



Parks, Arts, Recreation & Culture (PARC) Commission
Thursday, August 2, 2012
5:30pm – 7:00pm

Cornelius Town Hall
21445 Catawba Avenue
Cornelius, NC 28031
www.cornelius.org/parc

MINUTES

- 1) **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 5:33pm
- 2) **Determination of Quorum** – Quorum was reached with five commissioners in attendance and one attending via telephone.
Commissioners present: Chairman Bruce Trimbur, Michael Culbreth, Tedd Duncan, Nicolle Lewis, Travis Dancy and Dan Kelly (via telephone)
Staff Present: Director Troy Fitzsimmons, Karen Ulmer, Zach Roehrs
- 3) **Approval of Minutes (June)** – Minutes from the June 7, 2012, meeting were approved as written. (July meeting was cancelled.)
- 4) **Public Appearances – Citizen Concerns/Comments** - None
- 5) **Presentations**
 - a) Introduction of Summer Intern - Zach Roehrs
Director Fitzsimmons introduced Jonathan (Zach) Roehrs, a Sports Management and Business major from Barton College. He started with PARC in mid-May and will finish August 16. He has performed a variety of tasks, including cleaning bathrooms, spreading mulch and staffing camps, and has completed some special projects in the office, including a marketing analysis and a cost benefits analysis for special events weather insurance. He has done a great job and will be missed. Roehrs said he has liked the relaxed environment of PARC and feels the department staff works well together and is well organized. Biggest opportunity for PARC might be to offer more events and less summer camps, spreading events throughout the year.
- 6) **Director's Report** – Troy Fitzsimmons
 - PARC was awarded a \$5000 grant from ASC for cultural programming
 - Recreation/Arts Programs Coordinator Olivia Smallwood recently attended a NoDa artist market in an effort to reach out to other arts programmers
 - Cornelius was one of the hosts for the recent Disc Golf World Championships with 128 participants just at Bailey Road Park. Commissioner Dancy said overall more than 1100 athletes from 14 countries were represented.
 - Westmoreland Athletic Complex opened on July 7, followed by a Little League tournament
 - Beach Bash was last weekend with about 400 participants
 - Special Needs Coordinator Trina Roeder secured Buddy Scholarships from Angels in Need, providing 24 scholarships worth over \$1200
 - Staff is working on trying to get a holiday tree for Town Hall lawn and lighting ceremony

- Contract for Caldwell Station Creek Greenway is moving forward with NCDOT
- PARC has received official notification from NCENR for the PARTF grant for Robbins and WAC. The Town will have to provide an \$800,000 match. Director Fitzsimmons believes the Town's strong match is what got us this grant. Of the 50-60 applications, only 17 were approved.
- Fields remain closed at Bailey Road Park for field renovations. There will be a meeting at Hough High School on Monday morning at 9:15am for the Town Board and PARC board to take a look at their artificial surface. Commissioner Dancy has been assisting Director Fitzsimmons in putting together the presentation.
- There was significant storm damage last Friday, July 27, which went through Robbins Park, Oakhurst neighborhood and Bailey Road Park. Trees have closed trails, fallen on neighbors' fences, etc. Staff has been working hard to clean it up. Commissioner Duncan asked if the stump for the giant tree that fell at Robbins Park could be kept as a stump for counting rings, etc.

7) PARC Commissioner Recommendations & Reports

a) Items to be placed on record - None

b) Commissioner Reports

- 1) Commissioner Michael Culbreth – His family recently walked the trails at Robbins Park and noted how well the different trails were marked with different colors, making it very easy to navigate. He has also seen good usage of the Robbins Park multipurpose field by girls' lacrosse. Jetton Neighborhood Park seems underutilized and he asked if the small amount of parking might be limiting the use of the park. Director Fitzsimmons answered that if we added more parking the county would require us to add a restroom building. Commissioner Lewis suggested a low ropes course at Jetton and Fitzsimmons said that might be feasible at Robbins. Culbreth said the no tobacco signs are being ignored in the parks, especially noticed at Torrence Chapel Park. We need more signs or more visible signs. Director Fitzsimmons said we will need to continue to work with our athletic partners to inform and enforce this policy. Gene Ervin is starting up again next week so we will make sure he is reminding park patrons.
- 2) Commissioner Karen Tovar – Absent
- 3) Commissioner Chris Jones – Absent
- 4) Commissioner Tedd Duncan – He brought an article from the *Citizen* about a Community Garden in the Smithville community. They are looking for 10 people at \$10 each to get the garden started. He suggested the PARC Commissioners pitch in to sponsor several plots. \$50 cash was collected and will be forwarded to Lisa Mayhew-Jones of the Smithville Community Coalition. Commissioner Duncan saw that the press picked up our Special Needs programming. He also shared that Huntersville has presented a bond that includes \$4 million for a rec center.
- 5) Board Chair Bruce Trimbur – He was glad to see WAC finally opened and is looking forward to seeing its impact on the community. Wanted to commend Director Fitzsimmons for his hard work on this project. He attended the Beach Bash and noted there was not a big crowd. Fitzsimmons said he and Special Events Coordinator Mindi Stoner are talking about possible retooling of the Outdoor Concert Series.
- 6) Commissioner Del Arrendale – Absent
- 7) Commissioner Nicolle Lewis – She also brought the *Citizen* article about the Smithville Community Garden and also attended the Beach Bash. She liked that PARC gave away glow sticks to patrons in exchange for filling out surveys. The WAC Dedication Ceremony was great. Her neighbor has been sending her daughter to our Summer Day Camp and has loved it, though she wondered how we were able to charge so little for it. Director Fitzsimmons said we set up the program to only charge what we needed to cover our direct cost but that the cost will be adjusted moving forward. Another friend asked her about locked bathrooms at Smithville Park

in the evenings. Fitzsimmons said the Maglocks should be working within the next couple of weeks.

