

SMYRNA PARKS AND RECREATION PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 17, 2024

The monthly Smyrna Parks and Recreation Parks Advisory Board Meeting was held September 17th, 2024, at Smyrna Outdoor Adventure Center, Smyrna, Tennessee. Chairperson Clay Phillips called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm.

PRESENT Thirteen people were present: Christina Treglia; Molly Jennings; Nicole Green; Councilmember H.G. Cole; Chairperson Clay Phillips; Mark Hardy; Mike Moss, Director; Jimmy Stitt, Assistant Director; Christina Manus, staff; Rex Gaither, Assistant Town Manager; Charles Kings, Town Engineer; Marty Smith, staff; Claire Settles, staff

ABSENT Mayor Mary Esther Reed; Eli Victory; Michael Potts

SUMMARY Prayer: Mark Hardy

Citizen's Comments: None

Review and Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings:
Park unanimously approved August Park Advisory Board Minutes

Old Business:

Rotary Soccer Club Partnership Projects

Mike Moss updated the board on Rotary Soccer Park improvement projects. Mike would like to see the former concession stand and the new concession stand be connected with a breezeway that would provide shade for the patrons and become the park's centerpiece. He would also like to make sure all the concessions, shelters, and breezeway roofs match in color. The Rotary Club of Smyrna has committed \$75,000 in sponsorship, and the Stones River Futbol Club may also contribute to the town's improvements. The Stones River Futbol Club has requested improvements to have the concrete painted. Mike would like to have a trophy and picture-taking area developed. Ragan-Smith Engineering Firm is designing a concept plan for that area. Currently, the league is using a portable riser for pictures. Mike showed examples of both the breezeway and trophy area. The trophy and picture area will depend on funding. Mike asked the board if there were any questions about the projects. Molly Jennings and Nicole Green agreed that they really liked the trophy and picture-taking concept.

New Business:

Aquatic Season in Review

Mike Moss introduced Marty Smith and Claire Settle to the board. Claire is the new Aquatics and Program Coordinator. She recently graduated college and relocated from Oklahoma. She worked in parks, recreation, and a golf course during college. Marty reviewed several SplashTown Swimming Pool and Gregory Mill Park Splash Pad statistics. The pool was very successful this year, with a revenue of \$217,529.02. The pool was visited by 42,934 people, enjoying daily visits, member visits, swimming lessons, water aerobics, funbrella, and pool parties. Gregory Mill Splash Pad hosted 41 private parties and daycare groups. Marty discussed the annual issue of keeping lifeguards on until the end of the season. Once school starts, it is a struggle to keep them on staff.

Marty explained the hours of operation, why they changed the closing time to 5 pm last year, and how much it has help keep staff fresh. Marty also discussed only using one funbrella for party rentals so the other ones can be used for shade for the patrons. The splash pad and swimming pool had very few mechanical issues and did not have to shut down this summer despite earlier in the season dealing with Cicadas. Jimmy Stitt noted his appreciation for Marty and his staff operating the pool all season with minimal requests from the maintenance department. Mike Moss stated that Claire is working on a report reviewing the prices and trends of nearby swimming pools. Mike also stated we are working on receiving quotes to clean and repaint some of the features at the pool and splash pad during the off-season.

Discussion of a Memorial Plaza

Mike received a request from the TN Submarine Association to develop a memorial to commemorate the service and sacrifice of the American Submarine Force sailors. They are a division of the U.S. Navy, and 87 members died during wartime. Mike felt that rather than working with this one group to develop a memorial area, it would be prudent to plan for more requests from other military branches. Mike would like to design an area near the Kuss Memorial to prepare for additional memorials in the future. The Kuss Memorial would serve as the focal point. Mike has asked Kimley Horn to design two options for the town to consider. Mike shared these options with the board.

Councilmember H.G. Cole inquired about the proximity of a future amphitheater and corporate shelter in the Parks Master Plan. Mike explained that Lee Victory Recreation Park could probably not handle an amphitheater and parking at this point. He has been looking at other areas, such as Gregory Mill, Sharp Springs, or Enon Springs Road in regards to a corporate shelter. The Enon Springs Road location would tie into the Farmers Market and Depot District area.

