

# SMYRNA PARKS AND RECREATION PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

## MINUTES OF May 16, 2023

The monthly Smyrna Parks and Recreation Parks Advisory Board Meeting was held May 16, 2023, at Smyrna Outdoor Adventure Center, Smyrna, Tennessee. Chairman Clay Phillips called the meeting to order at 5:03pm.

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

**ABSENT** None

**SUMMARY** Prayer: Mark Hardy

Citizen's Comments: None

Review and Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings: Mark H. motioned to approve April 2023 minutes; Mayor Reed seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

Old Business: Mike M. began the discussion by stating that this meeting was scheduled to be held at Westfork Park today, but rain was forecast to happen right at 5:00pm, so we moved the meeting back to the SOAC.

Concerning Westfork Park Information and Development, Mike M. wants to share the history of how Westfork Park came to be. The Town obtained the property that the park is located on in the year 2000 in lieu of the developer, James Johnson, having to pay impact fees. The Town accepted 14 acres of land for the equivalent of \$110,000 of impact fees, and land sat undisturbed for several years. In 2014, the Town was awarded a \$250,000 Local Parks and Recreation Fund grant, which the town matched. On October 17, 2017, Westfork Neighborhood Park opened for use. Its amenities include a shelter, perimeter walking trail, creek, restroom building, parking lot, and playground. Mike M. recalled two challenges in building the park: topsoil had to be hauled in, and they had to bore under the creek to connect to water and electrical hookups. Mike M. stated that a Greenway Trailhead will be located at Westfork Park in the future, which will be a great addition to the park.

Council Member Cole stated there was some discussion in the past about connecting Smyrna's Greenway System to Murfreesboro's Greenway System via Nice Mill Recreation Area.

New Business: Concerning Athletic Committee Report, Mike M. stated that the committee meets the second Monday of each month. The Athletics Division leads the meeting and there are representatives present from each rec league. Together, they discuss operations, their rec league schedules, needs, workorder requests, and other issues.

Mayor Reed stated that she would like to implement a zero-tolerance policy directed at parents, coaches, and players to discourage undesirable behavior. She added that recreation should be fun and not so adversarial. She is not sure what options are available for the Town and/or Parks Advisory Board to help curtail that issue. The Town supports the leagues as a rule. The leagues have boards and bylaws and guidelines that they all follow. Mayor Reed asked if the Athletic Board discusses these types of issues at the meetings.

Eli V. stated that coaches are required to acquire a NAYS (National Alliance for Youth Sports) certification.

Mayor Reed asked if the Department has been asked for cameras on the ball fields. Mike M. replied that most video requests are related to parking lot incidents.

Clay P. stated that Smyrna Baseball League has not had many incidents this year with unruly parents/players/coaches.

There was an incident within the Stones River Futbol Club. Mike M. received a phone call from a parent which was passed on to the league. SRFC did follow-up with the parent.

Christina T. stated that her child's flag football team had to leave the field due to an issue, but nothing happened between the coaches and parents.

Mayor Reed feels the average citizen thinks the Town runs all the rec leagues, but that is not the case.

Michael P. asked if Mike M. receives notifications when coaches are ejected from the games. Mike M. replied he doesn't think he's notified of all cases, but he is on most parent or citizen issues.

Reports of Officers, Committees, or Staff: Mike M. reviewed upcoming events listed on the agenda. He reminded everyone of the first Live on the Lawn music event will be held on Friday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, at the Event Center grounds. It takes place 6-9pm and there will be food trucks too. Additionally, the Farmers Market's opening day is May 20<sup>th</sup> at the Depot. Kids to Park Day is May 21<sup>st</sup> at Sharp Springs. The Splashpad at Gregory Mill opens May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Family Movie Night at SAOC is May 26<sup>th</sup>. SplashTown opens May 27<sup>th</sup>. Simply Smyrna Celebration is June 3<sup>rd</sup>. The second Live on the Lawn music event will be held June 9<sup>th</sup>. Boat Day will be held June 17<sup>th</sup> at Jefferson Springs Rec Area. The Great Tennessee Air Show will be June 10 & 11.

The food court canopy that was storm damaged last year was replaced recently.

Director's Report: Mike M. reviewed his monthly report. He added that the SOAC has hosted several school field trips, and many school field trips have taken place at the Lee Victory Park and visited the Kuss Memorial.

We are offering Water Aerobics this year, the first time in several years.

He stated that he receives questions about tennis/pickleball courts all the time. He hopes to get some work done during this year's construction period.

