

Meeting Minutes for August 1, 2016

Diane Fenton called the Recreation Commission meeting to order and welcomed everyone

In Attendance: Tonia Winn, Mary Critzer, Cord Hall, Brad Epperley, Diane Fenton

Last month's minutes approved

Diane Fenton turned the meeting over to Brad Epperley

This month at the Recreation Center the attendance was 7,572 which was an increase from last year at this time. We did our 4th of July celebration and it turned out well considering all the weather. We are happy that we stayed true to our event downtown; we had a couple pop up showers. Most of the vendors came out but some didn't because of their concern with the weather. We had plenty of children activities, and the farmers market sold out in a number of things. Honestly, the food vendors that was present were very thankful that we continued with the festival. We had weather issues at the stadium that night with fireworks as well; we had lightning and sent everyone to their cars. After seeing the size of the storm and understanding the fireworks were already wet, we decided for the safety of our citizens they needed to stay in their cars to watch the firework show. For community programs, some of the classes that have done very well this past month was P90 Early Bird, which had 23 participants. Beginning Evening Yoga had 24 participants, yoga is really starting to become popular. Senior Populations did a New River Jetboat Trip. We had 20 participants for that event and summer bingo had 26 participants. Our Senior Citizens Police Academy went quite well, we had 8 participants for the academy. Another neat event was a partnership with the Montgomery County Sheriff's office. The event was called EFFORT. It provides folks with disabilities an outlet where they feel safe around Emergency Services Responders whether it be police, rescue or fire. They had 75 participants that came out for that event. What we did as a way to help with that event was one we provided bags that had the Christiansburg Parks & Recreation logo on it, everyone that was there got a bag with our logo on it. We also helped by giving them a free pass to the Recreation Center with a paying adult, provided a booth with information, and operated an obstacle course for the participants to take part in. Captain Haug was part of the leadership group that came up to Recreation Center and Brad spoke about Jill's Buddy Camp program, she did not know that we did those types of programs. She asked if we would be interested in participating in EFFORT Day. It is a great new program and something that will grow in the years to come. In Adult Athletics our Church Softball regular season is over with, they have begun there double elimination tournament. Christiansburg High School worked with us on the Girls Volleyball Clinic; we had 21 girls in attendance. We did a Youth Football Camp with DJ Preston. It turned out to be great. DJ Preston, a former Virginia Tech player ran the camp with some of our staff and former players around the area. We had over 30 participants that were involved in the camp. Last week, Morgan Sisson a former Christiansburg High School cheerleader had a cheerleading camp we had 34 participants for that camp. Football and Cheerleading signups are going on right now. The season is going to start a little bit earlier this year than it has in the past. We have already started handing out equipment in hopes to get more participants in to register. We started another youth football camp on August 1st. Coach Cromer with Christiansburg High School is going to manage that camp and operate it for us. We had 84 participants signed up for that camp.

The World Series had 56 teams from 4 different states. They were Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. In the New River Valley and surrounding areas we had 1,099 hotel rooms, in addition to 74 camp sites at Claytor Lake State Park. We had 742 of those rooms in Christiansburg. It was a

great event; we had teams from the Charlottesville area, Virginia Beach area towards Maryland. We had a couple teams out of South Carolina. One of the South Carolina teams was interesting as one of their coaches actually play football at the University of SC and advanced to the NFL. Brad spoke with him and asked how he decided on Christiansburg and he said he talked with another team that was here a year before and they really enjoyed it and wanted to try it.

A couple other things that Brad wanted to mention was our student representative selection, he has spoken with Shane Guynn on this we do have a female representative that he suggested and her name is Nicole Diloi. She plays volleyball and soccer and is a rising Junior. He is working on trying to find a male, we are looking in the lacrosse area so we have some coverage. If Recreation Commission is okay with the choices for the student representative, Brad will reach out and invite them in. The commission all agreed to move forward with inviting the student representatives. We will have some vacancy within our commission; Ms. Mary Critzer turned her resignation letter into Brad effective October 1, 2016. Mary is retiring and moving to South Carolina to enjoy time with her daughter and grandchildren. We are very thankful for everything she has done for the Department, and within our Town. She has been a part of the commission for 27 years. Another vacancy will be Mike Harris because he is moving out of the Town of Christiansburg. With these vacancies probably what we will do is put an advertisement out. Brad asked the commission to guide him the vacancy. Then at our next meeting in September the commission could look at them and make a decision at that point if everyone is okay with that. This was in agreement by all members. To best of Brad's knowledge in the past we have advertised here at the Department, and on the website. Town Council has mentioned to Cord Hall about bringing information to the commission about getting a soccer and lacrosse representative on the board and the board has been so full. He informed them that he would bring it up at the next meeting, but there wasn't one in July. Brad mentioned that we did discuss this in our June meeting and in the June meeting the commission felt we needed to be cautious of basically specifying one sport or group because there are so many different groups that are out there. So basically the commission wanted to just open it up to whomever is interested. One thing Mary Critzer wanted to comment on was that the Recreation Department has done a beautiful job meeting the needs of the entire family that includes the senior folks, so although most people think it is about sports, the Town doesn't forget the seniors. This is something this department should be proud of. Brad thinks this is so important as it's more than just the sports, its Jill's Buddy Camp, working with seniors, and doing all those things. Mary Critzer asked if there was an application for commission vacancies and Brad said, there is not one. In the past we have just advertised it, and they contact Brad. They tell him there interest, generally Brad asks for them to send in a resume so the commission can look at their resume. Brad said that we can develop an application though for this process.

