

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

Phil Bazemore Active Adult Center
500 S. Jefferson Street
Monroe, NC 28112
Tuesday, May 20, 2025 - 6:00 PM

AGENDA

- Item 1.** **Public Input**
- Item 2.** **Approval of Minutes - April 15, 2025**
- Item 3.** **Parks and Recreation Division Updates**
- Item 4.** **Placer AI Demonstration**
- Item 5.** **Miller Street Workforce Housing Subdivision Concept**
- Item 6.** **Parks and Facilities Event Policy**

CITY OF MONROE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
PHIL BAZEMORE ACTIVE ADULT CENTER
500 W. JEFFERSON STREET, MONROE, NC 28112
APRIL 15, 2025 – 6:00 P.M.

MINUTES

Members Present: Chairman Franco McGee, Debbie Dillion, and Joseph Milner

Members Absent: John Thomasson

Staff Present: Pete Hovanec, Alison Nichols, Jeffrey Wells, Randy Davis, Leann Yandle, and Terry Sholar

Visitors: Kevin Mussen

Chairman McGee called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Item No. 1 Public Input Chairman McGee invited any of the visitors to speak.

Mr. Mussen commented that the work at Dickerson Community Center has been great; he plays disc golf every weekend. Previously only a few people would be there, but now there are people there all the time. Mr. Mussen opined that the course is in need of tee pads and volunteered employees from his business to help. Mr. Mussen also noted his approval of the pickleball improvements.

Mr. Hovanec responded that tee pads are coming -- staff is waiting for the ground to settle – and promised to contact Mr. Mussen if volunteer help was needed.

Mr. Mussen reiterated his appreciation for staff's work and Dr. Milner's work on the disc golf course.

Item No. 2 Approval of Minutes – February 18, 2025 Dr. Milner made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2025 meeting. Ms. Dillion seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with the following votes:

AYES: McGee, Milner, and Dillion

NAYS: None

Item No. 3 Parks and Recreation Division Updates

- Ms. Yandle stated that staff is preparing for summer and the water park opening and discussed preparations for the upcoming water park inspection as well as water park hours. Membership numbers are up from last year, and staff is processing many new memberships in anticipation of the water park opening. Ms. Yandle reviewed successful recent events, including a food drive and

an Easter event, as well as upcoming events such as a book drive and Member Appreciation Day. Summer day camp registration is nearly full and is a big source of revenue. Craft show advertising will begin in May. Staff is in the process of contracting with Fyzical Therapy to provide land PT resources at MAFC. This would be a new source of revenue, and patients would pay for it with their insurance. The group discussed the details of this arrangement: it would be open to members and non-members and would run on referrals from physicians. The City of Monroe would receive a 10% cut of the profits. The group also discussed the increase in membership associated with the water park opening: staff expects a 9-11% increase over the summer. Prior to 2023, members could freeze their memberships indefinitely for free, but that policy changed to coincide with other facilities. Now members can only freeze memberships for a maximum of four months, and there is a cost of \$10. The group then briefly discussed using an app for programming and payment. Ms. Yandle advised that staff has the ability, but there is a cost associated with it and it allows members to change who is on their account and add ineligible people, so staff has decided against using it for security reasons.

- Mr. Davis presented recent participation and attendance numbers for the Bazemore Active Adult Center and reviewed upcoming special events and trips. Mr. Davis noted that the United Senior Games had great participation with 217 seniors taking part.
- Mr. Davis stated that in Athletics, baseball and softball season is underway with eight baseball teams and two softball teams. Track and field has 100 youth participating. The Easter Eggstravaganza was well attended, and staff did a great job. The group discussed the success of the rain plan implemented by staff, and plans are to repeat it next year. The first Music on Main of the 2025 season will be April 25 and will feature the Tams.
- Mr. Davis said that the community center renovations continue with new gym floor installation and new floors and paint in the centers. The Property Management staff is doing a great job. Staff is preparing for summer with two paid summer camps at Dickerson and Sutton Park; camp registration is almost full. The group discussed the good use of facilities and staffing needs for these camps. Mr. Hovanec noted that in the past, the summer camp has run 11 hours per day for \$50-60, which not only caused the City to lose money but also put a strain on staff and caused staff to leave. This year camps are being reduced to 8 hours per day. Dr. Milner responded that he has received strong community feedback about the new start time making it difficult for parents to get to work. Because of how long-running it's been, there are families who would not be able to make ends meet without this camp. Chairman McGee noted that parents tend to use summer camps as daycare and this is a safe space for the children. Mr. Hovanec agreed and pointed out that the camps are already basically full. The group discussed more details of staffing the camps as well as the possibility of offering a City job fair for seasonal positions next year.

