



**Parks and Greenways Board  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
January 14, 2025– 9:30 a.m.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Judy Lyons called to order the Regular Parks and Greenways Board Meeting at 9:32 a.m. on January 14, 2024.

The following attended in person at Town Hall, 441 White Pine Drive, Laurel Park NC 28739:

- Vice Chair Judy Lyons
- John McGregor
- Denise Layfield
- Joseph Robustelli
- Pat La Salle
- Todd Plessel
- Commissioner George Banta - Council Representative
- Bobbie Trotter – Chief of Police/Interim Town Clerk
- Kaitland Finkle- Regional Planner

Guests:

- Hunter Marks – Watermark- Landscaping Architect
- Mike Reardon - Carolina Climbers Coalition- Executive Director
- Alycia Andrade - Carolina Climbers Coalition- Marketing/Events

The following were absent:

- Chair Gary Anderson
- Town Manager Cara Reeves
- Parks Operation Coordinator Bryan Hensley

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Vice Chair Lyons asked if there were any public comments. Guest Hunter Marks and Mike Reardon were introduced and asked to speak during the appropriate agenda times. No further public comments.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Vice Chair Lyons asked for any agenda changes. Commissioner George Banta asked the Board for a modification for Hunter Marks to be heard sooner, due to his schedule. Vice Chair Lyons stated the election of this year's Officers was left of the agenda; and asked for the elections to be added to new business. Denise Layfield asked to add discussion on the tree sapling stake sale to

the agenda. Joseph Robustelli stated that he wanted to update the Board on a meeting he had with Steve Pettis, which was added to the Bee Committee Report section of the agenda.

The agenda was unanimously approved on motion by Joe Robustelli and second by Judy Lyons. Chair Anderson asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The December 10, 2024, minutes were unavailable at this time. The minutes will be reviewed at the February meeting.

### **BUDGET REPORT**

No budget report.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- Presentation on Roundabouts by Hunter Marks. Vice Chair Lyons brought forth guest Hunter Marks for his presentation. Marks began his work on the landscaping on HWY 64 along with four roundabouts. He had to work within NCDOT parameters and consider the utilities, as well. Marks opened for questions. Marks provided a hard copy of the plant list, to include native plants and trees, which are within the NCDOT regulations. Marks stated that this is a 38-million-dollar project and DOT allows 1.5% of the project to pay for landscaping. He estimated approximately \$900,000 to implement the plan. DOT will pay \$575,000, leaving the Town to pay \$325,000. The project would be a couple of years out and would be Town's responsibility for the maintenance.
- Discussion of Board Vacancies. Vice Chair Lyons began the discussion about the Board vacancies. Layfield and Robustelli discussed an option, and Layfield stated she would reach out again. Vice Chair Lyons commented that she had some people, she could reach out too and encouraged the other members of the Board to do the same.
- Discussion of Volunteer Appreciation Event. Vice Chair Lyons explained that a flyer was made but they had requested some changes. Trotter and Finkle stated that they would find the flyer, make the changes, and send it to Vice Chair Lyons.
- Discussion of the Staircase at Jump Off Rock. The staircase at Jump Off has been postponed due to snow. Plessel stated that the materials are ready, and the project will be completed once there is some good weather.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- Discussion of the Carolina Climbers Coalition. Mike Reardon and Alycia Andrade from Carolina Climbers Coalition presented to the Board. Carolina Climbers is a nonprofit organization, which provides community support with areas that are available to the

public for the purpose of bouldering. Reardon said the organization would assist with trail work, invasive species, and graffiti removal. Layfield asked about the process of having them assist with projects. Reardon stated that they were nonprofit, it would be a conversation and agreement. Commissioner Banta stated it would be best for Reardon to be in contact with Town Manager Reeves. Reardon agreed. Layfield put forth a motion to support the alliance with Carolina Climbers within the scope of the Town's regulations, and Vice Chair Lyons seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

- Site Plan Recommendation for Fawn Turn Lane Lot 3. Finkle presented information to the Board in reference to a site plan approval on Fawn Turn. Finkle stated that the lot is very steep at 29% and does about a trail section on the Parks and Greenway map. Finkle explained that since the greenway is on the opposite side of Laurel Park HWY, and she feels there is not a clear opportunity to work with the property owners for section of trail on their lot. Finkle reported that the owners do have a landscaping plan in place, which illustrates a perimeter buffer and streetscape buffer. At this time, within the UDO requirements, such site plans and review are to come before the Parks and Greenway Board, in terms of tree protection and possible parks and greenways. Finkle expressed that there will be some updates to the UDO and part of that would be the discussion to remove the step of coming in front of this Board. Finkle asked for the Boards input. Vice Chair Lyons commented that she believes, on the basis of an informational standpoint, she feels that the review process is still viable for the Board to remain on the distribution chain.
- Discussion of 2016 Parks and Greenways Comprehensive Plan - Review for a month and add to agenda for February.
- Election of Officers:
  - Chair- John McGregor- Motion by Robustelli, seconded by Lyons, all in favor.
  - Vice Chair- Judy Lyons- Motion by Layfield, seconded by Robustelli, all in favor.
  - Secretary- Pat LaSalle- Motion by Layfield, seconded by Robustelli, all in favor.

### **PARK TECHNICIAN'S REPORT**

No report

### **INVASIVES SPECIES COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. McGregor began by stating he had two topics to discuss. First, before Hurricane Helene, the missions were to manage, remove, replace, and restore. He asked if this committee would propose suggestions as to how to look at the areas that were totally wiped out by Hurricane Helene. In his opinion, secure the soil and plant what is appropriate. McGregor asked for input from the Board- Is this in the realm of the Invasive Species Committee or a larger conversation with Public Works. It was discussed to provide guidance with the assistance of Public Works. The second topic from McGregor was to work together with the Bee Committee to produce a mailing or newsletter to get information out to the community. It was also discussed to do a

demonstration area with Canal Park in mind. Great way to educate and illustrate to the community.

**BEE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Lasalle reported information on a meeting the Bee Committee is having with Phyllis Stiles from Bee City USA. The interest is learning how to gain more involvement with the community. The Bee Committee will be working with Steve Pettis for an event in late February. During the discussion of the Pettis event, Layfield added information on tree sapling stake sales. The discussion led the Board to wait until the fall to decide on the purchasing.

**CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE REPORT**

No report.


**BOARD AND COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**


Commissioner Banta expressed his appreciation for the Board putting forth the goal of community education and he encouraged the Board to give the same information/education to Public Works.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Vice Chair Lyons adjourned the meeting at 11:41 a.m. on motion by Layfield and seconded by Robustelli. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

ATTEST:

  
Pat LaSalle  
Secretary

  
John McGregor, Chair  
2. 11. 25  
Date