

Henderson County Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

August 8th, 2023, Athletics and Activities Center

Board members in attendance: Jeff Donaldson, Corum Smith, Mary Davis, Terry Maybin, Doug Moon, Robert Smith, Katie Breckheimer, Phillip Ellis, Milton Butterworth, Scott Rhodes, and Tricia King

Staff in attendance: Bruce Gilliam, Jason Kilgore, Cory Blackwell, Bridgette Thompson, Matt Russell, Jason, Powel, Lynn Metcalf, Melanie Adams, Lindsay Pressley, Autumn Radcliff, and Brooklyn Bishop

Public in Attendance: None

1. Call to Order: 12:04

2. Approval of Minutes: July 2023

Jeff asked for a motion to approve the July minutes as written. Corum motioned to approve, Doug and Bob seconded, and there was a unanimous approval from the board.

3. Public Input

No formal public input.

4. New Business

a. Introduce Mary Davis – New Rec Board Member

Bruce introduced Mary Davis as our new board member as of July. Mary gave an introduction stating that she moved to Hendersonville in 2016. She has worked to get involved in the community starting with Senior Games, where she got involved last year. She is now an ambassador for Senior Games. Mary retired from UNC Charlotte as the campus Recreation Director. We are very excited to have her as a member.

b. Introduce Recreation Staff and Programs

i. Lynn – Seniors and Special Needs

Lynn has been working with Donnie Jones and the senior group to partner with each other. Senior cheerleading will be cheering at special needs baseball games. They offer two sessions of baseball,

one in the Spring and one in fall that run on Saturday's from 10am – 12pm. Parks and recreation will be hosting registration online for the fall session. Last Saturday, senior softball played the Sheriff's office in a fundraiser game. A Corvette was raffled off at \$100 a ticket and the proceeds were split between Special Needs Baseball and the STAR Camp program. Lynn has created a calendar of upcoming senior activities including walking, cornhole, disc golf, and a variety of other activities. Kayaking is one of these activities that now has full registration with a waitlist. She is also working on new classes for seniors like progressive art. Some senior games participants took part in our float for the July 4th parade, which came in 1st place. We are now planning to have a float in the Christmas parade. Lynn will be hosting a SilverArts info night as well as a Senior Games State Games send-off luncheon.

ii. Cory – Supervisor and Outdoor Recreation

Cory started monthly hiking trips around Henderson County and possibly outside the county. He is working to create a pin to provide for reoccurring participants that attend 3 or more hikes. It is possible he will add more challenging hike options for different skill levels that may not want to hike alone. Saturday he will be meeting with the birding group from Jackson Park thanks to Katie in hopes to get involved. He would like to start biking activities in the future. Looking to remodel the bike park in Jackson Park and partner with local biking businesses to help. This winter, he would like to take an ski trip on a off day for schools. Cory is using different apps and technology along with the hikes to make hikes more interactive. He is working with Fish and Wildlife to develop some future fishing programs for HCPRD.

iii. Melanie – Contracted Programs

This summer we hosted 35 different camp sessions with 840 kids overall. This is the last week of camps, and we are currently having pickleball, art, and sign language camp. We hosted 10 art camp sessions, all which were full with a waitlist. Our new camp

offerings this year of theatre, sign language, and pickleball have all been successful. Our tennis camp had such great result that we created a follow-up program for those students involved in the original camp. Melanie has programs running as well including kid's tennis club, adult tennis, sprouts soccer and volleyball, and we will soon start contracting with Hendersonville Ballet to offer classes. There will be a health fair on 8/17 at the AAC gym. This health fair has come from organizations that wanted to take part in Senior Games to promote their services. So far, 20 different vendors have registered for the health fair.

iv. Bridgette – Special Events

During the summer, we have hosted movies in the parks at various parks. These are free events with food trucks, and we give away candy, popcorn, and glow sticks. Our last movie was at Jackson Park, and we partnered with Fostering Hope to promote foster parents and homes. That event also had inflatables and additional vendors that was paid by sponsorship from Fostering Hope. We will have a Back-to-School Ice Cream Social at Tuxedo Park on 8/13 from 3-5pm. There will be free Pelican's ice cream, inflatables, cotton candy, and games.