- 8) Commissioner Dan Kelly – Fall softball registration ends tomorrow and numbers look about the same or slightly higher than numbers from spring. There may not be a 17u age group but should have all others.
 - 9) Commissioner Travis Dancy – He is looking forward to Monday’s synthetic turf tour. Most Town Board members will be there. Hough High School’s Athletic Director will be there to speak about having turf for three years now. Also attending will be Thomas Finlay with North Meck Soccer Club, which plans to increase their contributions to us once we acquire turf fields, and Mike Newell with the Lake Norman Giants. He added that our region’s next big event is the North Meck Soccer Club’s kick off tournament, August 26-27.
- c) Town Commissioner Report – Commissioner John Bradford – Absent

8) Old Business

- a) PARC Commission Goals – The following commissioners were assigned to the committees below. Staff will work with commissioners to schedule some meetings.
- 1) Cornelius Arts Center and arts programming – Develop a comprehensive list of best practices from other communities that can be deployed in Cornelius and assist in the development of a program plan for the Cornelius Arts Center (PARC Staff: Hager, Smallwood) (PARC Commissioners: Trimbur, Lewis and Duncan)
 - 2) Community garden(s) – Formulate a means by which a community garden or gardens can be developed in Cornelius on or off park land. (PARC Staff: Hager, Smallwood) (PARC Commissioners: Tovar, Trimbur and Duncan)
 - 3) Comprehensive Parks Master Plan – Assist staff in developing a comprehensive capital improvement plan prioritizing projects that may be placed on a possible general obligation bond referendum and educate elected officials and citizens on those park needs. (PARC Staff: Fitzsimmons, DeKemper) (PARC Commissioners: Jones, Arrendale, Duncan and Kelly)
 - 4) Advocacy for synthetic turf installation at Bailey Road Park – Determine the cost and benefits for providing synthetic turfed fields at Bailey Road Park’s three multipurpose fields. (PARC Staff: Fitzsimmons, DeKemper) (PARC Commissioners: Arrendale, Dancy, Kelly and Culbreth)
 - 5) Reinstating collaborative meetings with neighboring Parks & Recreation departments – Initiate a joint Commission meeting with the Towns of Huntersville and Davidson, and the Mecklenburg County North Park Region Advisory Council. (PARC Staff: Fitzsimmons) (PARC Commissioners: Dancy, Tovar and Lewis)
 - 6) Establishing a PARC tie-in event with the annual Big Day at the Lake – Develop a related event with Big Day at the Lake that will promote PARC and lead to a future program that provides a lake oriented event for Cornelius residents. (PARC Staff: Stoner) (PARC Commissioners: Jones, Lewis, Kelly and Culbreth)

9) New Business

- a) Hough High School Parking
- Director Fitzsimmons showed a slide presentation regarding parking at and around Hough High School. Last year, in the fall staff noticed some additional cars parked in the Bailey Road Park soccer lot and the number increased as the year went on. Kids were also parking in the Bailey Springs neighborhood but that parking will be discontinued. There was an independent lot run by an individual along Bailey Road that has also been closed down by the Town. Enrollment at the school will increase this coming year. We estimate 500 potential cars looking for space this school year, with only 353 student lot spaces at the school. Cornelius Police Chief Bence Hoyle has written

a letter to the HHS principal asking for increased parking spaces on campus. Fitzsimmons asked the PARC Board for some guidance.

- Commissioner Duncan asked that we look into providing paid parking to generate park revenue. Fitzsimmons said we could look into that at some point but he did not think the program could be in place in time for the start of the school year in a few weeks.
- Commissioner Culbreth suggested we reserve field side parking for park use only.
- Chair Trimbur suggested we install a sign stating that the lot was under video surveillance. He would like to use the CMS policy to determine who would qualify for the permits.
- Commissioner Culbreth suggested, of the 117 spaces at the soccer lot, permit 100 spaces for students and leave 17 for park use only.
- Director Fitzsimmons said issuing parking permits has been cleared by the Town attorney.
- Commissioner Duncan recommended we post Park Use Only signs for now, then see how the year progresses. If we decide to offer permitted parking, we approach the school about taking their waiting list and giving those students first preference.

Commissioner Culbreth made a motion that the soccer lot be kept public as it is now and the baseball/tennis and basketball lots be designated for park use only. PARC staff will monitor parking lot usage and the PARC Board will revisit the issue after the first quarter of the school year.

Commissioner Duncan seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

It was also suggested that PARC post signs with messages such as, “ these spaces are provided by the Cornelius PARC, please be respectful”, “Clean up your trash”, “Consider volunteering”, etc .

Commissioner Lewis suggested using QR code on the signs and changing the page to which the codes direct regularly.

10) Adjournment – Meeting was adjourned at 7:37pm

Next Meeting – September 6, 2012 5:30pm

Future Dates: Thursday, October 4, 2012; Thursday, November 1, 2012; Thursday, December 6, 2012;