

**CITY OF MONROE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
MONROE COUNTRY CLUB
1680 PAGELAND HIGHWAY
MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA 28112**

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2021
6:00 P.M.**

AGENDA

www.monroenc.org

Item 1. Approval of Minutes – November 2, 2021

Item 2. General Updates

ATTENTION COMMISSION MEMBERS: Please contact Angie Sustar at asustar@monroenc.org or 704-282-4651 to confirm your attendance. Thank you.

**CITY OF MONROE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
NOVEMBER 2, 2021
MINUTES**

The Parks and Recreation Commission of the City of Monroe, North Carolina met in the Old Armory Community Center at 500 S. Johnson Street, Monroe, North Carolina at 6:00P. M on November 2, 2021.

Present: Chairman Dan Shive, Vice Chairman Moya Saltzgaber, Commission Members Rhonda Griffin, Debbie Dillion, and Tiffany Wilson

Absent: John Thomasson

Staff Present: Assistant City Attorney Ashley Britt, Tonya Edwards, Darren Baucom, Fred Baber, Rae Moore, and Angie Sustar

Chairman Shive opened meeting and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Item No. 1. Approval of Minutes from September 21, 2021

Vice Chairman Saltzgaber moved to approve the Minutes of the Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting of September 21, 2021.

Member Tiffany Wilson seconded the motion, which unanimously passed with the following votes:

AYES: Vice Chairman Saltzgaber, Chairman Shive, Members Rhonda Griffin, Tiffany Wilson, and Debbie Dillion

NAYS: None

Item No. 2. Belk Tonawanda Park Phase IB Project Update

Parks and Recreation Director Tonya Edwards provided a brief project update. She advised the pre-bid meeting took place last week and the bid opening is next Wednesday, November 10th at 2:00pm at City Hall. She stated that once the project is bid it is possible that construction may begin by the end of the year with the goal to have the splash pad operational by Summer 2022.

Member Dillion asked if there were any local companies submitting bids. Ms. Edwards advised she thought one was local. She stated that all had experience in splash pad construction.

Chairman Shive asked when the performing stage “shell” will be constructed. Ms. Edwards advised that would be in Phase II.

Chairman Shive inquired about previous conversations regarding a dog park. Ms. Edwards advised the dog park was not deemed appropriate for that area by the consultant in the master plan because of the location being in an area prone to flooding. She stated there is another potential location for a dog park

and that is being considered.

Item No. 3. Program Updates

Parks Maintenance:

Parks Maintenance Superintendent, Darren Baucom provided a brief update on projects that are currently underway. He advised that staff is transitioning to winter projects as the mowing season winds down and that loose leaf collection is in full swing.

Member Wilson asked for an update on replacement of the playground structure that was destroyed by fire at the J Ray Shute Community Center. Mr. Baucom advised that since the destruction was caused by vandalism, our Safety Risk Coordinator is working with the insurance company on this claim. Ms. Edwards advised that all quotes for replacements had been submitted. Ms. Edwards advised an investigation is ongoing and that security cameras in the area have been reviewed.

Discussion followed.

Athletics:

Athletics and Special Events Coordinator Rae Moore provided updates on athletic programs currently offered. She advised that football and baseball season have finished with soccer wrapping up in the next week. Registration for basketball has closed and rosters are being compiled. Teams will begin practicing the week after Thanksgiving. This year all girls' teams are be offered and currently there are two girls basketball teams.

Chairman Shive asked what the participation in sports had been this year in comparison to previous years. Ms. Moore stated participation in soccer and flag football were the same. She advised this is the second season offering a baseball fall league and participation was good.

Member Wilson stated she has received complaints that teams did not play outside teams and asked if the basketball teams play teams outside of Monroe. Ms. Moore advised that the older age groups play other teams outside of Monroe.

Discussion followed.

Ms. Edwards advised that previous surveys revealed the majority of parents completing the surveys preferred for younger age group teams to play in house to limit travel distance.

Recreation:

Ms. Moore provided a brief update on special events. She advised that last week's Music on Main event was moved indoors at the Dowd Center due to inclement weather. The last "Car Cruise In" for the year is next Friday and there is also an outdoor movie night taking place at the Union County Government Center Plaza. The Christmas Tree Lighting is December 4th.

Monroe Aquatics & Fitness Center:

Interim Director Fred Baber provided a brief update on programming and memberships. He stated that at this time the MAFC isn't gaining memberships but are following past trends based on 2018 and 2019 but at 60% less. He shared current strategies being used to increase programs, memberships, and hours of operations. Staffing continues to be an issue. Currently hours of operations are Monday – Thursday

5:00am – 9:30pm, Friday 5:00am – 7:00pm, Saturday 8:00am – 1:00pm, and closed Sunday. He advised he would like to add back Saturday afternoon hours but staffing is an issue.

