniform fee of \$100, covering 4 seasons; \$80 is refundable if they discontinue during the year and return the uniform. They showed cost breakdown. Running at about 21% profit margin. Have awarded \$4,275 in scholarships, about 20% of their gross revenue, and would never turn a child away. They have a nonprofit organization called Assist the Goal, which is funded through corporate donations and through 10% of their registration and 20% of their uniform fees. Families can link to this program through their website to apply for scholarships. They can offer full scholarships to about 1:5 kids in league. They award 25%, 50%, 75% - using CMS Free and Reduced Lunch model. John Mott knows all the kids, runs the program full time. They currently run K1-HS programs for boys and will be partnering with a girls' league in Charlotte to start offering girl's lacrosse. They offer free clinics with over 500 kids having attended. They work on getting more kids exposed to the sport. What sets them apart more than anything else is they encourage (not require) all their kids to participate in community service. They have a director of community outreach. They hold kids accountable in the classroom, have to have teacher recommendations to try out for their select teams. They pay their head coaches. All of their head coaches have played at the college level – only program that offers that level of coaching. Teams meet together and work together to devise coaching plans. Parent coaches are trained to assist but are never head coaches. They use the older HS kids to help coach the younger kids. They have

several high level, professional companies that they use for other instruction and clinics. Commissioner Kelly asked about helmet cost. Mott said they are the top of the line and offer highest level of safety. They work with Cascade to sanitize them and recertify them after each season. Commissioner Jones asked how long have they have been in business. They started this past spring with 67 kids. In the fall they more than doubled to 150. John Mott has been in this community for 10 years. Their biggest obstacle in the past has been obtaining fields.

6:00-6:20 – Lacrosse program proposal, Top Tier Lacrosse

Steve Schattner, President and Owner; Matt Segal, who will help with tournaments; Chris Ryan and Bob McIntosh, parents on their advisory committee; and Adam Olmstead, who will run their spring rec program. Top Tier has an advisory committee that will oversee their organization. They want to further advance the community and help grow the sport of lacrosse and grow the young men and women who play it. They want to grow both skill and character. They handed out a copy of their mission statement, which emphasizes developing character and discipline on and off the field. They embrace the role of influencing the lives of young people. Schattner has been coaching for 16 years in Charlotte. Scholarship policy: there has never been a time they have turned away a single family or player and they never will. In their three years they have donated \$26,625 in scholarships, for 113 players, the lion share to residents from Cornelius and Huntersville. Their fee structure is based on straight costs. All of their coaches have experience; if not, they do “coach the coaches” and partner them with someone with experience. Top Tier was the first lacrosse program in Charlotte to offer online registration. Schattner has experience in tournaments, leagues, camps and clinics since 1996. His goal has always been to help grow the sport and positively influence young men and women. T2 is focused in Lake Norman area. Schattner has met with Visit Lake Norman and NM Soccer to talk about running more tournaments. He wants to run two per year, with a minimum of 50 teams per tournament. Strengths of their program include they have a long history in Charlotte, started programs at NMHS, LNCS, currently head coach at Cannon School. They have the confidence of the families that they are looking out for the best interest of the kids on and off the field. They have coaches from Hough, Hopewell, CSD, Cannon, St. Mark, LNCS coaching in their program. Schattner and everyone on their advisory council all have fulltime jobs and do this to make the community better. They are working on creating a 501c3 program to build more donations and scholarships. Commissioner Duncan asked about their most difficult challenge in taking over town program. Schattner said it was communicating that this transition is a good thing, why it is being done and how it can benefit the community. Commissioner Tovar asked about a women’s program. They do run a women’s rec league but have not had enough interest in tournament-level women’s teams. Commissioner Lewis asked about how families can trial the sport if it is new to them. Schattner said they have free clinics and will work on a trade-in equipment program to make that part of it more affordable. Past two years they have brought down the top UNC lacrosse players to put on a clinic with a couple hundred participants. They try to teach the proper fundamentals in a fun way.

