



Recreation and Parks Commission

Meeting Minutes

January 21, 2025

Alamance Parks Office 3916 R. Dean Coleman. Burlington, NC 27215

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Vice-Chair Mr. Peter Dahl, Dr. Charles Parker, Commissioner Ed Priola, Mr. David Woody, Ms. Kelly Ronnow, Dr. Harold Kernodle, Mr. Thomas Purcell, Elizabeth Read (via Zoom), Lee Isley (via Zoom)

ACRP DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT: Jamie Merchel – Director, Chase Parrish – Grants and Communications Coordinator, Guil Johnson – Athletics Director, Michael Scott – Parks Superintendent, Nolan Carter – Trails and Open Space Coordinator, Karoline Cox - Intern

1) COMMUNICATIONS

- a) Call to Order and Establish Quorum
 - i) Meeting called to order at 12:30pm. Quorum established
- b) Review and approval of the November 19, 2024 minutes
 - i) Motion to approve, motion carries

2) PUBLIC COMMENT

3) REPORT OF CHAIRMAN

4) REPORT OF STAFF

- a) Welcome Michael Scott – Parks Superintendent
- b) Youth Athletics Update – Guil Johnson
 - i) The start to the new athletics model that the department has adopted has seen a very successful kickoff. The current basketball season has 220 participants signed up, with a ratio of about 50/50 between new and returning participants. We were able to increase the percentage of kids who participate in multiple programs from 9.1% to 64% when comparing last year to this year. Intro to Sports allowed us to reach 75 kids, two successful kickball programs, volleyball nearly 50 participants, 47 of those were female. Fall total, 165 kids. Fall and basketball combined is nearly 400 kids. With the projected Spring/Summer programs we should be increasing our overall participation numbers when comparing to last year. Fall sports we've had over 660 contact hours with the youth in the community (excluding basketball and club sports).
 - ii) Spring sports will bring dodgeball, indoor soccer, team handball, intro to sports, intro to strength training, cross country, family disc golf, wiffleball.
 - iii) Baseball – There will be a club baseball league that we will partner with when it comes to space needed to play. We will offer a rec baseball option in June/July after club ball is complete.
 - iv) Football – Football will continue with the club ball model while Guil continues to work to help facilitate.
 - v) Guil shared some of the positive responses he has received via email from parents who have children currently participating in our basketball program.
 - vi) Dr. Charles Parker offered the suggestion of looking into offering a cross country option

of a “long run” for students who would like additional conditioning on a Saturday that the schools may not have space/time for within their sports schedule.

5) OLD BUSINESS/UPDATES

- a) PG Disc Golf Course
 - i) Park Manager Dusty Cantley and his team have finished the back 9 holes. There has already been an increase in course usage since the completion. New signage will be installed this Spring.
- b) Cane Creek
 - i) The observation tower’s deadline is February 28th, we are currently waiting on the fabrication and installation of the stairs. Will be cutting it close to the deadline. Parking lot of phase 3 has a deadline of June 15th. 2 miles of trail have already been built, flagging of the next loop (around 3-4miles) will begin soon.
- c) BE Jordan
 - i) Grading has been completed and site is prepped for plumbing and electrical work. Pre-fab concession building should be arriving late February.
- d) Village of Alamance Paddle Access
 - i) Site cleanup has been completed. Waiting on DOT permit and then groundbreaking will begin.
- e) Alston Quarter
 - i) We are actively working with the buyers of the property who are closing on the property soon and will work with us to sell us pieces of the property in phases.
- f) Carolina Mill
 - i) Capital Broadcasting has been in touch about donating the property and they have completed their demolition process. We will have to complete a phase 2 and phase 3 study before moving forward since the property has technically changed now due to the demolition process. A grant opportunity is coming up in May where the donation of the land will be used as a match for funds that we hope to use towards the goals we have for Carolina Mill. We will work to secure the property so that the public who are walking through will have directions to safely navigate around.

6) NEW BUSINESS

- a) AFP Grant Application
 - i) Deadline is March 1st. This grant will be for Cedarrock Park, offered from PARTF. There is no guarantee that this will be offered again, so we are taking advantage of this opportunity now. Deeper details on the grant to be discussed at our next meeting. Kelly Ronnow asked about a pathway at the historical farm. There will be a chapel hill grit material used to create an accessible pathway leading through the farm. Ed Priola asked a question regarding the annual upkeep and maintenance that this project would create once completed. This project would have no major impact on the department’s budget and funds needed to maintain new features. Motion to approve by Vice Chair Peter Dahl. Motion carries.
- b) LWF Grant Application
 - i) We recently applied and asked for \$10.5 mil. And were awarded \$4mil, which means this project must be completed in phases now. We hope to close on phase 1 this calendar year. Phase 2 will be applied for this Spring, no funds will be asked for from the general fund. The land fill will purchase a portion of land that will be used as a match for the grant. Phase 1 has the potential to begin work in 2025. This project will add an additional 900 acres that the department manages, so it will increase our need for an additional park technician position to support as well as an increase in our budget for park maintenance. Motion to approve by Peter Dahl. Motion carries.

- c) 24/25 Facilities Improvement Plan
 - i) Information to be emailed out to members for the sake of time.

7) ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) Amateur Sports Grant Award – Athletics/Archery
 - i) Awarded \$8,720 from NC Amateur Youth Sports Grant for new baseball/softball equipment (gloves, helmets, bats) and outdoor archery targets.
- b) RTP Grant Award – Haw River Trail
 - i) Awarded \$78,000 for paddle and land trail improvements
- c) 2 New Trail Races Coming in 2025 at Cane Creek Mountain Natural Area
 - i) One race will be held in September and the other in November, more information coming later in the year.
- d) 2025 Balloon Festival
 - i) ALCOVETS have chosen to not hold a 2025 festival. They are working as a group to figure out their approach for the next festival that they hold.

8) ADJOURNMENT

- a) Meeting adjourned at 2:10pm

Next Meeting February 18th, 2025 Burlington Historic Depot/CVB