Kids Safety Day was a great day. Stone Crest Hospital gave away 40 bicycles and bike helmets. They do a tremendous job and are excellent partners for this event.

Lee Victory Park tennis courts will be renovated this year.

We completed two ADA-compliant parking spaces and a sidewalk near the EA Victory Shelter at Sharp Springs Park recently. There are plans to build a main parking lot near the shelter too. TWRA plans to possibly re-build the fishing piers located throughout Sharp Springs Park over the winter.

The new restroom building at Cedar Stone Park will be starting soon. It will be located close to the playground and tennis/pickleball courts.

Progress continues on the Freedom Playground restroom building. Brian H. stated the projected end date is the end of June. Jimmy S. added that there is sewer and water line work to do. Mike M. stated that when Lee Victory Park utilities were initially being installed, that later expansion was considered, making new construction so much easier.

The Town's Earth Day Cleanup this year had teams working along Lowry Street and Sharp Springs Park. We'll try to cleanup Lee Victory RecPark next year.

The Paintball Tournament was held last weekend. There were 50 teams from all over the country that participated. They will re-seed the fields because there was a lot of rain prior to the tournament.

On a sad note, Mike M. shared with the board that the young man that drowned at Percy Priest Lake on May 13<sup>th</sup> while fishing was 19-year-old Myo Kyo. He played soccer for SRFC and SHS. Such a tragedy.

Council Update: Councilman Cole reviewed highlights from the most recent meeting. He spoke of the Historic Zoning District in downtown Smyrna, adding that it helps to add ambiance to that area of town. He asked board members to support that idea and support historical places in town.

A new development, "Stewarts Landing", will be built on the Summit property that includes restaurants, office space, retail space, condos, perhaps a hotel, and walking trails to provide walkability within the development. It will be a higher-end type of community. It is exciting to see a development like this happening in Smyrna.

Rex G. stated that the Town of Smyrna has acquired AAA Bond Rating, which is the highest rating that a community our size can acquire. The Town pays just .9% - 1.5% interest on loans because of our bond rating.

Mayor Reed added that Rex G. has done a great job in managing the Town's finances and been able to pay cash for many capital projects. The Town recently purchased two fire trucks for

\$1.5 million each and paid cash for them. Brian H. and Rex G. try to spread capital expenditures to all departments. Brian H. thanked Rex G. for doing such a great job.

Councilman Cole stated that the Mayor and Brian H. have worked hard to obtain grants and low-interest loans. Mayor Reed stated that Smyrna has the lowest debt across the state for our size. And, excluding Eagleville, Smyrna's tax rate is the lowest in the county.

Other: Brian H. told the group he is working on a project that will highlight the SOAC but cannot say much about it yet. However, he stated that the Town's vision is to provide a good Quality of Life for its residents. The Mayor added that for many years Smyrna lacked programming opportunities for the community, that Parks' primary focus was offering recreational sports. Now, with the SOAC as well as additional staffing, we can offer a wide variety of programming that benefits a wider range of people.

Mayor Reed stated that she would like to see a future music event held at the Kuss Memorial as it would provide an automatic crowd and perhaps better sound. She would also love to see an ice-skating rink at the Event Center during the holiday months.

Roundtable – Mike M. wanted to offer everyone a chance to make announcements or speak about a topic.

Christina T. asked the Mayor her thoughts on the Sam Davis Home selling some of their acreage. They're doing it to fund maintenance and restoration projects at the historic site. Their board approved the sale of 4-acres of the property, which is in a good commercial location. Brian H. stated that it is difficult for some of the historical facilities to survive in today's economic climate.

Mark H. stated that he is thankful to be back on the Park Board, for living in Smyrna, and for working for the Town of Smyrna.

Clay P. stated that Stewarts Creek and Smyrna High Schools are playing softball and baseball regional tournaments. Congratulations to both schools.

Rex G. stated, for those that did not know, that the Town also paid cash to fund the SOAC and pool renovations a few years back.

Mike M. stated that the Disc Golf Club inquired about hosting a tournament for 550 players.

Nicole G. stated that she is pleased to be part of the Parks Advisory Board.

Eli V. asked about the bridge work being done going to Tridon. Brian H. stated that it is a 6-month project.

Mayor Reed thanked everyone for volunteering their time to serve on this board. She also reminded them that registration is open for the Kuss 6K, to be held September 15<sup>th</sup>.

Jimmy S. stated that the Depot is lit up blue this week to honor Police Officers.

Meeting adjourned at 6:36 pm.