

Aberdeen Parks and Recreation Department
Advisory Board

10/27/16 Minutes

- The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.
- Members present: Adam Crocker, Dene Moon, Jonathan Rivenbark, Wilma Laney, Billy Hartness, Dr. Rev. Kelly, and Tim Todd via Facetime.
- Members absent: Betsy Mofield and Charlie Needham.
- The previous meeting's minutes were approved.
- Adam gave an update on projects happening in the parks. The repairs and painting of the Recreation Center, gazebo, and shelter at Aberdeen Lake Park have been completed. With the flooding at Aberdeen Lake Park from Matthew, the Board of Commissioners is looking into removing the Rescue Squad building. This would eliminate storage space for our department. The Board also wants staff to look into the cost of having the spillway fixed, as it currently does not open properly. Given the loss of storage at the Lake Park, and a future project planned to remove the old storage shelter at Colonial Heights Park and replace it, Adam is looking at combining these two projects and building one larger storage facility at Colonial Heights Park. Fire Chief Phillip Richardson and Public Works Director Rickie Monroe are assisting Adam with this project. Tim asked for clarification on where the structure would be located, and Adam explained it would be in the natural pine straw area, to the left of the park lot. The new playground equipment for Sharpe Park has been delivered, and should be installed over the weekend. Staff should then be able to complete this project, by filling the fall zone area with the playground mulch. Finally, Adam described all of the work done at the Malcolm Blue Farm to prepare for the festival. Public Works, several members of the Friends of the Farm, and Program Coordinator Kayla Hillman all put in a couple of weeks' worth of work to prepare the property. Jonathan asked how the festival went, and Adam and Dene expressed they felt it was a large success. Most of the negatives were caused by the abundance of people who came out, such as lack of parking and running out of change. Staff has already looked at these issues and ways we can improve next year, such as using the Old Bethesda Church for more parking and possibly running shuttles. The department and Friends of the Farm will also look to begin planning earlier next year, and continue to grow the event. All in all, approximately 1,200 people came out. Tim explained that his family and friends who attended had a wonderful time, save for his wife stepping on a black snake. Seems all were unharmed during this incident, no report on the snake.
- Adam updated the board on a new grant opportunity, the Connect NC Grant Program for Children and Veterans with Disabilities. This new, and most likely one time, opportunity has \$3 million available to parks and recreation departments to build or adapt recreation facilities to accommodate children or veterans with disabilities. Adam mentioned that Aberdeen would be applying for this grant, and presented the idea of adding handicap parking spaces, a paved walkway to the playground and shelter, and

improving the fall zone surface at Aberdeen Lake Park playground. Adam spoke with Jonathan about the possibility of speaking with a local veterans' with disabilities group, as well as reaching out to the schools to speak with any groups which work with children with disabilities. This grant is a 20% match grant, which means the town would need to budget \$1 for every \$4 of grant money. Being a most likely one time grant, there will most likely be a great deal of competition for this grant. However, Adam is hopeful that given a good application, and hopefully not going for too large of a project, the town will be looked upon favorably, despite receiving a couple of PARTF grants fairly recently. Jonathan wondered if we could get any insight into other projects that may be submitted, but while Adam indicated we will not get much information on this, we can be sure there will be a great number of applications.

- Adam is also working on a request for qualifications (RFQ) to send out to landscape architect and engineer firms regarding the Aberdeen Lake Park trail project. This is essentially a resume from these agencies to decide the best firm to work with to generate the design plan for the trail. Adam is hopeful to move forward with this soon after the new year.
- Adam also updated the board on programming. The youth t-ball league just wrapped up, with 104 youth ages 4 and 5 participating. We had 96 participate last year. The new flag football league for ages 9 – 12 is getting ready to finish. This is the first time the department has offered this league, which was made possible by a grant from the NFL. Both Southern Pines and Aberdeen started teams this year as well, and the three towns had a total of 5 teams playing each other. Aberdeen had 22 youth participating split onto 2 teams. Tim mentioned that his family participated in the Moore County league, as Aberdeen did not offer a league for ages 6 – 8, and asked if Aberdeen would look into offering a league for that age group. Adam explained that the department could certainly look at it, but the fear would be that there would not be enough Aberdeen participation to support a full league, and would instead just weaken the other leagues. It is certainly something, however, the town can look in to. Adam reiterated again that the Malcolm Blue Festival was a success and welcomed back strongly by the community. The final Movie by the Lake was held in October, which wrapped up a four movie series held once a month between July and October. Adam expressed that this has been one of the best received programs or events that the department has started. And Fall-O-Ween was held this past weekend, with bounce houses and obstacle course, a climbing wall, basketball shooting and putting games, face painting, and more. This event was moved earlier in the day this year, at 11:00 a.m., to incorporate food trucks, and it was extended by an hour, until 2:00 p.m. Both of these changes were well received by participants. With these changes, participation was up from approximately 350 people, to approximately 425 people attending.
- Billy asked if there had been acknowledgement in the area regarding the changing demographics, and the lowering median age in the community. Adam explained the numbers do bear this out, and that there has been acknowledgement by municipal administration and boards and commissions in all of the towns regarding this. Wilma asked about a bicycle path sign on Bethesda. Adam was unaware of this sign, but was going to look into it to find out what it is. Tim asked why the August 3 meeting date was

in red on the agenda, and Adam explained that was because that meeting would not be on the last Thursday of the month but rather the first Thursday of the next month. This is due to a family trip to NY Adam takes each year.

- The next meeting will be held Thursday, January 26, 2017 at the Recreation Center, at 6:00 p.m.
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.