

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING**

Phil Bazemore Active Adult Center  
500 S. Jefferson Street  
Monroe, NC 28112  
Thursday, January 29, 2026 - 6:00 PM

**AGENDA**

- Item 1.**           **Public Input - Chairman McGee**
- Item 2.**           **Approval of Minutes - December 16, 2025 - Chairman McGee**
- Item 3.**           **Parks and Recreation Division Updates - Mr. Davis and Ms. Yandle**  
**Bazemore Active Adult Center - Mr. Davis**  
**Athletics - Mr. Davis**  
**Community Centers - Mr. Davis**  
**Monroe Aquatics and Fitness Center - Ms. Yandle**
- Item 4.**           **Visitor Feedback Form - Mr. Hovanec**
- Item 5.**           **Disc Golf Course Improvements - Mr. Hovanec**
- Item 6.**           **America 250 Update - Mr. Hovanec**
- Item 7.**           **Dog Park Update - Mr. Hovanec**
- Item 8.**           **Coaches Incentive Discussion - Mr. Hovanec**

**CITY OF MONROE**  
**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**  
**PHIL BAZEMORE ACTIVE ADULT CENTER**  
**500 W. JEFFERSON STREET, MONROE, NC 28112**  
**DECEMBER 16, 2025 – 5:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Jose Ayala, Deborah Dillion, Debra Huhnerkoch, Chairman Franco McGee, Joseph Milner, and John Thomasson

**Members Absent:** Fatima Garcia and Jalen Sowell

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

**Visitors:** Barbara Pann, Calen McKinney, Kristie Begley, Kevin Mussen, Seth Boswell, Malina Begley, Cooper Jolly, Steven Begley

Chairman McGee called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**Item No. 1 Public Input** Ms. Nichols read the guidelines for public input aloud. Chairman McGee invited the first person to speak.

Barbara Pann introduced herself as a City of Monroe resident who takes her dog to the dog park every day. She expressed appreciation for the dog park but also expressed concerns: 1. There are areas where dogs can escape under the chain-link fence. 2. Trash cans are needed inside the dog area. There were a couple Rubbermaid trash cans briefly, but they disappeared. 3. There is no running water or bowls for the dogs. Patrons provided bowls, but they disappeared. 4. Benches in shade would be useful and appreciated. 5. A more robust online presence would be helpful.

Mr. Mussen, a resident of the City of Monroe, stated that the disc golfers had two good-sized events at the Bearskin Creek disc golf course at Dickerson and had given very positive feedback. Tee pads at all holes and updated baskets on the course would get the course where it needs to be. The disc golf community is committed to the upkeep of the course.

Steven Begley introduced himself as one of the co-creators of the Monroe Disc Golf League and requested new baskets, tee pads, and signs at the course. He stated that the group of disc golfers is willing to help install everything if Parks and Recreation provides the materials. Leaf removal would be helpful as well. There are 152 members in the league, and they play at Bearskin every two weeks.

**Item No. 2 Approval of Minutes – October 21, 2025** Ms. Dillion made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2025 meeting. Dr. Milner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with the following votes:

AYES: Ayala, Dillion, Huhnerkoch, McGee, Milner, and Thomasson

NAYS: None

### **Item No. 3 Parks and Recreation Division Updates**

- Mr. Davis presented Bazemore Active Adult Center updates, stating that staff is planning for the upcoming United Senior Games and that the Older Adults Technology Services program is about to kick off. The average daily attendance last month was 200.
- Mr. Davis stated that basketball season is underway. There are 26 teams with 250 children participating at multiple facilities. There would have been more participants and teams if there were more coaches.
- Ms. Yandle presented Monroe Aquatics and Fitness Center updates. There are currently 5,500 memberships and nearly 16,000 members. December is historically the month with the lowest membership numbers. In November, the MAFC saw 25,000 visits, which is up from October. The indoor pool renovations are complete, and the pool re-opened November 3. The MAFC's Angel Tree project was successful, and staff delivered angel tree gifts for 110 people to the Union County Christmas Bureau. They also sent a truckload full of winter clothing to Heart for Monroe. Ms. Yandle reviewed upcoming MAFC events and stated that staff is working to develop a partnership program with Hornets Hoops.

Chairman McGee reviewed the community center December program guide on the screen.

The board discussed issues with members of the public crossing Franklin Street to access centers in the absence of a nearby crosswalk.