Item No. 4 Parks and Recreation Project Recap Mr. Hovanec presented a refresher on Parks and Recreation projects of the last two years. Completed projects include

- Dog park at Sunset Park – would like to add amenities to dress it up
- Bazemore Active Adult Center

- Belk Tonawanda Park Phase 1-B with completed splash pad and tree work improvements
- Public Tree Ordinance moving the City toward being a Tree City USA. Ordinance is written but not yet approved.
- Changed Parks and Recreation Commission meeting schedule
- Community Center floor replacement. The group discussed publishing before and after photos.
- Pickleball Court Concepts. Three were approved but ten were created thanks to Mr. Davis. Mr. Hovanec read an appreciation email from pickleball players. The group discussed rules signage and amenities at the pickleball courts as well as the use of Placer AI to track usage.

Outstanding projects include

- Bearskin Greenway Phase III Creft Park – Downtown Connector, which will be out for contract soon and will create a vast network of walkways and provide additional connectivity to Winchester.
- Creft Park Playground Additions – currently being signed off by Stormwater and then will go out for bid
- Sunset Park restroom – complete. There is a field house that the City is getting back from UCPS for use of that space.
- QR Codes/Flo Codes – out at all facilities. Staff is working to give feedback and give visitors access to fillable feedback forms.
- Community Center upfits – new floors, new paint, new gym floors and bleachers, new restroom partitions, and HVAC upgrades. Staff is working to make the centers welcoming and trying to create special identities for each of the centers.
- Parks and Recreation fee structure – staff has been reviewing the existing schedule to make it consistent and commensurate with other communities.
- Sponsorships – staff is moving forward with these.
- Pickleball complex vision – staff wants to move forward with this.
- Community Center check-in kiosks – staff has bought software to do digital check-ins and will roll out the first one at Dickerson on June 1.
- Transition to Property Management – has happened.
- Bearskin Creek disc golf – Mr. Hovanec showed pictures on the screen. Dr. Milner gave credit to the grounds crew for their professionalism and work speed. There are 6 new holes for a total of 18 holes, and the usable space has doubled by making use of the wooded areas. The course difficulty is greater, and all are in agreement that it is more fun. Community engagement has increased. Dr. Milner showed graphs of play count and steps from the UDisc app, which helps players with scoring and wayfinding on courses. The group discussed new tee pads; community volunteers; QR codes for UDisc; City logos/signage on the baskets, including the possibility of sponsorships; new baskets at some of the holes; and the possibility of tournaments at the course.

Chairman McGee brought up the lack of safe spaces for skateboarding in Monroe, mentioning that one possibility for such a space is the parking lot at the Science Center to be used as a temporary location. This could open up partnerships with area businesses and added elements like music and food.

Mr. Hovanec explained that area skateboarders are skating around the skateboard shop in Downtown, which creates safety issues, but that they currently do not have a dedicated place to skate. The City Manager and City Council have been discussing the use of the lower parking area at the Science Center as a place for a temporary skating area. Parks and Recreation has been charged with making this happen. There are minor concerns with interfering with Science Center operations and making sure the skateboarders don't mess up the space. Questions to be addressed include how to block off the space and what signage needs to be in place. Staff is moving forward with this and exploring the purchase of temporary ramps. The City is working to partner with the skate group to have a Community Skate Day on Sunday, April 27. The City would be a sponsor. The Legal department will work with liability issues. Staff will monitor usage of this area and City Council can use the results as a tool to make decisions about building a more permanent skate park.

Chairman McGee noted that he wanted this committee to come to consensus as to whether this is something it needs to do and explained the need for collaboration with the police department as well.

The group discussed the choice of the date and that Sundays have traditionally been the day the skaters gather.

Mr. Hovanec said that he does have a contract ready to go for a \$10-15,000 proposal for a pump track at Belk Tonawanda Park but is holding it while staff looks at this current development. Tourism will help as well.

The group discussed the location and the use of Placer AI tracking as a tool to help make decisions. This would be a very low-cost event with the police department cooking hamburgers and hot dogs as well as a good way to build a bridge between the police and the skateboarders.

Mr. Hovanec said that if the board is all in agreement, staff will report back to the City Manager that the Parks and Recreation Commission will support this. No formal vote was taken, but the board agreed.

