



PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, February 20th, 2024 6pm

Ruby Fulbright Aquatic Center – Large Meeting Room
120 Paul Franklin Road Clarkesville, Georgia 30523

Roll Call

- ✓ Joe Elam
- ✓ Peggy Fortson
- ✓ Cassie Head
- ✓ Angela Haughton
- ✓ Keith Deyton
- ✓ Brooke Whitmire
- ✓ Bruce Palmer

Old Business/Minutes

1. No Old Business

New Business/Current Events

1. Written Report – Director, Brooke Whitmire
 - a. Highlighted track and field numbers doubling this year from the past (42 total, normally have 20)
 - b. Highlighted large numbers in 3-4 tball (90) and 5-6 coach pitch (120).
 - c. Spring sports total 623 participants – up by about 20 participants across all sports
 - d. Discussed how practices are split up and scheduled – coaches supplied with bases, tees, and balls needed. Many 6 and under teams must share fields 2-3 per field because of number of teams
 - e. Reported on parking changes are Diamond Memorial – need for accessibility
 - i. Discussion around providing a shuttle – recreation department does not have a golf cart or utility vehicle currently, can borrow sheriff's department's occasionally
 - ii. Discussed there being an area for loading & unloading & no parking between fields
 - f. Discussed field reconditioning success & fields holding up well to wet weather already coming through – looking forward to Spring tournaments scheduled
 - g. Discussed setting swim team season schedule & hosting GRPA D7 meet in June
 - h. Discussed success of first ever PuzzlePalooza! – Next puzzle event will be held May 24th – applying for grant to cover costs of program

- i. Discussed Swim Safely – April 20th, 2024 – will be funded through donations by community partners
2. Carl Vinson Public Input – March Meeting – Brooke Whitmire
 - a. Would like to attend next board meeting – March 19th
 - b. Will help them develop departmental report and strategic plan for department
3. Public Issues & How to Handle Them – specifically when brought to social media – Joe Elam
 - a. Discussion surrounding how the board as a group should respond to social media posts – discussed communication plan and how things should be approached
 - b. Discussed creating a “virtual business” card of sorts for board members to use where they can post to questions on social media
4. Discussion on issue at Aquatic Center from week of February 12th – Angela Haughton
 - a. Discussed an incident that happened at closing on a Friday – staff was addressed and additional protocols put into place
 - b. Concerns over chemical levels of pool were addressed – and reports from camp over Christmas break – all chemical levels at that time were reported normal
5. Discussed how the public knows about the parks and recreation board. How can we get more word out to people?
 - a. Discussed advertising the board to coaches at the beginning of the season so they know they can bring issues to them
 - b. Discussed how we can use other avenues than in person meetings to get more involvement from the community
 - c. Discussed implementing a virtual suggestion box somehow – possibly a board email address? – making an auto reply that give meeting dates & times and letting people know who they can contact immediately – talked about building a culture where parents know they can go to coaches and/or staff members with their requests – QR Code?
6. Discussed cracked pool deck floor and condition of the natatorium with needed repairs and updated – things are in rough shape in there
7. Brooke gave an update on bleacher requests in gymnasiums – had company come out to give quote on replacement, but if far out of current budget – working on alternative options – to replace exact bleachers we have now with new ones would be around \$114k – if approved, replacements could be started in July, 2024



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8. Brooke gave an update on being able to send flyers and other information to school system & now know how that process works!
9. Discussion around how to get more fencing put back up at horse arena – Director Whitmire mentioned that the rodeo group who comes out for the rodeo suggested we leave the fencing down because it's easier for groups to come in and use the arena. There's worry about a fence not being up doesn't allow local people to come out and use the horse arena.
 - a. Brooke also discussed how facilities supervision is run by the county. There is one department that runs ALL facilities maintenance, etc who only has a few people on staff. This crew does all of this for the county, plus everything for the Parks and Recreation Department. They are lining ballfields, mowing grass, setting up for events, maintaining facilities, fixing issues, etc. This makes it extremely difficult to keep up with everything they are required to do.
10. Discussed challenges of location for fairgrounds facilities because of it being on top of a hill with little access. Also the fact that the parking is shared between several different facilities. It makes it difficult to schedule many events at one time.
11. 2024 Remaining Meeting Dates – all held at Habersham County Administrative building beginning at 6:00p
 - a. ~~February 20th~~
 - b. March 19th
 - c. April 16th
 - d. May 21st
 - e. June 18th
 - f. July 16th
 - g. August 20th
 - h. September 17th
 - i. October 15th
 - j. November 19th
 - k. December 17th

Upcoming Events

1. Hosting GRPA District 7 All Star Basketball Tournament for 8U Boys & 12U Girls teams – February 22nd – 24th
2. RK Gun Show – February 23rd & 24th

3. March Member Initiative – “Run/Walk a Marathon” in March! Fitness membership members track milage through the Month of March to complete a marathon. Finishers will receive a prize & shoutout on Facebook
4. NE Georgia Car Part Swap Meet – March 9th
5. Bi-Annual - Kids Consignment Sale – March 10th – 17th
6. USFA Softball Tournament – March 16th
7. Mountain Top Jeep Invasion – March 23rd
8. Dusty's All Star Circus – April 1st & 2nd

Adjourn

Motion by _____Angela_____

Seconded by _____Keith_____

Time: __7:35p_____