Brad mentions that there are two sites for our playground equipment that we won; one is on John Lemley Lane and the other one is Third and Phlegar Street. Brad wanted to discuss some information that he has received. He has had one person from the John Lemley Lane area that lives close to that property and they were ecstatic that we are considering that particular area. He has also had a conversation with one person that is the next door neighbor that is opposed to it. With the Master Plan John Lemley Lane is a great location for us because it is east of 81 and that was one of the areas we were looking at. Brad spoke with Andrew Warren to the towns Planning Director about if we needed to do a public hearing or anything along those lines for this particular property. Right now the property is currently zoned to be able to put a park in it without any type of public hearing. The other part of it is time is of the essence because the end of September is the goal to get this in. The other area Third and Phlegar Street if the commission remembers this land was donated to us by a family. This is also zoned for a park. There are a couple upsides to this particular property as well; the one upside to this is it is close to downtown. Brad thinks downtown is going to be an emphasis moving forward with our current administration of enhancing downtown and those types of things. It's one of those little connection type things that could enhance it. Both locations are both good locations but Brad wanted to see what Recreation Commissions views were on this to move forward. One thing we could possibly do is a public input type of item one night. Mary Critzer asked which area is in the greater need; Brad said it sort of is a toss-up.

According to the Master Plan John Lemley Lane is in the greater need because we need a park east of interstate 81 and there is nothing out there. The email Brad received from the gentleman that was happy about the park he said about 80% of the houses in that neighborhood they had kids. Tonia Winn mentions that if they are already zoned for parks, then you shouldn't hold a public hearing other commission members agreed with Tonia. Mary Critzer mentions the commission can recommend it and that's how Brad can present it to anyone that communicates with him. If they have an issue with it they can bring it to commission and express their concerns. Third and Phlegar is a flood area and Tonia Winn mentions she would hate to have a beautiful park there and it be destroyed by floods. Cord Hall asked Brad what does he think, Brad thinks that John Lemley Lane is the spot of need according to the Master Plan. He does see that Third and Phlegar could be a great location especially because of some downtown enhancements that will be coming in the future. However at the current moment Brad thinks this particular area at John Lemley Lane is the better area. We do not have anything out there and this could be a way to provide recreational enhancements to this area. Cord would hate to put something at Third and Phlegar before they do the work to fix the flood area and storm water project. Everyone from commission is in agreement to place the new playground equipment at John Lemley Lane. Brad mentioned that he would reach out to the people he has spoken with and invite them to the next commission meeting to voice their thoughts to the commission.

A few other items, we had a long term senior pass away, she has been involved with our programs for a long time. Then most everyone knew Tony Huddleston, he coached in our program, he worked in our program, and he was here every day. He tragically passed away recently. On a good note, Jill's Buddy Camp ended up being a great camp. Tonia's daughter Emily was a part of it and did a wonderful job. This year was even better than last year. We got some good publicity and Brad thinks that will help it to grow and probably more than anything to maybe get rid of the standard that the Parks & Recreation is just about sports. It is very much more out there than sports. To be able to go through that program and see those teenage kids and those campers and how they grow is pretty amazing. The World Series homerun derby was able to raise \$2,410 for next year's Jill's Buddy Camp. We had 241 kids to sign up for the home run derby. We do food for breakfast and lunch and then we pay for their field trips. The school system pays for their professional services, the transportation, and the bus driver. This June and July has been the busiest since Brad has been here, we had the teen police academy, 2 weeks of Jill's Buddy Camp, Dixie District Tournament then the 4th of July Celebration festival and fireworks, then the World Series, and lastly week we had our senior police academy. The staff has done a remarkable job keeping it all together and doing it. Cord Hall mentioned that the Top Gun Softball turned out to be a successful this year. Brad asked Cord Hall if he had any updates on the Kiwanis lease, Cord has been approached a few times about setting a date for a meeting. Cord mentions that at the next council meetings he going to see if they can reach out to them and see if they can schedule a work session with them.

Meeting adjourned, next meeting is September 6th, 2016.