Chairman McGee noted that Lisa Kerner, a City employee, is a grant administrator, and any grant opportunities such as disc golf, dog park, park restrooms, etc. can be sent to her.

Ms. Dillion made a motion to adjourn. Dr. Milner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with the following votes:

AYES: McGee, Milner, and Dillion

NAYS: None

The meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.



STAFF REPORT

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission
VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager
DATE: May 20, 2025
FROM: Peter Hovanec, Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Director
PREPARED BY: Peter Hovanec, Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Director
SUBJECT: Parks and Recreation Division Updates

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The Parks and Recreation Commission will be presented updates of plans and programs in each of the four Parks and Recreation divisions.

REVIEW

Parks and Recreation divisions include Athletics/Special Events, Community Centers, Monroe Aquatics and Fitness Center, and the Bazemore Center for Active Adults. Each of these divisions interfaces daily with the public and provides services and activities contributing to the quality of life of Monroe and Union County residents.

RECOMMENDATION

Presented for informational purposes; no action is needed at this time.

Attachment(s):



STAFF REPORT

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission

VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager

DATE: May 20, 2025

FROM: Pete Hovanec, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Director

PREPARED BY: Pete Hovanec, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Director

SUBJECT: Placer AI Demonstration

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Staff will give a brief review of new software that captures data regarding the number of people using various facilities.

REVIEW

A subscription to Placer AI was purchased earlier this year through Tourism and Downtown that allows users to identify areas and capture usage data within that area.

Staff is working on identifying key Parks and Recreation areas to better gauge usage and better determine where and how funds should possibly be allocated based on that usage.

The software captures cell phone, vehicle and other electronic means to not only gauge how many individuals are in the specified location, but also lets us know where they are coming from and where they go when they leave.

RECOMMENDATION

No action needed; provided for general awareness and observation.



STAFF REPORT

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission
VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager
DATE: May 20, 2025
FROM: Pete Hovanec, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Director
PREPARED BY: Jeff Wells, Assistant City Manager
SUBJECT: Miller Street Workforce Housing Subdivision Concept

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Planning staff, at the request of Manager Watson, has developed a concept for a workforce housing subdivision on city owned property. The location is the northern area of Don Griffin Park. The subject area encompasses just under 3 acres.

REVIEW

The city owned property is the northern area of Don Griffin Park. The approximate 3-acre property is bounded by Miller Street to the east, Holly Street to the west, Avon Street to the north, and Cedar Street to the south. The property currently has a small shelter and parking lot, playground, and multi-purpose ball field.

The concept subdivision depicts a proposed 6 lot subdivision that complies with the existing zoning designation of the property. The concept is a pilot project idea and gives the General Services Committee an impression of what the property could look like with 6 single family housing units.

Staff would draft a program to incentivize the property to be developed for workforce housing. Housing that service workers can afford is a subject that many municipalities discuss with varied success. Staff believes there is an opportunity to improve this underutilized city asset while still maintaining some features of the park that can serve as open space for the subdivision and immediate area.

RECOMMENDATION

No action needed; provided for general awareness

Attachment: Map of Subdivision Concept



Parcel Info 09-229-014
Lot size: 2.9 acres
Density: 2.07
Open Space Required: 20% = .58 acres
Open Space Provided: .6

RMD Lot Standards
Minimum Lot Size: 12,000 sqft
Minimum Lot Width: 75-ft

Lot 1
Size: 15,797
Width: 75'

Lot 2
Size: 15,937
Width: 76'

Lot 3
Size: 14,720
Width: 77'

Lot 4
Size: 13,552
Width: 75'

Lot 5
Size: 12,169
Width: 75'

Lot 6
Size: 12,086
Width: 84'



STAFF REPORT

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission
VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager
DATE: May 20, 2025
FROM: Pete Hovanec, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Director
PREPARED BY: Pete Hovanec, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Director
SUBJECT: Parks and Facilities Event Policy

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Parks and Recreation facilities are being rented by various organizations, and staff is seeking clarity regarding usage, advertisement and overall direction from the City Legal staff regarding consistency of use and policy enforcement.

REVIEW

Recent rentals at City Parks and Recreation facilities are being used by non-profit organizations and there is some confusion as to whether those organizations can advertise to the public (via social media or other) or are only allowed to advertise through targeted memberships.

Staff has observed social media posts of rentals inviting the public to the event as well as observed posts targeting specific individuals. Staff is seeking clarification to ensure accountability and consistency with regards to facility rentals.

RECOMMENDATION

No action required; only receiving information from legal team.