**Item No. 4 Parks and Recreation Events** Mr. Hovanec reviewed the 2026 Parks and Recreation Events calendar and attendance numbers on the screen, noting that staff uses Placer AI to track attendance at the events. Parks and Recreation staff makes these events happen by planning them and working at them. The dates for 2026 have been approved.

The board discussed the positive impact P&R events have on Monroe, especially Downtown, by driving business to Monroe. Downtown merchants are starting to see the benefit of staying open during Downtown events.

The board also discussed events in light of the 250<sup>th</sup> celebration of the nation in the coming year. Staff has plans to expand some of the current events and add some new events to go along with this year of celebration.

**Item No. 5 City-Owned Lakes** Mr. Hovanec reminded the group that the City owns three lakes, which are used for the City drinking water supply. Each lake has a lake house and attendant, and visitors can boat and fish on the lakes. The Utilities department currently manages this and contracts with the attendants, but P&R is exploring taking over that process to build upon recreational/tourism aspects such as canoeing and kayaking. Challenges would include staffing, financing, and developing rules and regulations.

Chairman McGee added that City Council is in the process of establishing the rock quarry, which could be an asset to P&R as well.

**Item No. 6 Dog Park at Sunset Park** Mr. Hovanec thanked Ms. Pann for her comments. Staff had put temporary trash cans at the dog park until permanent ones can be installed, but they have apparently gone missing. The dog park was erected hastily and needs some expansion. Adding benches and trash cans is simple. Staff will confer with Property Maintenance to figure out how to fix the fence.

Chairman McGee concurred that the dog park had been hastily done and is lacking shade. He charged P&R staff to see how it could be improved/expanded.

The group discussed the possibility of relocating the dog park and potential sites. Mr. Hovanec stated that staff would make simple upgrades to the current dog park until a more permanent site or solution is found.

**Item No. 7 Facility Rental Regulations (Tabled from October PRC)** Mr. Hovanec reminded the board that changes to the language on the facility rental forms had been discussed at length at the October meeting, and there was some confusion about the process of recommendations/approval with the General Services Committee and City Council. He deferred to Mr. Sholar for clarity.

Mr. Sholar stated that this committee can make recommendations to General Services and then to Council. General Services can send it back to this committee for further clarification. Ultimately Council makes the decision.

Mr. Hovanec said that it is back in this commission's court and gave a recap of the recommendation the board had given last, which was striking language on the facility rental forms saying that events cannot be publicly advertised.

Chairman McGee stated that there are some inconsistencies: a couple nonprofits hold advertised events at the Old Armory Community Center, and there is pushback against smaller nonprofits. If bigger organizations like the Red Cross and A Few Good Men can advertise their events, then smaller nonprofits should be able to do the same in the name of consistency if they can abide by the rules. We need staff on hand at events to make sure they follow the rules.

Mr. Hovanec reminded the group that this committee was unanimous in wanting this change, but the issue was tabled at the last meeting.

Chairman McGee asked if a motion was needed.

Mr. Hovanec stated that the motion would be to remove the language on the facility rental regulations and applications stating "Community Centers are not available for events that are open to the public" and "All rentals must be considered private events and are not available as events open to the public" as well as the entirety of Number 4 "Parks and Recreation Facilities are available for private rentals only. Rentals or events that are advertised or open to the public are not allowed." If the commission approves this, staff will take it back to General Services and let them discuss and give a recommendation. Then it would go to all of City Council.

Mr. Sholar clarified that the recommendation of this committee would go directly to Council regardless of what General Services decides.

Mr. Hovanec asked if it still needs to go to General Services.

Mr. Sholar responded that it does. This is a very specific recommendation this time. This committee's recommendation in and of itself will be a separate recommendation to Council.

Chairman McGee stated that there was some misunderstanding about General Services' responsibility. They thought they could kill it in their committee, but they cannot. That's where the questions were. It goes to General Services. They can deny it or approve it, but it still goes to Council. They are not a Council. It's three Council members, and they should not be able to say yea or nay. We wanted to make sure that wasn't going to happen before we send it back. It will pass through General Services, but it will still go on to Council.

Chairman McGee asked if there was a motion to send it on to General Services.

Mr. Thomasson made a motion to recommend removing the language on the facility rental regulations and applications stating "Community Centers are not available for events that are open to the public" and "All rentals must be considered private events and are not available as events open to the public" as well as the entirety of Number 4 "Parks and Recreation Facilities are available for private rentals only. Rentals or events that are advertised or open to the public are not allowed." Dr. Milner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with the following votes:

AYES: Ayala, Dillion, Huhnerkoch, McGee, Milner, and Thomasson

NAYS: None

Mr. Hovanec said that his goal was to get this on the January General Services and City Council agendas.

