

Aberdeen Parks and Recreation Department
Advisory Board

1/26/17 Minutes

- The meeting was called to order at 6:11 p.m.
- Members present: Adam Crocker, Dene Moon, Wilma Laney, Jennifer Bowles , Dr. Rev. Kelly, Charlie Needham, and Tim Todd via Facetime.
- Members absent: Betsy Mofield, Jonathan Rivenbark, and Billy Hartness
- Charlie Needham was presented a gift bag from the town thanking him for his years of service, as he is stepping down from the P&R advisory board. Charlie explained his 25 year ride with the department, and all of the accomplishments he has been a part of. Charlie has been involved in a great many departmental achievements, and his service is greatly appreciated.
- New advisory board member, Jennifer Bowles was introduced. Jennifer expressed that she is very excited to become a member of the board, and is excited about getting involved.
- The previous meeting's minutes were approved.
- Adam gave an update on projects happening in the parks. Adam updated the board on the dam project and the current status of the lake. The board was presented part of the presentation the dam engineer shared with the Town Commissioners, and informed about the process and timeframe. This project is essentially in two parts, repairing the sluice gate which allows the town to raise and lower the water in the lake, and then repairing the concrete portion of the spillway. While the sluice gate is repaired, another engineering firm will come in to run testing on the concrete spillway to determine the extent of work needed. The approximate cost for these is \$150,000 - \$192,000. The total timeframe on this approximately 5 months, but the lake could be partially filled during the process. The concrete work would then be handled at a later date, and would be a longer process, and permitting will need to be applied for through the state. The second phase of the playground renovation at Sharpe Park has been completed, and the park is really starting to come together. There will be one more phase next year to replace the older wooden portion of the playground. Improving the parking and accessibility of the park was also discussed, and Jennifer mentioned that better accessibility to the shelter was necessary as well as the playground. Tree work was completed at Colonial Heights, Berkley, and Ray's Mill parks. This work was done to help eliminated trees hanging over ballfields in Colonial and dropping pine straw on them, raise the canopy in Berkley to allow for a more aesthetically pleasing and free moving park, and removing dead or dying trees in Ray's Mill. Adam also discussed that he has discussed a new plan for Powell's Pond in Ray's Mill Park with Foster Lake and Pond. This new plan would continue to treat aquatic weeds, such as water lilies, in the pond, but would also address the floating masses of organic material that form in the spring. Foster Lake and Pond will treat these with an enzyme to help break down the

material. There will be two treatments for this following the aquatic weed treatment. All of this will happen in early spring.

- Adam updated the board on the Connect NC Grant Program for Children and Veterans with Disabilities. This grant 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 application included adding handicap parking spaces, a paved walkway to the playground and shelter, and improving the fall zone surface at Aberdeen Lake Park playground. This grant is a 20% match grant, which means the town would need to budget \$1 for every \$4 of grant money. Recreation Resource Services (RRS) did receive our application, and complimented our department on the organization of the application. This probably means very little in our chances of receiving the grant, and we will just wait to see if we are selected as a recipient. Word should come sometime in the spring.
- Adam updated the board that he sent out a request for qualifications (RFQ) 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. These firms have until 3 p.m. on Friday, January 27 to get their qualifications to the department. A committee of Adam, the department athletic director, Joseph Keel, town planner, Daniel Martin, and advisory board member, Billy Hartness will determine which firm the town will work with.
- Adam also updated the board on programming. The youth basketball league is running with 184 youth registered. We had 194 participate the previous year, and this is first time a youth athletic league failed to grow in the past two years, and basketball particularly has been taking large strides. Adam explained that he feels 200 is probably close to the saturation rate for this league in our size town, so it is not strange that we would settle around this number, and numbers do at time ebb and flow a little bit. However, this is something the department will monitor, and push a bit harder next season. Youth cheerleading is also currently running, and is at its max of 30 participants. There were 28 registered last year. The Christmas Tree Lighting was held in Downtown Aberdeen at the Train Depot. The turnout was good this year, and the new revamped lighting and decorating scheme was a huge success. Adam asked program staff to make sure that the tree lighting was dramatic, and staff did not disappoint. There will continue to be improvements made, as the sounds system was deficient, and the program was a bit disjointed with where Santa entered. Jennifer was in attendance, and agreed that these were both issues. The sound system has since been upgraded, and staff has already brainstormed better ways to get Santa “on stage” and keep the event consistent. Supper with Santa maxed out at 110 participants, and Adam explained that it was once again a successful, relaxed evening for children to enjoy a dinner from Texas Roadhouse, watch Christmas movies, make Christmas crafts, and visit with Santa. The Christmas Parade was a very cold one, but still a success. The lineup grew by a couple of entries, and all but one showed despite the bitter cold. The crowd was also a good one, again despite the below average temperatures. Jennifer discussed the recruiting efforts the department uses to bring in new entries. Adam expressed that the department invites back all previous entries, and continues to try to bring in new bands to beef up

the noise and decibel levels of the parade. UP and North Moore bands have both been approached each year, and this year the St. Andrews pipe band was approached. The department will continue to attempt to bring in more bands, starting even earlier this coming year. The Old Fashioned Christmas was also held at the Malcolm Blue Farm this year, with a great showing. Approximately 200 came to the farm to see what a Christmas around 1825 would be like. Adam thanked Dene Moon for all of her involvement and help with the event, as she is one of the driving forces behind its success. Dene also mentioned that the department and the Friends of the Farm are working on a civil war reenactment event at the farm for February, and that the department is looking to plan a bluegrass event in May. Both Douglas and Jennifer expressed interest in possibly helping with these events.

- The next meeting will be held Thursday, April 27, 2017 at the Recreation Center, at 6:00 p.m. Adam explained that the two red dates on the upcoming schedule are to show changes to the regular schedule. While meetings are held the last Thursday quarterly, the July meeting is moved to August to account for a family trip Adam takes each year to NY. The second moved meeting date will be next January, to account for Adam's wife's birthday. All board members present understood Adam's desire to keep his wife happy, and remain married.
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.