



PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING AGENDA

April 21, 2021, 5:30PM Davis Center at Maides Park

Members Attending

Will Bordeaux
Ingrid Corbi
Zach Gilbert
Hunter Holland (Zoom)
Shirin Jenkins
Andy McGlenn (Zoom)
Emily Morgan
Erika Robertson (Zoom)

Members Absent:

Marissa Bryant
David Eason

Others Present:

Andrea Talley
Margaret Isbell – Admin

CALL TO ORDER

Shirin called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MARCH MINUTES

Hunter made a motion to approve the March 2021 meeting minutes, Zach seconded, all approved.

DAVIS CENTER TOUR—GABRIEL GUERRA, DAVIS CENTER PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Gabe led the Board through the facility including the new gymnasium, the computer lab, gaming room, and the pollinator garden. Gabe described different programming provided by staff including Drive In Senior Bingo and free fitness classes like yoga and Zumba.

ELECTION OF NEW CHAIR/CO-CHAIR

Andy was elected to the role of Chair, Shirin was elected to the role of Vice-Chair, Emily was elected to the role of secretary; none opposed.

OLD BUSINESS

Andrea provided an update on continuing projects:

Davis Center Gymnasium – Complete. Ribbon cutting ceremony scheduled for Friday, April 23, 2021. Board members received invites to attend. The following week will be Kick Off Week including scheduled events such as Zumba, pickleball, basketball, and futsal.

Sports Park – Design moving along; 90% plans received by P&R last week. Scheduled to go out to bid around May 19.

MLK Gym – Staff have been encouraged by City Council to incorporate a kitchen into the new gym design. Andrea reminded the board that the kitchen was a previous project that was not progressed due to not receiving a grant and not having other funding at the time. The Board previously supported the kitchen project when it was initially presented. Andrea shared some of the programming plans for the kitchen including cooking and health classes and teaching people how to work as chefs. The facility is also intended as an opportunity for chefs and individuals to rent as needed. Ingrid noted that food truck operators often use kitchens like this for their food preparation and believes the kitchen would be rented often. Andrea also shared that the kitchen would have additional walk-in freezer space. The cost of the kitchen will be in addition to the cost of the gym, which is over one million dollars over budget; funding is being still being looked into. Andrea clarified that the City previously looked into making the gym a hurricane shelter but ultimately decided not to in part because of elevation of the building. The additional cost of the project is partly due to the increase of construction costs in recent years, many of the bond projects are experiencing similar challenges. Andrea shared that staff did present a plan to City Council that was within budget and without many features the current design includes; City Council did not approve this plan.

Andrea explained the name update of previously known as North Waterfront Park to Riverfront Park and the hopes that a naming sponsor will be added.

Ingrid asked for the estimated date of completion for Riverfront Park and the anticipated first concert for the venue. Margaret shared that events are scheduled around July 4th and a first official concert is anticipated around July 16th.

Andy shared that City Council approved the sale of Optimist Park to Cape Fear Public Utilities.

Andrea provided a follow up to the previous Board Meeting regarding the request of Steve Morrison to convert some of the tennis courts at Robert Strange Park to pickleball courts. She informed the group that he met with Andrea and Davina as well as RJ, separately, to better understand the perspectives against this proposal shared in the last meeting as well as to share his own perspective. Andrea shared that many city staff do not support reducing the number of city tennis courts with the exception of Greenfield Lake. This location could provide 4-6 permanent pickleball courts. Groups previously declined this location due to lack of lighting but Morrison is supportive of this idea. Andrea shared that many pickleball players already use the tennis courts at Greenfield Lake for this purpose and reminded the group that on the other side of the lake, at Legion Stadium, there are 4 additional tennis courts available. Andrea also feels this solution could help reduce the misuse of the courts by skateboards.

Andrea updated the Board on the Landscaping and Forestry Manager position which has been reclassified as a Superintendent position and has been posted for applicants.

Andy asked about the naming process of the new gym, specifically the opportunity for community input. Andrea shared that the gym does not currently have a separate name from

the building at this time as well as that there is a City Council committee for naming facilities that is currently reviewing and revising their policies. There is currently a moratorium on naming anything new until the new policy is established; Riverfront and the Sports Park are exempt in anticipation of gaining sponsors. Zach asked if sponsorship and naming are viewed differently (example: sponsoring Riverfront Park vs naming a gym). Emily shared that she has participated in the focus group hosted on behalf of the City's committee – the third party has concluded the focus group sessions and is preparing to share their findings with another opportunity for feedback before presenting their feedback and recommendations to City Council.

NEW BUSINESS

Andy updated the group on a few projects the local Sierra Club is working on that involve the parks.

The Parks Project: A series of videos to encourage people to make use of the City, County, and local parks. The videos are shared on the CapeFear SierraClub's Facebook page as well as their YouTube Channel. Video examples include Empie and Halyburton Park ([Andy narrates the Halyburton Park](#) video).

LiveNation and City Council: The Sierra Club reached out to the city to encourage the parks to uphold the same environmentally friendly stands that LiveNation is committed to when they use venues. This would include actions such as eliminating single use plastics as well as to partner with a local compost company to dispose of materials from the venue.

Andrea reminding the group that the next meeting will be at Halyburton Park to show the new screen and video camera set up that allows for easier and more accessible zoom and in-person joint meetings.

Emily asked about signage at Halyburton Park and expressed concern there are few maps, trailheads or trail markers which may make the park less accessible to many people. Ingrid included that knowing the skill level recommendation would also be helpful on signage. Andrea shared that Halyburton will be part of the next Bonds project and will include updating some signage. Zach, as the park representative via the adopt-a-park project, agreed to mention this to Andy Fairbanks. Zach also recommended a short term and affordable recommendation to use a scannable QR code that will show users a map of the park on their smart device.

ADJOURNMENT

Ingrid made a motion to adjourn, Emily seconded, all approved.

Next Meeting: Wednesday May 19, 5:30PM at the MLK Center