Bridgette is preparing for Treat Street with the City of Hendersonville for our downtown Halloween event. Hola Carolina will not be assisting this year as they will be hosting their own event a few days prior. We are in the process of reaching out to get contributors for this event. It is free to be a contributor and a great way to promote their business/organization and all we require is they supply a kid friendly item to give out such as candy. Biltmore Church will also be a partner for this event and will supply the fun zone with inflatables, games, and goodie bags. The City will be doing a costume contest and will have a dj dance party.

In December, we will host Santa on the Square at the Historic Courthouse on 12/1 in conjunction with the Old Fashion Christmas run by the City of Hendersonville. There will be selfies with Santa and staff will be dressed in costumes. We will provide popcorn and hot chocolate and the City will be doing free carriage rides. We will host a New Years Apple Rise downtown on 12/31 with a 7pm countdown for families. We will have crafts, a dj, hot chocolate, and swag.

v. Matt – Youth and Adult Athletics

The addition of the A/C and new goals in the gym have been great improvements to the gym and the community has been very appreciative. We would love to donate the old goals to possibly a school or somewhere that would be able to use them indoor as they are in good condition. The summer season of adult softball is wrapping up with an open league game on Thursday that will finish the season with co-ed finishing next week. Registration for the fall season is open with the co-ed season starting the last weekend of August and men's beginning after Labor Day. We don't expect many rainouts for the fall season and hope to finish the season by November. Maintenance staff has done a great job working hard to keep fields maintained and prepped for the season. Registration for youth basketball will start mid-September, running through October with practices starting around December and games start the second Saturday in January.

vi. Jason – Youth and Adult Athletics

We are finishing registration for fall soccer. There has been an increase in registration from last year going from around 430 for 2022 to over 500 currently for this season. This past spring, which is usually our largest league, we had 624 registered. There has been major growth in the middle school leagues specifically. There will be a coaches meeting held tonight. The biggest obstacle the past few seasons has been parent participation for coaching.

We have had great involvement from local high school students as referees. Games will start September 9th and will run through November. Adult basketball will start this winter right before Christmas. We will also offer co-ed adult volleyball in January and hope to have more participation this season. We have added a fall pickleball tournament in October. The summer tournament had a full bracket for men's, women's, and co-ed. Bruce mentioned how great Jason has been for the soccer program including prepping fields and improved communication between parents and coaches.

vii. Lindsay – Edneyville Community Center

Lindsay runs programs for the Edneyville Community Center and started the summer off with an End of School Ice Cream Social. The Big Rigs and Digs event was very successful and continuing to grow. Lindsay offers a Tumble Bears class, which is an intro to gymnastics class for ages 3 to 5 that helps teach kids to follow directions along with basic tumbling. This class consistently has a waitlist for registration, but we are only able to offer 5 spots per class since Lindsay is the only instructor. Art Start is another 3 to 5 program that is beginner's crafts. We hosted a water day this July with the Edneyville Fire Department which produced a great turnout. We partnered with the NC Farm Bureau Women's Group for Ag in the Classroom program. There has been one session a month since June and has been very successful and a great course to teach kids different skills. Field Day Fun was a great use of the soccer field at the community center.

There is a large homeschool presence in Edneyville that support our programs and this year Lindsay would like to offer an art class for older kids to include them more. This fall will have a Monster Mash event, a community yard sale in September, and others. We partner with the Chamber of Commerce to run the arts and crafts segment of Camp Field Day, which has local business send employees for a day of activities to promote the camp industry.

Doug mentioned that this past weekend there was the first 5 on 5 full court basketball game on the new court at the community center. The nets for pickleball have been ordered for that court and we are glad it is getting use.

viii. Jason Kilgore – Maintenance

This has been a very busy summer for our parks. The rainfall has been great for keeping the turf healthy. The weather has cooperated with the growth for the grass as well. We are starting preparations for the fall baseball and soccer seasons. They have had some time to make repairs in the lull season. We will soon start renovations on Etowah Park and grow that facility for the community. Jason has been working with playground groups to improve other parks including Etowah.

