

# SMYRNA PARKS AND RECREATION PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

## MINUTES OF April 18, 2023

The monthly Smyrna Parks and Recreation Parks Advisory Board Meeting was held April 18, 2023, at Smyrna Outdoor Adventure Center, Smyrna, Tennessee. Director Mike Moss called the meeting to order at 5:01pm.

**PRESENT** Sixteen people were present: Michael Potts; Clay Phillips; Mark Hardy; Nicole Green; Eli Victory; Mayor Mary Esther Reed; Councilmember H.G. Cole; Molly Jennings; Ashley Lester; Christina Treglia; Mike Moss, Director; Jimmy Stitt, Assistant Director; Kay Arnold, staff; Brian Hercules, Town Manager; Rex Gaither, Asst. Town Manager; Charles King, Town Engineer

**ABSENT** None

**SUMMARY** Mike opened the meeting by announcing that Ashley Lester and Nicole Green are our newest Parks Advisory Board members, tonight being their first meeting. Additionally, Clay and Eli were re-appointed for a second term. Mark Hardy is back on the board after a two-year break. Mike welcomed everyone to the board.

Prayer: Mark Hardy

Citizen's Comments: None

Review and Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings: Molly motioned to approve March 2023 minutes; Clay seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

Old Business: Concerning Mountain Bike Trail Update, Mike displayed a concept plan of the Mountain Bike Trail (MBT) that will be built at Sharp Springs Park. We requested permission to build the project from U.S. Corps of Engineers back in 2021, and finally obtained approval in March 2023. The Disc Golf parking lot and parking area at the E.A. Victory Shelter will serve as the parking areas to access the MBT. There is an additional parking area to the north also. There are two areas where the MBT crosses the greenway, but they will be clearly marked for bikers to yield to greenway users the right-of-way. The MBT will remain essentially primitive. We do not want to disturb the wildlife and nature. The trail will be approximately 2 miles in length, 8-10 feet wide. There will be a bridge to cross low spots and adequate signage. We will most likely install gates so that it can be closed when it floods. No opening date has been set yet.

Eli asked if the Mountain Bike Trail is something that was requested by the public. Mike replied that there have been inquiries over the past few years and it's trendy right now. It is also a great way to utilize the land with low impact.

New Business: Concerning Parks Advisory Board Role and Mission, Mike displayed and reviewed a list of example tasks that a board member might experience while serving their term:

- Selection of Lifetime Service Award recipient
- Selection of Young Leader Award
- Provide input for park design and development
- Grant Project review and support
- Review and support of Events and Programs
- Parks Master Plan development and recommendation to the Town Council
- Provide input for various Parks and Recreation subjects, facilities, and issues
- Ambassadors for the Town and Parks Department
- Policy Review
- Fee review and recommendation to the Town Council
- Naming or renaming Park Facilities -- recommendation to the Town Council
- Judge Costume Contests at Halloween in the Park

Concerning Parks and Recreation Department Overview, Mike stated that there are four divisions that make up the Parks Department: Administration, Athletics & Aquatics, Maintenance, and the Smyrna Outdoor Adventure Center. He displayed a map of Smyrna highlighting all the park locations throughout town. Pioneer Park and Westfork Park are two parks that are less familiar to residents. Mike added that the department's Master Plan was last updated in 2021.

Concerning Selection of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, *Mayor Reed motioned to appoint Clay Phillips as Chairman of the Parks Advisory Board. Councilman Cole seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.*

*Councilman Cole motioned to appoint Molly Jennings as Vice Chairwoman of the Parks Advisory Board. Clay seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.*

Reports of Officers, Committees, or Staff: Mike reviewed upcoming events listed on the agenda. Charles asked if the department received permission from USACE for the canoe launch at Sharp Springs. Mike replied that we did but it may require a permit.

Continuing with his report, Mike stated that Kids Safety Day is scheduled for May 6<sup>th</sup>, 9am-1pm. Live on the Lawn Concert Series scheduled for May 19<sup>th</sup>, June 9<sup>th</sup>, and August 18<sup>th</sup> at the Event Center grounds. Councilman Cole asked if the music events may return to Gregory Mill in the future. Mike replied that Gregory Mill is a great venue, except for the mosquitos. He added that the Event Center has more parking, very visible to the public, and is ADA friendly. Mayor Reed suggested holding the concert series events at the Kuss Memorial too; it's a great atmosphere. Mike stated that we could consider different venues next year.

Director's Report: Mike reviewed his monthly report. He added that the Maintenance Division recently planted 82 trees all over the Sharp Springs park property. SOAC recently hosted a Leadership Rutherford event. SOAC's Summer Camps are almost at full registration, and they have numerous school field trips scheduled this spring.

Jimmy stated that Tyler Comer, Site Supervisor, applied for and received a scholarship for CPRP Certification course and testing, Certified Parks and Recreation Professional. This is a professional designation through the National Recreation and Park Association. The certification is designed for the beginning to mid-level professional and CPRP candidates must meet education and experience requirements to qualify for the exam. Tyler started with Smyrna Parks & Recreation when he was 16 years old.

Mike stated that the department is currently \$108,000 below our projected FY22-23 revenues. We projected \$450,000 for the fiscal and feel we will meet our goal. We still have May and June to go in this fiscal year.

Mike stated that he held a departmental staff meeting last week and was very impressed by the amount of work taking place throughout the department and town.

Council Update: Mayor Reed welcomed the newest Park Board members, adding that the board is fun and interesting and that you will learn a lot more about the town than just Parks and Recreation related information. She reminded them to be advocates for the Town and the Parks and Recreation Department.

Mayor Reed reviewed highlights from the most recent meeting.

Brian spoke about the new restroom building to be built at Cedar Stone Park, close to the playgrounds and tennis/pickleball courts location. The cost of the restroom building bid came in at \$630,000, but includes getting utilities to it. The building will have an adult changing table in the Family Restroom area. The new restroom building currently being built near the Freedom Playground at Lee Victory RecPark will also have an adult changing table in the Family Restroom.

Mayor Reed stated that if the Park Board members have ideas to help improve the park facilities, to please bring it to the meetings.

Other: Mike went through more slides showing recent events.

Mayor Reed asked if we want to meet at a park for May's meeting. Mike stated we'll try to meet at Westfork Park on May 16th.

Meeting adjourned at 6:01 pm.