Councilmember Cole asked about installing motion sensor cameras for the Kuss Memorial in light of recent activity at the plane. Mike and Jimmy stated that three cameras there record the plane area and believe they are stored for 2 – 4 weeks. Councilmember Cole noted that he had heard the request to place security around the plane and fencing. Molly Jennings mentioned that motion-censored lights could also be installed to call attention to the plane if someone were to try to climb on it. Mike explained they wanted to mount the aircraft higher but could not because the airport was across the street. Mike asked if there were any questions. The group stated they liked the designs that were shared.

Director's Report:

The Top Gun Night Run was postponed due to the threat of inclement weather. The race will now be held on September 20th with 735 runners registered to date.

Member's Only Night for the Thomas and Friends exhibit opening at the SOAC will be held on September 21st. Depot Days and the Depot District is fast approaching on the 27th and 28th. We have Fright Nights at the SOAC on October 11th and 12th and Halloween in the Park on October 26th. Mike and Jimmy both spoke a little bit about the Walk for Water Event that will be held at Sharp Springs Natural Area this year. This is a 1,000+ participant walk to support water efforts in Africa. It has moved from being on the streets to the park due to the safety and size of the event.

Mike announced several new employees: Ginger Levinson will start soon at the SOAC as the new Program Coordinator, replacing Michelle Nicholson, who has joined the administration team. Sam Kaviyakone has accepted a full-time programming position with the SOAC. She has worked as a part-time programmer for several years, and we are excited to have her come on board full-time. J.D. White has returned to the maintenance department after relocating out of state and is now returning. Mike stated that J.D. is a workhorse and that we would be pleased to have them back. Last but not least, Claire Settle, who the board has met tonight as the new Aquatics and Program Coordinator

Mike shared with the group that he purchased three new features for the mountain bike trail and showed an example of one of the ramps we will install. Mike stated the Hilltop and Lee Victory Recreation Park basketball courts will be resurfaced soon as the bid opens on September 10th, and it is on track for council approval. Mike shared a before and after picture of the multi-purpose field at Rotary Soccer Park. Due to the number of soccer requests the department receives, we needed a field available for open play. Mike stated we will be helping Murfreesboro host the state TRPA conference from November 4th through the 7th.

Jimmy updated the board on paving projects in the parks system. Shelter A and B at Sharp Springs Natural Area should be completed this week. 9th Avenue and Huntely along the greenway will be repaved soon using 2022 bid pricing

Mike and Marty discussed the recent Blakelynn 5K, which was held at Sharp Springs Natural Area and had over 500 participants.

Mike stated that we have been hosting many large corporate events this year at our parks. Some of these groups are over 1,000 people. Our restrooms can't handle that number of users, so we require them to bring in port-a-potties and dumpsters. Mike would like to have a place to hold their events that is custom-made for large events. Mike spoke about the corporate shelter and said he would discuss it with Rex Gaither, the Parks Department's Assistant Town Manager.

Mike shared pictures from the recent Autumn Animals program at Sharp Springs, which was held in partnership with the T.W.R.A. Mike also shared pictures from the Asian Heritage Day held at the SOAC on September 14th.

Reports of Officers, Committees, or Staff: none

Council Update:

Councilmember H.G. Cole reviewed Park's consent items from the last council meeting. H.G. Cole stated the town had approved the contract for Gear Up an upcoming SOAC exhibit. The town has also approved the contract to paint the SOAC pickleball courts. H.G. asked Charles King, the Town Engineer, to review ongoing road and sidewalk improvement projects. H.G. discussed the road improvements budget and how it was raised to tackle road projects. Due to last year's winter freeze, many roads need repairs. Rex Gaither stated the town has opened up the Gov.Deals auction.

Mike reminded the board that we will be accepting Lifetime Achievement Applications soon. The meeting adjourned at 6:14 pm.