

SMYRNA PARKS AND RECREATION PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

MINUTES OF APRIL 15th, 2025

The monthly Smyrna Parks and Recreation Parks Advisory Board Meeting was held on March 18th, 2025 at the Smyrna Outdoor Adventure Center, Smyrna, Tennessee. Mike Moss, Director, called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm.

PRESENT Fifteen people were present: Michael Potts; Megan Dietsch, Molly Jennings; Dalton Hidalgo; Tom Sage; Christina Treglia; Nicole Green; Councilmember H.G. Cole; Mayor Mary Esther Reed; Dave Santucci, Town Manager; Mike Moss, Director; Charles King, Town Engineer; and Christina Manus, Jimmy Stitt, Courtney Morgan, staff

ABSENT Mark Hardy

SUMMARY Prayer: Mark Hardy

Citizen's Comments: None

Review and Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings:

Mayor Reed motioned to approve March's minutes, and Christina Treglia seconded the motion. The board unanimously approved the motion.

Mike Moss introduced the two new Park Board Members, Tom Sage and Dalton Hidalgo. Each new member presented a little background about themselves and why they wanted to get involved with the board. Mayor Reed asked each other person in the room to introduce themselves to the new members.

Old Business:

Review of Director's Summit at Henry Horton State Park

Jimmy Stitt outlined the key topics presented at this year's Director's Summit:

- The importance of Master Plan updates every five years to qualify for grants.
- An overview of OREC TN Outdoors and their goals.
- Roundtable session including Franklin Parks statistics, marketing videos, and NRPA benchmarking data.
- The Blueway TN Initiative.
- A session on investing in parks, discussing the difference between investment and expense while focusing on creating a "Great User Experience."
- Discussions on ADA compliance, featuring information and images of all-terrain wheelchairs available in state parks, as well as ADA-accessible boat and kayak launches.
- Trends in greenways and trails.
- An overview of Henry Horton State Park and its upcoming \$100 million improvements.
- A slideshow on Destination Play Spaces.

Jimmy's most significant takeaways included:

- The necessity for electronic lock systems
- The need for additional indoor space
- Partnering with Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation on the Blueway Project
- The vital role of effective marketing
- The availability of custom design pieces
- Conducting salary surveys to improve employee retention
- Acknowledging that public Wi-Fi is not working well for other departments
- Noticing trends where developers are funding greenways
- Recognizing that camera systems are becoming increasingly important
- Observing a decline of public outdoor swimming pools

During a discussion about trends in parks and recreation presented by Jimmy, Town Manager David Santucci spoke about a new tool, Placer IA. The Town of Smyrna will soon be using Placer IA to collect foot traffic data. This tool will provide insights not only into event attendance but also into the distance traveled and statistics about the visitors.

Mayor Reed inquired about the pricing structure, asking whether it was charged per event. David clarified that it involves a one-time annual fee. Councilmember Cole asked if the software had retroactive capabilities, allowing data collection for past events. David confirmed that it does.

Councilmember Cole also inquired about the price of an all-terrain wheelchair, to which Jimmy responded that it costs \$10,000.

Mayor Reed asked if there had been any negative feedback regarding the use of License Plate Readers (LPRs) in the parks. Mike replied that there had been none.

Jimmy expressed his gratitude to the Town Council and Mayor Reed for the recent compensation study conducted in the town. He noted that the new plan has significantly improved job applicant numbers, increasing from two or three to twenty.

New Business:

Selection of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Mayor Reed nominated Christina Treglia for Chairperson and Councilmember Cole seconded the motion, all approved except Christina Treglia. Councilmember Cole nominated Molly Jennings for Vice Chairperson and the Mayor seconded, all approved.

Role and Mission of the Parks Advisory Board

Mike Moss displayed the Park's Mission Statement and discussed some important roles of the board. The board will vote on the Lifetime Service Award recipient, help determine its fee schedule, prioritize projects, help update the Master Plan, and review policies.

Mayor Reed added that the role is important in dispersing factual information to the public and bringing new ideas to the table.

Parks Master Plan Update Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Mike expressed that the last update to the Parks Master Plan occurred in 2021. The Master Plan for 2026 will involve a more comprehensive examination of the Town's needs. The town is likely to collaborate with Kimley-Horn again, as they worked on the previous plan and the current mobility plan, and could assist in securing new grants.

Discussion and Follow-Up on the Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Presentation

Several key points resonated with the board during the discussion, including:

- Veterans Park
- Staffing levels
- The organization of three divisions
- Park Police

Mayor Reed remarked that Murfreesboro has more undeveloped land than Smyrna. Councilmember Cole expressed that Smyrna Parks and Recreation has consistently accomplished more with fewer resources. He also acknowledged the dedication of the staff, mentioning Chris Davis specifically. The mayor also expressed surprise at the construction of their skate park due to concerns regarding liability.

Director's Report:

Mike displayed and reviewed the Director's Report.

Mike invited the board to May events such as Kid's Safety Day and the Storybook Trail ribbon cutting at Smyrna Library.

Mike noted the SOAC is staying open later a couple nights a week for pickleball players to have access to the restrooms and retail shop. Councilmember Cole asked if we had installed benches yet. Mike replied we have not, but we will soon.

Mike announced that Smyrna Golf Course will now fall under the Smyrna Parks and Recreation Department. The Director has currently been there for 18 years, so he is confident it will be a good partnership.

Mike reported that we could be losing the practice fields at Smyrna High School soon and will be pursuing fields at All Saints Church.

Council Update:

David Santucci discussed the relocation of the National Guard from Nashville Airport to Smyrna Airport. The Guard is funding a traffic study to address the number of service members who will visit Smyrna each weekend. Additionally, the Town has adopted a resolution for a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan, which refocuses roadway construction to prioritize sidewalks and accessibility. Tom Sage inquired if the National Guard would want to retain Volunteer Park and David replied no.

Mayor Reed addressed three current topics in town.

The reconstruction of the roundabout on Front Street in order to slow down traffic, the T.D.O.T. diverging diamond interchange at the Almadale Road exit that is now on schedule again for 2029, and the acquisition of land adjacent to Smyrna High School for a new Kroger.

The county will receive 25 acres, that they may deed to the Town for park use. There is a potential pathway that would connect to a sidewalk under Lowry, close to Karin's Kustard. Tom Sage emphasized the importance of the Town Council approving documents that outline where sidewalks should be located. This approval is necessary for TDOT to adhere to these recorded documents for many years to come. He also expressed his gratitude to the Mayor, Town Manager, and Town Engineer for their attendance at the Park Advisory Meetings.

Reports of Officers, Committees, or Staff – Round Table Discussion

The board discussed possible off-site meeting locations for this summer.

Sage Hill at Sharp Springs, Pioneer Park and Cedar Stone

Mayor Reed motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:37 pm and seconded by Michael Potts.