

Meeting Summary – Parks and Recreation Council September 1, 2021

Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Haywood Rhodes (Chair), John Greeson (Vice- Chair), Andrew Landstrom, Tim Tippin, Mikki Fleming, Cecily Kritz, Gina Reyman, Chris Colvin, Greg Hughes, Xilong Zhao

Members Absent: Bob Smith

Staff: Dave Stancil, Beth Young

Chair Rhodes opened the meeting. The June 2nd meeting notes were reviewed and accepted. Council went around and introduced themselves to new member Greg Hughes. Chair Rhodes mentioned the need to soon hold chair/vice-chair elections. Both Rhodes and John Greeson will rotate off of the council in March or April 2022. Rhodes discussed the duties of the chair and vice-chair. Elections will be held at the October meeting. Rhodes stated that there was an error in the agenda as there are no vacancies to be filled and the council will be back to a full 12 person board next month.

New business: Potential Neighborhood/Mini Park Proposal - Stancil has been apprised of a neighborhood that has expressed interest in a mini park on a two-acre parcel that the County owns nearby. A meeting is being set up with the homeowners in the community to talk about what is possible. Stancil pointed out that as per the Orange County adopted Master Parks and Recreation Plan you will see that counties are not typically involved in “pocket parks” on small acreage. In cities, especially larger cities, these parks are very popular and widely used. These spaces tend to rely on high population density, public transportation, and water and sewer infrastructure that the county does not have in its jurisdiction. Chapel Hill and Hillsborough both have good examples of small parks within their limits, but counties do not typically do these. Orange County focuses on community parks, district parks and regional parks. Stancil also noted that local governments in North Carolina cannot just give away land or even necessarily sell it to a designated party. There is a statutory process for the conveyance of property that requires what is known as an upset bid. This was provided as information for Council, no action needed.

Recreation Quarterly Report (written): Stancil presented Recreation Superintendent Chris Sousa’s PowerPoint. Stancil explained that the Recreation Division has been down two key staff members and have done a remarkable job since the beginning of Covid pivoting to provide virtual and downsized programs. Stancil went through the slides explaining participants for each program. Tim Tippin congratulated Sousa and the recreation staff for putting on successful summer camps with no Covid cases. He stated it was really impressive and looks like folks are gearing up for fall programs with recreation using a mix of virtual and in person programs. Stancil stated that Recreation did a great job and all the precautions and measures put into place helped get campers through the summer safely. Stancil briefly discussed the vacancies in the Recreation division.

Old Business: Parks & Recreation Master Plan 2030: The plan was adopted in 2014 and it is time to check in on the plan. Stancil provided a document showing an evaluation of what the county was doing as far as the plan goes. **Recommendations/Progress report document:** Stancil went through the nine points and graded the progress. Stancil would like for the council to go over this document before year-end and make some concrete decisions on things that the council want to pursue and try to make