



MINUTES
Kinston/Lenoir County Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting
July 11, 2019 5:30pm
KINSTON COMMUNITY CENTER (CONFERENCE ROOM)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Nick Harvey **Kelly Jarman**
Amanda Sawyer **Ed Futrell**
Sue Ellen Maddux **Rosalyn Yarus**

MEMBERS ABSENT

Sonya Berry **Felicia Solomon**
Nathan Perry **Christopher Bradshaw**
Dr. Wojeski **Dr. Sylvia**
Steve Saint-Amand **Merwyn Smith**

The July, 2019 meeting was called to order by the Chair, Nick Harvey. There was no meeting held in May and the April and June minutes were not approved due to lack of a quorum.

Heath Harrison, Janice Skoczylas, John Wiggins and a group of concerned parents and coaches were present at the meeting to discuss some concerns and recommend changes to the youth softball and baseball program in Kinston and Lenoir County. The group distributed a list of their concerns and solutions to the commission. Some of the concerns included:

- Better communication between the department's staff and the coaches/parents
- More social media & information needs to be posted by the Recreation Department
- Include more sponsors for community involvement
- Include a part-time staff member at Lagrange (with an office) during sign-ups
- More involvement with the Lenoir County School system
- Vetting all coaches and conducting a criminal background check on all of them
- Making sure all coaches are certified in order for them to be eligible to coach
- Start softball earlier to be in line with other departments & to allow for more time to practice before the tournaments and All-Star games.
- Consistency during regular season games and tournaments (ie: use the same pitching methods)
- Maintain better field conditions in the county
- Start hosting travel ball tournaments to bring in revenue

John Wiggins from Lagrange stated that he would like to see more parental and community involvement in youth sports. Also, the Recreation Department used to hold baseball clinics for the coaches and in order to coach, you had to attend the clinic. He would like to see the department bring those clinics back.

Corey Povar stated that he agrees more programming is needed and his staff could do a better job, however currently the department only has two full-time staff people to program the entire county. He also stated that he and the County Manager are in the process of working to reduce the workload of the Crew Supervisor in the county so he will have more time to focus on county ballfields and facilities and keep them better maintained. He is also challenging his staff to think outside the box and create new programming throughout the city and the county.

Nick Harvey stated that the schools have gone back to sending paper copies home with the kids but he would also like to see better communication between the department and the

coaches and parents. He commended the group for coming to the meeting and offering viable solutions to some of the complaints and not just complaining about the problems.

Corey Povar informed the commission that the Coaches Code of Conduct already states that *“Once an athletic activity begins, no coach shall allow stoppage of play or refusal of play unless dictated by recreation staff, umpires or referees.”* **Failure to abide will result in automatic 2 game suspension.** The commission recommended adding “no verbal abuse, **foul or offensive language** will be tolerated towards officials/players/spectators to #2 on the Coaches Code of Conduct. They also recommended changing wives to **spouses** on #5.

Corey Povar stated that the recommended changes would be made on the Coaches Code of Conduct and brought back to the August meeting for the commission’s approval.

Corey Povar updated the commission on the department’s summer camps and participation numbers. He stated that Fun In The Sun Camp at the Neuseway Park had approximately 65 participants, Lovit Hines Camp had approximately 40 participants and Georgia K. Battle Camp had approximately 74 participants. Mr. Povar complimented Ella Clarke, the Center Director at Georgia Battle Center for making her camp an organized and well run camp. He also commended her and her staff on their enthusiasm, creativity and hard work, which made her camp a success.

Corey Povar updated the commission on the Little League 10U & 12U Baseball Tournament that was held at Fairfield Park. He stated that he received very good feedback on this tournament from the spectators. The fields looked great and were very well maintained. Little League does not allow gate fees to be collected so the concession sales paid for the umpires. It was recommended next year to purchase fans for the dugouts and to have cooling zones with misting hoses set up. It was recommended to check with the Lenoir County Sheriff’s Department to see if they have cooling equipment.

Corey Povar made the commission aware that the department has the opportunity to apply for a PARTF (Parks and Recreation Trust Fund) grant for the renovation of Emma Webb Park. He is putting together a team of staff members to organize and help to put this grant together. The grant is not due until next year so there is adequate time to update the department’s Comprehensive Plan, hold community meetings and gather the needed information in order to turn in a very competitive application.

Corey Povar informed the commission that a kayak launch pad will be built as an Eagle Scout project to be located at the Neuseway Nature Park. Tanner Whitley from Boyscout Troop 392 will be building this as his Eagle Scout Project. The county will be contributing ½ of the funding for this project.

Sue Ellen Maddux suggested the commission travel to several recreation sites in order to see the facilities/sites for themselves. Corey stated that he thought that would be a great idea and he would start working on this for the future.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Debra A. Wicker
Secretary to the Kinston/Lenoir County Parks & Recreation Commission