

ALAMANCE COUNTY
RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE TUESDAY, APRIL 19, 2022 MEETING
CEDAROCK EQUESTRIAN CENTER
5160 FRIENDSHIP PATTERSON MILL ROAD, BURLINGTON, NC 27215

MINUTES

Members Present (Underlined): Chairman Lee Isley, Vice-Chair Kelly May, Commissioner Bill T. Lashley, Mr. Ryan Bowden, Ms. Ann Meletzke, Ms. Bhavna Hilligrass, Mr. David Woody, Ms. Kelly Ronnow, Mr. Mike Dunning, Ms. Lisa Wolff, Mr. Peter Dahl

Alamance Parks Staff Present: Brian Baker, Director; Anna Bowland, Grants & Communications Coordinator

Members of the Public Present: Andrew Sam, Tommy Purcell

I. COMMUNICATIONS

A. The meeting was called to order and a quorum was established at 6:12pm

B. Approval of the February 15, 2022 Minutes

Upon a motion of Peter Dahl and the second of Kelly Ronnow, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2022 meeting.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Tommy Purcell and Andrew Sam, who are trail building volunteers in Alamance County, remarked that they were proud of the progress and investment that Alamance County has made in its parks over the years. They complimented the work of the park maintenance staff in keeping the trails in good shape.

III. REPORT OF CHAIRMAN

No report

IV. REPORT OF STAFF

Department Report

Director Brian Baker reported that park attendance continues to be steady with many people visiting the parks. The Eli Whitney Quilting Party was held last month. This party has been held for 91 years and is the longest-running annual quilting event in the country. The youth baseball season has begun and practices are underway. The Department has also kicked off its new Alamance Inclusive Recreation (AIR) programming which includes trail walking, yoga, and functional fitness. These programs are introductory and open to participants of all abilities. The park volunteers, including trail building groups, continue to be very active and the Department is appreciative of all of their work. The Department continues to seek applications for the Park Technician 1 position and is currently down two staff members.

ALCOVETS Balloon Festival

Brian Baker informed the Commission that the ALCOVETS Balloon Festival will be held September 9-11 at Cedarock Park. Organizers and staff are working through the logistics of this event.

Cane Creek Mountains Natural Area Update

Brian Baker updated the Commission on the development of Phase 2 of the Cane Creek Mountains Natural Area. Construction on the parking lot for Phase 2 has begun and the contracted trail builders have begun work on the trail leading to the tower. The trail building volunteers continue to work each Monday and have completed approximately half of the volunteer trail with 1 mile remaining to build. The bid for the tower construction has been awarded to Sasser Companies and planning for the tower is underway. Phase 2 of the park is expected to open in the spring of 2023. Additionally, the Department has flagged the first trail for Phase 3 of the park.

V. UNFINISHED AND OLD BUSINESS

Alamance Parks 2022-23 Budget

Brian Baker informed the Commission that he gave a presentation to the Alamance County Commissioners last week to update them on the Department's needs for the upcoming year. Peter Dahl inquired as to the status of the county's American Rescue Act Funds. Commissioner Lashley reported that the county continues to consider the best way to disperse that money and is expected to continue to allocate funds in the coming months.

Land Acquisition along the Haw River Trail

Per the request of Peter Dahl, Brian Baker provided an update on the progress of land acquisitions along the Haw River Trail. Acquisitions have been secured along the Altamahaw to Shallow Ford Natural Area route. The Trails and Open Spaces Coordinator, Nolan Carter, continues to work with landowners to secure easements.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Youth Athletics Overview

Brian Baker updated the Commission on the state of the Department's Youth Athletics Program. The program is faced with two converging issues: the need for extensive repairs to facilities and declining participation numbers. The Department does not own athletics facilities and instead utilizes Alamance Burlington School System facilities. Declining participation numbers are part of a larger national trend that most other municipalities are also experiencing. Investments are needed to facilities at the four corners of the county where players are concentrated to ensure that conditions are safe for players and spectators. The Department also continues to explore implementing an Afterschool Youth Athletics program for students in Alamance Burlington School System's afterschool care who may not have access to traditional athletics programs. The Department and the Commission will continue to discuss the future path of the Athletics Program. No action taken.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:20pm upon the motion of Peter Dahl and second of Mike Dunning.

Respectfully Submitted, Brian Baker