Maintenance had great part-time help this summer that helped us greatly to make it through the summer season. We had two interns, Will Parker in the office, and Eli Grayson for maintenance. We also have Nate Rhodes who helps with maintenance during the past few summers who have all been a great help. The office has had great staff this summer has well including Mattie Rowe, Hannah Hansen, Zach Adkinson, and Ellie Bowen. We love to build relationships with our part-time staff and help them any way we can. Milton asked if these students are here for a summer job or if they are looking to have a future in a similar field. Most are returning employees with various majors, but Will is a Sports Management major who will likely return for a second internship.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Ecusta Trail Update

The first phase bid opening was supposed to be yesterday, however, they only received 2 bids rather than the required 3. There are plans to reassess and readvertise so hopefully bids can be placed by the end of this month. The next bid process will not have a minimum requirement for bids. The original pre-bid meeting had 13 different contractors

represented and they have reached out to those about placing a bid. This process can be difficult due to the needed requirements to bid with the DOT. The ARTAC is meeting tomorrow to continue discussions on MOU's. It will likely be September before a decision is reached and Autumn will then go to the board with her recommendation on MOU's. There are several subcommittees working to help with the trail and reaching out to local businesses about making connections.

One of the main constraints with receiving bids is due to the need to rebuild the bridges along the trail that would require a lot of contractors to sub out this work. Katie inquired about how the second bid process does not have a minimum bid requirement. Autumn informed the board that since they did not meet the requirement in the first bid round, the second round is now open with no minimum. Milton asked about how the selection process works, and Autumn said this is determined by the lowest responsive bidder. This would be the bid that meets all the requirements with the lowest cost within reason. Katie mentioned that there will be a Hellbender Trail forum in Asheville on 8/31 from 8 – 1 to discuss connecting local trails. This will be free and government officials will be invited.

b. Etowah – PARTF Grant - Jason

There will be big renovations soon to the Etowah Park. We are still working on getting the drawings but most everything is laid out. Progress will start speeding up once we receive the drawings.

6. STAFF UPDATES and EVENTS

We have a new position for a full-time receptionist that we have now filled, and she will start on August 28th. This position received a lot of applications and interest. We have also hired a new special events assistant, Elena Pierre-Louis. Monday we will be having a cookout for our staff and the pickleball and basketball players that visit our AAC gym. Hot dogs have been donated from Hot Dog World, burgers have been donated from Applebee's, and Pardee's Sports Medicine group will be present. We are working on replacing the bottom level tennis courts at Jackson Park. They will be used for tennis and not

just pickleball as our local high schools use the courts. Bruce and Rebecca McCall took a ride through Jackson Park to discuss problem areas that need repairs. Phillip asked if the lines for courts are painted the same way as asphalt as he would like to add lines on the road through Jackson Park. Phillip said we need to add a pedestrian connection from where the Greenway ends to the playground. Milton mentioned this would be good for optics to help alert drivers of pedestrians. Jason said the only issue with this would be how slim the road already is may not allow for any additional space for a pedestrian path. The board agreed that this is an issue that needs to be addressed.

7. MEMBER COMMENTS

Katie had mentioned to Jason that the wooden kiosk at the Jackson Park house had been overgrown and neglected and she would love to have help cleaning it up for organizations to use. Jason placed a work order, one of our maintenance staff, Arnie, made repairs to the kiosk and Jason gave the keys to Katie before today's meeting. She was very grateful for their work and so happy to see the programmers to put a face to the work they do.

Tricia asked if there will be a fall abilities tennis program. They have not contacted Melanie to set up a program yet. Tricia also mentioned that the striping on the AAC turf field is faded, and Jason said he repainted the striping yesterday. Bruce pointed out the field to John Mitchell yesterday that the field needs new turf as it is very worn.

Doug mentioned that West Henderson is starting their own youth basketball program and was curious if this would affect our use of school gyms for our programs. Bruce said we just found out about this program but Scott Rhodes assured the relationship between Parks and Recreation and Henderson County Schools will always be a priority so this will not be an issue. Matt mentioned it may be like their football programs, which are a large commitment with travel. Milton mentioned how great it is to see the increase for middle school participants. Jeff said he has been a part of the board for a long time and the recent progress has been amazing to see. Corum agreed that the progress has been great.

8. ADJOURN: 1:16

Next Meeting: September at the AAC office.