The group went on to discuss the Bearskin Creek Greenway project, which will connect Don Griffin Park to Creft Park. City Council awarded the project last week, and work will begin after the new year and take about six or seven months.

The group also discussed the 250<sup>th</sup> celebration of the United States and P&R events and partnerships that might be coordinated with that. Of special note was a proposed disc golf tournament and needed updates to the course at Bearskin Creek/Dickerson Park.

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

AYES: Ayala, Dillion, Huhnerkoch, McGee, Milner, and Thomasson

NAYS: None

The meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.



**STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission  
**VIA:** Mark Watson, City Manager  
**DATE:** January 29, 2026  
**FROM:** Peter Hovanec, Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Director  
**PREPARED BY:** Peter Hovanec, Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Director  
**SUBJECT:** Parks and Recreation Division Updates

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**SUMMARY STATEMENT**

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

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**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.

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**RECOMMENDATION**

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



## STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission  
**VIA:** Mark Watson, City Manager  
**DATE:** Jan. 29, 2026  
**FROM:** Pete Hovanec, Parks and Recreation Director  
**PREPARED BY:** Pete Hovanec, Parks and Recreation Director  
**SUBJECT:** Visitor Feedback Form

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### SUMMARY STATEMENT

The Monroe Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department oversees the operation of 10 facilities and several parks. To improve customer experience and meet the needs and expectations of the patrons of our facilities, staff has developed a “Visitor Feedback” form to help staff make decisions regarding facility operations.

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### REVIEW

Staff has developed a basic Visitor Feedback form for visitors to provide input regarding their experience at our facility. The form will consist of feedback questions like facility name, date of visit, purpose of visit, length of visit, cleanliness of facility, and any issues during visit to name a few.

Visitors will be able to scan the existing QR/Flow codes at each facility and be taken to the facility Web page which will also have the fillable feedback form available. Staff will compile the data and respond to issues and requests as the forms are submitted.

Hard copies of the form will also be available at each facility.

A copy of the proposed form is attached.

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the Commission approve the form for internal tracking and information gathering.

Attachment: Visitor Feedback Form

## Facility Visit Survey

Date of Your Visit

Purpose of Your Visit

How often do you use this facility?

Daily   Weekly   Monthly   Occasionally   This was my first visit

What did you enjoy most about your visit?

What did you enjoy least about your visit?

Overall, how satisfied are you with the cleanliness of the facility?

Very Satisfied   Satisfied   Neither   Dissatisfied   Very Dissatisfied

Overall, how satisfied are you with the condition of the facility?

Very Satisfied   Satisfied   Neither   Dissatisfied   Very Dissatisfied

Overall, how satisfied are you with staff helpfulness and professionalism?

Very Satisfied   Satisfied   Neither   Dissatisfied   Very Dissatisfied

How likely are you to recommend this facility to others?

Extremely Likely   Likely   Neutral   Unlikely   Extremely Unlikely



**STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission  
**VIA:** Mark Watson, City Manager  
**DATE:** Jan. 29, 2026  
**FROM:** Pete Hovanec, Parks and Recreation Director  
**PREPARED BY:** Pete Hovanec, Parks and Recreation Director  
**SUBJECT:** Disc Golf Course Improvements

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**SUMMARY STATEMENT**

Staff continues to implement upgrades and improvements to the Bearskin Creek Disc Golf Course located at the campus of the Dickerson Park Community Center. Staff continues to work with stakeholder group to implement the improvements, enhance the course and improve overall play experience.

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**REVIEW**

City staff and the stakeholder group volunteers have completed a large overhaul of the course over the past years and the next phase of that overhaul includes replacing the baskets, many of which were the original baskets from several decades ago, and constructing new Tee Pads due to the relocation of holes during the overhaul.

Staff is planning on purchasing 18 new baskets and working with the stakeholder group for the installation of 22 new tee pads that enhance the new layout that was implemented last year. A new welcome sign as well as new tee signs will also be included.

Staff will continue to work with the stakeholder group as they will complete the installation of the tee pads and continue to promote the course locally and regionally. Stakeholder group is

committed to the course and has had several “clean-up” days and has been instrumental in the renewed success and participation at the course.

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**RECOMMENDATION**

For information only, no action needed.