Upon conclusion of both presentations, Chair Trimbur opened the floor for discussion amongst Commissioners. He acknowledged we have two very good opportunities and both are pretty equal. He liked the T2 mention of bringing in people for tournaments. He asked for a first impression from all commissioners. Commissioner Arrendale liked Xtreme, is doubtful T2 can bring large numbers of hotel rooms. Superintendent Hager responded that regardless of whom we choose, they will bring in tournaments. Commissioner Kelly liked Xtreme, very organized, liked equipment program, they live in Cornelius. Commissioner Jones asked who Superintendent Hager would rather work with based on his experience with each program. Hager said they are both very passionate and dedicated to the sport of lacrosse and will both run a good program. We will partner with one and will still work with the other on a field rental basis. He shared that Huntersville chose Top Tier to run their lacrosse program. Commissioner Jones liked Xtreme. Chair Trimbur liked the idea of heads in beds but liked the passion of Xtreme.

Commissioner Tovar liked Xtreme, the way they compared the costs when factoring in equipment, that they provide good helmets and that they are partnering to begin a women's lacrosse program. Commissioner Duncan has two daughters that both played lacrosse. He is glad that we have two good choices and that neither group would go away. Liked Xtreme. Commissioner Lewis liked Xtreme because they are completely focused on lacrosse and had a clear system. Commissioner Jones made a motion: We are faced with two well-qualified options but have decided to go with Xtreme Lacrosse. Director Fitzsimmons is to begin a negotiation with Xtreme to get an agreement put together. If negotiations do not work out with Xtreme, we will go to Top Tier. The plan is a one-year test run with a four-year renewal option. Commissioner Tovar seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. (Commissioner Dancy excused himself from the meeting prior to the vote.)

6:30-6:50 – Pedestrian Plan presentation, Planning Director Karen Floyd

Director Floyd wanted to impress upon the PARC Commission how important it is to get their feedback on the pedestrian plan. The goal is to get a bike and pedestrian plan on the Town's master plan. NCDOT has changed their criteria to award grants. You have to have something in place that was endorsed by NCDOT. Floyd wants PARC to look at the maps for ideas and look for places pedestrians are using that are not actually trails or walkways. Planning sent out surveys and is getting feedback but they need buy-in from as much of the community as they can. She urged the commissioners to ask their kids and neighbors where they would like to walk and bike. Bikes should use multi use paths not sidewalks. Ten-foot multipurpose paths are safe and parents like them. The maps she showed are still in draft status. The charge to the PARC and Transportation Advisory boards is to identify sidewalk needs beyond the obvious civic locations. There will be a joint meeting on December 20 which is important because they are going to ask the DOT to participate and listen to our comments. We want construction grants and in order to get them we have to have a pedestrian plan in place. The Town is trying to become more "walkable". In 1996 the Town adopted a policy that new subdivisions require sidewalks on both sides of the road and they have been able to do that over 90% of the time. Planning is spending a lot of time getting the maps right and putting together ideas. Floyd encouraged the PARC Commission to forward her any suggestions and to attend the December 20 meeting.

