

SMYRNA PARKS AND RECREATION PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2023

The monthly Smyrna Parks and Recreation Parks Advisory Board Meeting was held September 19, 2023, at Westfork Neighborhood Park, 130 Wade Herrod Road, Smyrna, Tennessee. Chairman Clay Phillips called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

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

ABSENT Christina Treglia and Eli Victory

SUMMARY Prayer: Brian Hercules

Citizen's Comments: None

Review and Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings: Mayor Reed motioned to approve the August 2023 minutes; Michael P. seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

Mike M. began the meeting by welcoming everyone to Westfork Park and gave a little history about the park. The 14 acres of park land was given to the Town in lieu of paying Impact Fees. The Town was awarded a \$250,000 LPRF Grant in 2014 to build the park and opened the park in 2017. The neighborhood park is surrounded by 2,000 homes.

Old Business: Concerning Potential Permanent Pickleball locations, Mike M. began the discussion by stating that he receives questions frequently about building additional pickleball courts.

He passed an aerial map of Westfork Park around to the board members showing possible locations within the park where a pickleball court could possibly be constructed, stating that there is some flat space on the east side of the park. The game of pickleball is quite loud with the paddles hitting the balls. Mayor Reed asked if we could find out how far away from homes that pickleball courts should be built so that nearby residents are not disturbed by the noise of the game. Mike M. stated he would find out.

Mike M. also feels Pioneer Park could be another possible location for an additional pickleball court; perhaps on the basketball court. We will definitely add permanent pickleball courts at

Hilltop Park. In some communities, it is common for existing tennis courts to be re-purposed to pickleball courts. A lot of places are building multi-purpose courts too.

Council Member Cole asked if pickleball is just trendy or is it going to stick around. Will the courts at Cedar Stone attract tournaments? Mike M. replied that he believes that it will indeed stick around. It has become very popular across the country. He likes the multipurpose court idea so that the courts can be used for many different activities.

New Business: Concerning SOAC Presentation, SOAC Manager Courtney Morgan is present tonight to give a presentation about the SOAC. She discussed the staff, summer camps, room rentals, after school opportunities, special needs offerings, local sponsorships, field trips at SOAC, water recreation programs, public programs, exhibit sponsorships, exhibit admission numbers, 2024 exhibit schedule, and upcoming October special events. It was a great overview of SOAC activities.

Mayor Reed stated that we should approach HCA Foundation for sponsorship funding. Courtney M. stated that \$25,000 - \$30,000 is needed per exhibit sponsorship.

Reports of Officers, Committees, or Staff: Mike M. reviewed upcoming events listed on the agenda. There were 661 participants registered for the Top Gun Night Run. The event had several sponsors. Lots of people hung around after the race and enjoyed the night. All of the race proceeds go toward upkeep of the memorial. A "Jeff Kuss Memorial Scholarship" has been established to honor his dedication to education. Three \$6,000 scholarships will be awarded to students who submit an essay and an interview. Applications will be accepted by the committee beginning January 2024. The scholarship winners will be announced at that year's 6K race event. They would like to find a permanent date to hold the 6K each year, perhaps the second Friday of September. Brian H. added that someone had suggested a 1-mile fun run be added to the event.

Director's Report: Mike M. reviewed his monthly report. He stated that work continues on the Cedar Stone restroom building with block work and utility installation.

The Tennis/Pickleball Grant work continues. We just re-submitted the revised design plans to TDEC. We will wait for their final approval of the plans, and then we can bid the project.

The Freedom Playground Restroom Building is open.

The Lee Victory Recreation Park continues to be heavily used. We plan to add more staff members to that park just to keep it clean. It takes many hours on Monday mornings to clean the park, as well as at the Jefferson Springs leased area. Mayor Reed stated that it is a good problem to have; it means the parks are being used.

The Mountain Bike Trail will open this fall/winter.

Food Truck Friday at Cedar Stone Park was successful.

The department applied for a Tourism Grant with State of Tennessee for a breezeway at Rotary Soccer Park. Hopefully it will be approved.

Over 50 dogs participated at the Pups in the Pool event. Molly J., and her husband Brice, did a great job with the event. The Friends of Bark Springs group has \$5,600 in their account. We would like to partner with them to purchase some obstacles for the Dog Park.

Mike M. stated that the department is working to change the format (look) of the departmental newsletter. We want to include articles of the local sports leagues' happenings. The newsletter will continue to contain program information.

Jimmy S. gave an update of work being done at the EA Victory shelter parking lot.

Council Update: Mayor Reed reviewed highlights from most the recent meeting.

The quote from Global Synthetic Ice was approved and the order placed for \$112,994.80. Their vision is to create a fun environment around the Event Center, providing fun things for teens and families to enjoy. The ice rink will be in place for the upcoming holiday season.

The council approved a property lease for the new Senior Citizen Center to be built on Sam Ridley Parkway.

Other: Mike M. announced that nominations for the 2023 Lifetime Service Award and the Young Leader Award will be accepted until November 16th. Next month's meeting will include an Aquatics Update and review of the past season.

Meeting adjourned at 6:32 pm.