# 5 BEARSKIN CREEK

## Tee Information

○ **WHITE:** PAR 3 | **225 FT**

● **BLUE:** PAR 3 | **305 FT**



 **Monroe**  
North Carolina

Please respect the course • Pack in / pack out



**STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission  
**VIA:** Mark Watson, City Manager  
**DATE:** Jan. 29, 2026  
**FROM:** Pete Hovanec, Parks and Recreation Director  
**PREPARED BY:** Pete Hovanec, Parks and Recreation Director  
**SUBJECT:** America 250 Update

**SUMMARY STATEMENT**

On July 4, 2026, The United States will celebrate 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence. In the fall of 2025, City Council requested a committee be formed to plan various events to celebrate this momentous occasion throughout the City. Staff will provide an update on committee meetings to date.

**REVIEW**

On November 11, 2025 City Manager Mark Watson made committee appointments, which include the following individuals:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| • Mayor Robert Burns                                | • Pete Hovanec, Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Director |
| • Councilman James Kerr                             | • Randy Davis, Recreation General Manager               |
| • Councilman Franco McGee                           | • Leann Yandle, MAFC Superintendent                     |
| • Keri Mendler, Senior Planner                      | • Tim Pappas, Center Theater Operations Supervisor      |
| • Lisa Stiwinter, Planning and Development Director | • Tyson Carrier, Athletics & Special Events Supervisor  |
| • Jason Puckett, Communications Supervisor          | • Lauren Fike, Science Center Supervisor                |
| • Ashley Nowell, Downtown Director                  |   |

The committee met two times before Christmas to brainstorm various activities that could take place in 2026 including July 4th festivities and activities leading up to the Fourth; staff will

provide a brief overview of planned events at the meeting. The committee also finalized a mission statement and chose logos for various branding and advertisement materials.

In addition to enhanced July 4 activities, Parks and Recreation staff are looking at additional ways to celebrate the 250 and will be exploring options and activities within Parks, Recreation and Tourism.

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

For information only; no action needed.



**STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission  
**VIA:** Mark Watson, City Manager  
**DATE:** Jan. 29, 2026  
**FROM:** Pete Hovanec, Parks and Recreation Director  
**PREPARED BY:** Pete Hovanec, Parks and Recreation Director  
**SUBJECT:** Dog Park Update

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**SUMMARY STATEMENT**

The City’s only dedicated dog park operates at Sunset Park. The dog park is located on .7 of an acre and features two separate areas, one for small dogs and one for larger dogs. The dog park opened in late 2022 and currently has a small following of users.

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**REVIEW**

Staff has communicated with property management with regards to maintaining the park including ensuring the fence is secured to not allow dogs to get out or go between the two areas. Staff has discussed adding some amenities as well as evaluating the possibilities of expanding the area to better accommodate the needs of the users.

Staff is in the process of securing permanent trash receptacles as well as other dog amenities to enhance the overall park experience. Staff will continue to limit and remove communal toys and water bowls due to the possibility of unknowingly spreading sickness.

Staff is in the process of developing a set of standards for this park as well as future dog parks within the City.

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

No action is needed; item is being presented for information and discussion purposes only.



**STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission  
**VIA:** Mark Watson, City Manager  
**DATE:** Jan. 29, 2026  
**FROM:** Pete Hovanec, Parks and Recreation Director  
**PREPARED BY:** Pete Hovanec, Parks and Recreation Director  
**SUBJECT:** Coaches Incentive Discussion

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**SUMMARY STATEMENT**

Staff has been asked to look at ways to provide incentives for the volunteer coaches in the various athletic seasons.

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**REVIEW**

The Parks and Recreation athletic leagues provide various youth activities in several sports throughout the year including, basketball, soccer, track, baseball, softball, and flag football.

Staff has a very reliable and steady pool of coaches, many of which have not only coached for several years, but coach more than one sport.

Currently, coaches receive a free registration for their child in the sport they are coaching and are given a coach shirt.

**Number of coaches for sports down below:**

|                              |                    |                                |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>2024-2025 Basketball:</b> | <b>24 Coaches</b>  | <b>2025 Track: 10 Coaches</b>  |
| <b>2025 Flag Football:</b>   | <b>26 Coaches</b>  | <b>2025 Soccer: 30 Coaches</b> |
| <b>2025-2026 Basketball:</b> | <b>35 Coaches</b>  |                                |
| <b>Total:</b>                | <b>125 Coaches</b> |                                |

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

Discuss possible options for incentives and rewards for volunteer coaches.