



Recreation and Parks Commission

Meeting Minutes

November, 21 2023 at 12:30pm

Impact Alamance • 133 E Davis Street, Burlington

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair Ms. Lisa Wolff, Vice-Chair Mr. Peter Dahl, Commissioner Bill T. Lashley, Mr. Dan Ingle, Mr. David Woody, Ms. Kelly Ronnow, Mr. Mike Dunning, Dr. Harold Kernodle, Mr. Thomas Purcell, Mr. Craig Yokeley, Elizabeth Read

ALAMANCE PARKS STAFF PRESENT:

Jamie Merchel, Director; Nolan Carter, Trails and Open Space Coordinator; Anna Bowland, Grants & Communications Coordinator

PUBLIC PRESENT:

None

1) COMMUNICATIONS

- a) The meeting was called to order and a quorum established at 12:28 pm
- b) The October 17, 2023 meeting minutes were approved unanimously upon the motion of David Woody and second of Peter Dahl.

2) PUBLIC COMMENT

None

3) REPORT OF CHAIRMAN

- a) Chair Lisa Wolff noted the Department's participation in the Great Alamance Creek Feasibility study with the kickoff meeting being held on November 14.

4) REPORT OF STAFF

- a) Monthly Department Report: Director Jamie Merchel gave Department updates:
 - Programs: Fall Archery is wrapping up and was very successful with the largest enrollment to date. The program now has 2 instructors which enabled the program to accept more students. Basketball – practices have begun for traditional league style. Center Court registration is still open and begins in January. Participation numbers for basketball are on pace with recent years. Jamie will send out a breakdown of participation by age, gender and sport over the past several years for Youth Athletics.
 - Equestrian Vendor: The Department is still seeking a vendor to offer horse riding services at Cedarock Park. The request for proposal is open and posted on the Alamance Parks website.
 - Open Position: The Department seeks a part-time person to staff the Cedarock Visitors Center. The position is posted to the Alamance County government hiring site.



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5) OLD BUSINESS

Haw River Trail Updates: Nolan Carter and Peter Dahl gave updates:

- Volunteers are continuing to build trail in Saxapahaw north of the dam. The group is almost to the end of the easement.
- A section of trail at The Valley currently puts hikers into the fairway of the golf course. There is a possible route to cut trail through a new area to make it an easier path but this will require a lot of work to cut through growth. There was also a suggestion to add/improve signage in this area. Nolan will work with the volunteers on options for this area.
- New trail at Shallow Ford Natural Area opened on Saturday, October 21, which was also North Carolina Great State Trails day. Alamance Parks staff and Friends of the MST volunteers were on site at the trailhead to provide materials and greet hikers. Peter Dahl noted that members of the Harrison and Lake families, who had formerly owned and farmed this land, were in attendance and were very grateful for the trail. This type of “success story” is motivating to continue the great work of the Haw River Trail and Mountains-to-Sea Trail.

b) Cane Creek Mountains Natural Area: Nolan Carter and Jamie Merchel gave updates:

- The Lookout Trail (Oak Hill Trailhead) and campsites (Pine Hill Trailhead) opened on October 13. Work continues on the Observation Tower – a permit has been issued; however, work is on hold until the tower material type is finalized. Nolan is meeting with Barr Construction and the Project Engineer to determine the cost for using a non-combustible composit material.
- Planning for Phase 3 of the park is underway. Nolan and Andrew Sam (Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail, Alamance Task Force Leader) have flagged the new trail and are preparing for trail building work to begin.

c) Cedarrock Park Playground:

- Jamie reported that the purchase order for the playground is submitted and they expect to break ground in March.

d) BE Jordan Renovation Update:

- Jamie reported that the purchase order is in hand for demo and the project team is finalizing the details and specifications of the ballfield facility. The goal is to schedule the bulk of the construction for the summer break with students will be out on break.

6) NEW BUSINESS

a) 2024 Meeting Schedule:



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- Jamie presented the upcoming year's meeting schedule. No conflicts were voiced. The board agreed to cancel the December 2023 meeting and reconvene at the January 16 meeting.

- b) Great Alamance Creek Feasibility Study: Jamie Merchel and Lisa Wolff gave updates:
 - The Department continues to partner with Chatham County and Central Pines Regional Council on an EDA Economic Development grant for Haw River Trail. The first Steering Committee meeting for the study was held on November 14. Alamance Parks is working with the consultant, Alta, to conduct partner interviews, develop public input surveys and participate in community tabling events. Jamie will send out the upcoming outreach events and Parks Board members are invited to participate in these.
 - Lisa noted that in addition to providing recreation opportunities, development of the Great Alamance Creek provides an economic benefit as well.
 - Discussion took place about public outreach opportunities and locations

- c) Preservation Burlington Received Funds for Glencoe:
 - Elizabeth Read reported that Preservation Burlington received \$150,000 from the NC General Assembly to paint the water tower in Glencoe. This allotment of resources is part of a broader effort to invest in the Glencoe community. Jamie noted that the Department is currently working to build a plan and proposal to provide more connectivity in Glencoe.

- d) Regulator Disc Golf Course at Cedarock Park:
 - David Woody praised the Department for planning and building the Regulator Disc Golf Course at Cedarock Park in a timeframe of 2 years. The course is attracting the attention of large tournaments which has a big economic impact to the county.

- e) Rock Creek Trail at Cedarock Park:
 - Kelly Ronnow inquired whether staff were walking the trails on a daily/weekly basis. Nolan confirmed that they were. Kelly recommended that more signage would be helpful for clarification at the area where the Rock Creek Trail connects with the Curtis Mill Trail. Staff will look into this area and determine if more signage is needed.

7) ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:26pm by acclamation.