Chairman Shive asked if there was a Sunday schedule prior to the shut down due to Covid-19. Mr. Baber stated that prior to the Covid shut down Sunday hours of operation were 1:00pm – 7:00pm.

Member Griffin complimented the MAFC on their successful Summer children's programming and asked if there were any Winter children's programming during holiday breaks. Mr. Baber advised that a week and two-week Winter camps had been offered in the past but due to low enrollment numbers, the two week was only offered one year.

Ms. Edwards stated that across the department, Winter children's camps have experienced low enrollment due to families' travel schedules during the winter holiday break.

Chairman Shive commended the after school camp staff for the outstanding job they do on a daily basis.

Item No. 3. Other Business

Golf Course:

Ms. Edwards announced the Golf Course will move out from Parks and Recreation and the Golf Course operations will move to Tourism under Pete Hovanec. She shared that with the Dowd Theater and new Science Center, this would be an opportunity to provide a better way to market the Golf Course. Ms. Edwards provided an update of the restructuring and transition plans.

Member Wilson asked if the Ballroom rentals would go through Tourism and if there would be a different pricing.

Ms. Edwards advised everything will go through Tourism once everyone is in place and the transition was complete. She stated she believes this is a growth opportunity for the Golf Course and she was very happy to announce that for the first time in many years the Golf Course ended the year with a \$143,000 revenue. She stated this was a significant accomplishment and she commended staff for their dedicated work.

Chairman Shive thanked Ms. Edwards for her leadership.

Chairman Shive asked if the cost of fuel for mowing was a part of the Parks Maintenance budget or General Fund and if there had been a significant increase in fuel cost.

Ms. Edwards advised that fuel was a part of the Parks and Recreation budget and that all fuel is purchased through the Operations Center and there hasn't been a notable increase at this time.

Senior Center:

Ms. Edwards provided a brief update on the Senior Center Renovation Project. She advised that progress is being made and construction is underway with a projected completion of June 2022. Discussion followed.

Chairman Shive asked what was the cause of the delay in the opening of the Science Center. Ms.

Edwards advised that it was due to delays in delivery of supplies and Exhibits.

Member Wilson stated they're waiting on two Exhibits to be delivered.

Chairman Shive shared his sentiments about Ms. Edwards and her upcoming retirement. He advised that he had staff compile a list of her accomplishments to be entered in the meeting minutes.

Chairman Shive stated that Tonya has been a part of the City of Monroe for twenty-five years and she has had many accomplishments during her career.

- Parks Williams Phase 1 & 11 – Secured PARTF grant and major construction of the facility.
- Greenways – During her tenure the Greenway Program was developed which included the creation of the Greenway logo.
- She continued to grow the Greenway Program
 - * Construction and opening of Bearskin Creek Phase II
 - * Downtown Historic Loop
 - * Monroe Aquatics & Fitness Center (MAFC) – Parks Williams Athletic Complex (PWAC) Greenway
- Renovation of the Old Armory Community Center Phase 1 & 11
- Construction of gymnasium at J. Ray Shute Community Center

During Tonya's tenure in leading the department as Director, her priority became to address deferred maintenance in Parks and Recreation facilities. Numerous projects have been completed over the past five years to enhance and improve these facilities such as:

- Renovations and expansions to Belk Tonawanda Park
- Renovation of tennis courts at Dickerson Community Center
- Installation of new sports lighting at Don Griffin Park and Sunset Park
- Replacement of various playground equipment throughout the Parks system.
- Automation of locking system at Park restrooms.
- Led the efforts for renovation of the Enquirer Journal Building for the new senior center.

Chairman Shive stated that he once told the Mayor "If I had a business, I'd unlock the door and I would say Tonya come on in and I would go home because she could run it because she is so organized, she does a great job, and I wouldn't worry about it." He stated that she would be greatly missed and we owe her a debt of gratitude for her leadership, and asked if there could be a motion to show our appreciation for the service that Tonya has provided to the City.

Vice Chairman Moya Saltzgaber made the motion that was suggested by the Chairman to show our appreciation for the twenty-five years of dedicated service that Tonya Edwards has provided to the City of Monroe and particularly to the Parks and Recreation Department.

Member Tiffany Wilson seconded the motion, which unanimously passed with the following votes:

AYES: Chairman Shive, Vice Chairman Saltzgaber, Tiffany Wilson, Rhonda Griffin and Debbie Dillon

NAYS: None

Ms. Edwards expressed her appreciation to the Board for their continual support of her and the Parks and Recreation Department.

There being no further business, Vice Chairman Saltzgaber made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Tiffany Wilson seconded the motion, which unanimously passed with the following votes:

AYES: Chairman Shive, Vice Chairman Saltzgaber, Tiffany Wilson, Rhonda Griffin and Debbie Dillon

NAYS: None

Respectfully Submitted,

Angie Sustar,
Administrative Assistant
Parks and Recreation Department