

# SMYRNA PARKS AND RECREATION PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

## MINUTES OF APRIL 20, 2021

The monthly Smyrna Parks and Recreation Parks Advisory Board Meeting was held April 20, 2021 at Smyrna Outdoor Adventure Center, Smyrna, Tennessee. Mike Moss called the meeting to order at 5:03pm.

**PRESENT** Fourteen people were present: Carl Boyd; Tommy Williams; Councilmember H.G. Cole; Ernie Felts; Michael Potts; Clay Phillips; Scott Poston; Charles Scurr; Mike Moss, Director; Jimmy Stitt and Kay Arnold, staff; Brian Hercules, Town Manager; Rex Gaither, Assistant Town Manager; Charles King, Engineer

**ABSENT** Mayor Mary Esther Reed and Eli Victory

**SUMMARY** Prayer: Jimmy Stitt

Citizen's Comments: None

Review and Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings: Michael Potts moved to approve March's minutes; Tommy seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

Old Business: None

New Business: Mike welcomed the board's newest members: Carl Boyd, Clay Phillips, Charles Scurr, and Eli Victory. He asked the new board members that were present to tell a little about themselves.

According to the Smyrna Municipal Code, in April of each calendar year, members of the Parks Advisory Board should select a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. Mike opened the floor for nominations for Chairperson. Councilman Cole nominated Ernie Felts for Chairperson. The motion received a second. The board approved the motion unanimously. Mike opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chairperson. Councilman Cole nominated Tommy Williams; Ernie seconded the motion. The board approved the motion unanimously.

Concerning Discussion of Youth Football in the Community, Mike began the discussion by stating that Stewarts Creek School started a Youth Football program, which will play their games at the Stewarts Creek High School and is designed to be a feeder league for the high school. So far, they have not asked the Parks Department for much. They did ask to advertise

their program in Smyrna's parks. Mike did not allow it because of the department's User Agreement with Smyrna Youth Football. They also asked for practice areas, as well as advice and guidance in getting their league started.

Smyrna Youth Football has been in existence for 53 years and we (Parks Department) consider the league as our service provider. Mark Dye met with Mike a couple months ago to invite Stewarts Creek to incorporate with Smyrna Youth Football. Mike asked for the board's thoughts about working with the two leagues. Tommy asked about the conversation between the two leagues. Stewarts Creek asked Mark Dye to help them get the league set up and established; he declined.

Mike shared that Blackman School started their football program 10-15 years ago. There seemed to be enough kids to go around for both programs back then.

Council Member Cole stated that Stewarts Creek is a Smyrna school and they deserve support in some fashion. Smyrna Youth Football is not directly associated with Smyrna High School – it is a rec program. Mike stated that the Town has a strong relationship with Stewarts Creek School in various ways.

Smyrna Youth Football League plays other teams outside its league, from other towns. Who does the school youth football league teams play?

Mike stated that Smyrna Youth Football League's numbers of teams have decreased in the past few years due to several reasons. The concussion issue is a major concern for parents now, so there are not as many kids playing in the league. The league currently has 10-12 teams and includes the Cheer Program too.

Concerning Cedar Stone Park Usage and Revenue Update (first spring using all 4 fields), the Baseball League is flourishing! We have already had to expand the parking lot at Cedar Stone with stone. The league plays Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and some Saturdays. Since January 2021, the town has collected \$12,500 revenues from tournament fees at Cedar Stone Park. The concessions have been making some good revenues too during league games and tournaments.

There have been some good groups at the park holding weekend tournaments. If it rains during a tournament, because of the turf fields, they just wait until the rain stops then resume playing. Councilman Cole asked about the draining of the turf fields. Mike replied that it drains very well because it has a thick gravel bed underneath the turf. The ballfield lighting is incredible – no spill light. Jimmy added that the turf is holding up well. There was one seam that came loose but the vendor repaired it immediately.

Jimmy stated that Cedar Stone Park has become the Lee Victory RecPark of the south side of Smyrna. The playground is packed consistently, and the playground equipment is spread out so well that it accommodates a lot of people at once.

Reports of Officers, Committees, or Staff: Mike reviewed upcoming events listed on the agenda. He added that we plan to hold our large community events this year such as Simply Smyrna and Independence Day Celebration. We also plan to open the Splashpad at Gregory

Mill and SplashTown in May. Councilman Cole asked if the Splashpad is running well. Jimmy replied that the equipment will need some significant upgrading in the next two years.

SOAC's "Paddlecraft Adventures" program will be launched May 1<sup>st</sup>. Rentable kayaks, canoes, and paddle boards will be stored at the SOAC, so the pickup/drop off of equipment will be here. We will provide a map of local put-ins to the renter, but they will be able to take the equipment anywhere.

Director's Report: Mike reviewed his monthly report. He added that lots of progress is being made on the Freedom Playground as well as the new playground being installed at Old Rock School Park. We will have a ribbon cutting ceremony at Freedom Playground in late May.

Councilman Cole gave kudos to Rex Gaither and Brian Hercules, as well as town directors, in managing town revenues very well, and produced a revenue surplus this fiscal year. Brian stated that he received a phone call praising the Parks Department's ability to quickly clean up recently flooded Volunteer Park and get it ready to use again by the Adult Softball League. They were impressed on the speed of cleanup and how it was accomplished so quickly. Kudos to the Maintenance Division! Mike stated that the Rotary Soccer Park flooded also, with sewage backing up into the park.

Mike continued his report stating that we had some old, dangerous trees removed at Old Rock School Park per an arborist's recommendation. We will plant more trees at the park at a later date. We may be able to move the outdoor basketball courts to full court later this summer, depending on Covid vaccination rate within the county.

Council Report: Councilman Cole reviewed highlights from the latest meeting. The contract to design Cedar Stone Park Phase II was approved.

Charles reported that in September pedestrian gates should be installed in the Zama Park area near the train track, to cross the railroad. Additionally, new sidewalks will be installed along a section of Lowry Street, on both sides of the street.

Other: Charles reported that the bid for the Lee Victory Recreation Park Entrance Project was awarded to Charles DeWeese Construction for \$1,163,000.

Brian shared that the Budget Retreat was recently held to review Fiscal Year 2021-2022's budget. He feels the Parks Department fared very well; it appears that the tennis court/pickle ball courts will be approved to be built at Cedar Stone Park. The Town continues to grow. The Police Department will hire more staff in FY21-22. There are some large projects to address in the next few years: roads, wastewater treatment plant, fire stations, parks. The Jefferson Pike widening project will take approximately 3 years to complete. The goal of the council is to provide a quality of life that Smyrna residents expect. Brian is excited for the town and the community.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15pm.