4) PARC Commission Subcommittee Recommendations & Reports

- a) Items to be placed on record - None
- b) Commissioner Reports
 - 1) Commissioner John Bradford – Via Phone. If there is an opportunity for him to be the Town Board liaison to the PARC Board, he would love to be able to stay on as that person.
 - 2) Commissioner Karen Tovar – Excused herself from the meeting before reports were given.
 - 3) Commissioner Chris Jones – He attended Veterans Day event and thought it was well done.
 - 4) Commissioner Tedd Duncan – On Commissioner Tovar's behalf he reported that grants for community gardens were awarded in Mooresville so they are encouraged by that. He asked that all commissioners make an effort to go by the Planning Department to get a map and begin to work on gathering suggestions for the Pedestrian Plan.
 - 5) Board Chair Bruce Trimbur – Davidson parade is coming through on Saturday. A number of events are coming up for Christmas holidays: Holiday Celebration, Cocoa with Santa, Santa's Mailbox and Special Needs Holiday Event.
 - 6) Commissioner Del Arrendale – His wife and son attended the Veterans Day event and they raved about it and he heard glowing reports from many other people also.
 - 7) Commissioner Nicolle Lewis – Had marketing meeting and is looking forward to new logos being presented. We are in the early phase of discussion about the DNC, including Visit LKN. The Town will be introducing a new website soon and it will include a mobile component.
 - 8) Commissioner Dan Kelly – Attended Veteran Memorial and said it was a great time, touching moment, made him feel proud to be a member of the community.

- 9) Commissioner Travis Dancy – Excused himself from the meeting before reports were given.
- c) Town Commissioner Report – Commissioner Chuck Travis – Absent

d) Standing Committee Reports

- 1) Director's Report – Director Fitzsimmons reported rec basketball had 800 participants, 50 more than last year. Staff recently finished the Veterans Day program and has many upcoming holiday events. Town board approved support for the Red Line Trail. Staff had a good meeting with Thomas Finlay of North Meck Soccer Club. They asked what the Town needs from them to put artificial turf on Bailey Road Park soccer fields. Fitzsimmons was able to meet with several artificial turf providers while at NRPA conference in Atlanta and found that the price is coming down because it is becoming more mainstream. If we are able to turf the fields, we will have four lighted artificial turf fields and there would be no other facility like this in Mecklenburg County. Staff will revise estimates and bring back to Commission.

Town management, the Town attorney and Director Fitzsimmons met with Classica Homes and one resident from Robbins to discuss safety and traffic issues at Robbins Park around the playground.

They do not want any on-street parking in front of or across the street from their homes and requested the playground relocated. Town's official stance is that we would only eliminate parking on the resident's side of the street. We may consider moving the playground if they fund it.

Commissioner Duncan stated anyone complaining about the playground at Robbins Park would find no sympathy with the current PARC Commission. Commissioners Arrendale and Duncan would like to draft a letter saying how pleased we are with the park's plan and its success and we would not change anything, are fully in support of it. We will put that on the agenda for January. The January meeting will be held at Bailey Road Recreation Center and will include a tour and presentation by John Anderson.

5) Old Business

- a) Marketing Subcommittee – Covered under Commissioner Lewis' report.

6) New Business

- a) PARC Commission appointments – Director Fitzsimmons pointed out we were interviewing candidates just a few months ago and we had great candidates. Mr. Culbreth was one of them and was very highly ranked. He was contacted and said he was excited and honored to serve on the committee. We have a vacancy open now with Commissioner Bradford moving on to the Town Board. Fitzsimmons asked for the PARC commission to recommend reappointment of Commissioners Duncan and Arrendale, who wish to continue serving, and to appoint Mr. Culbreth for the open position. Chair Trimbur made a motion to make those appointments and Commissioner Lewis seconded. The motion was unanimously approved. On December 19, these will go before the Town Board for official appointment. Mr. Culbreth said he has lived here a long time, has young children and is excited to be a part of the PARC Commission. His family spends a great deal of time in our parks.
- b) PARC logo, Special Events Coordinator Rhonda Hollingsworth – The Marketing Subcommittee and staff have been working on several ideas and have narrowed down to two shapes – a circle and a diamond, both incorporating the Town's logo. They would like to be able to start using it in the beginning of 2012. The logo with the diamond shape was approved by the majority. Hollingsworth will finalize that concept.

7) Adjournment – meeting was adjourned at 8:17pm

Next Meeting – January 5, 2012 5:30pm, at Bailey Middle School

Future Dates: Thursday, February 2, 2012; Thursday, March 1, 2012; Thursday, April 5, 2012