

## Meeting Minutes for August 7, 2017

- Diane Fenton called the Recreation Commission meeting to order and welcomed everyone
- In Attendance: Tonya Winn, Richard Polikoff, Matthew Davidson, Jim Williamson, Brad Epperley, Robin Boyd, Charlton McCoy, Mike Saylor, Diane Fenton
- June meetings were approved.
- Directors Report: Attendance for the month of July was 8,147 and that was an increase from last July. We have been working on our Annual Report and the number of scans from last year to this year was over 7, 000 scans. We had 20 vendors for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration downtown this year, then we had 3 different bands, a kid area, 2 food trucks and those trucks completely sold out. There was some rain before the fireworks causing some fog which caused the fireworks not to go as high, but everything turned out great.
- In our Community Programs, Zumba, Beginning Evening Yoga and Core Balance were all popular for us this past month, with Yoga having 21 participants. Our Novice Dog Obedience had 14 dogs/owners this past month. Currently we do our dog obedience classes at the National Guard Amory due to restriction to the Amory we will not have the use of that facility as of September 1. To be able to move forward with our obedience classes we are going the class to the Old Mayflower building at the crossing of the Huckleberry Trail. The town owns that building but eventually that building will come down because there is a connector road there. But for now we are doing some updates and renovations to make sure it meets code so we hold our classes there. One of the nice things is that at any time is that we could do obstacle course areas and those types of things because that building is big enough.
- In our Senior Population Programs, Senior Aerobics had 22 participants. We held a blood drive with the American Red Cross and had 17 participants in that. We had a group that went to the Barter Theater for Savannah Sipping Society. We also had 21 participants for the Summer Bingo that we held toward the end of the month. One of the programs we will hold with the Christiansburg Police Department is the Senior Police Academy as well as the Teen Police Academy that one was earlier in the year. We held our Senior Academy the week of July 17, and we had 10 participants for that. 7 of the participants were out town participants and they also got to learn a little bit about we have to offer as well. We also received a nice email from one of the participants talking about how great it is we have a relationship with Police Department and all the stuff we have to offer. Last thing from a Senior Population item perspective is the Effort Day Event that is co-sponsored with Montgomery County Sheriff's Office. This event is to support our Special Population groups and to provide a beneficial partnership with First Responders. This event had 124 participants and it was a great event.
- In our Youth Athletics, our Dixie Angels won our District Championship Tournament that was hosted here in Christiansburg. That went on to in the State Tournament, first time Christiansburg has had an Angels team to participate at the State level. They went 1-2 and represented Christiansburg very well. Robin Boyd wanted to thank Chuck Muncy, Youth Supervisor, he drove down for every game. Now for Youth Athletics, we have the fall sports which include, football, cheerleading, fall softball, fall baseball and volleyball sign ups have started. Fall is the busiest time for Youth Athletics. Football is one of the hardest sport to pick teams for, usually you separate them before going into full pads, and then you have a totally different child in full pads. Chuck is very strict on this and wants to make sure the teams are equal as possible. They are going to practice together after getting full pads before being selected for teams. Mike Saylor mentions when he officiated back when Chuck used to do sports that he did a well job of making sure the teams were equal.
- In our Adult Athletics, Church League Softball regular season has finished up and there in their playoffs now, we plan on finishing up next week. Open League Softball has ended, Wolf Packed was the champion. Summer Basketball League and Church League Volleyball has come to an end. It has been a busy summer from an Adult Sports perspective. We are taking register now for the Adult Volleyball Leagues.
- Outdoor Facilities, a couple items to mention, last month we hosted two major tournaments. Nations East Coast World Series as well the USSSA East Coast Championship, both programs did well from a team perspective. It ended up being more beneficial for us because we got two weekends out of it. We have done a World Series before we were pushing 60 teams and those types of things. Now there is competition there and one organization is dropping numbers and the

other is growing, it happens it part of it. The nice thing for us we had back to back weekends, one that was right at 40 teams and another one that was 44 teams. We get partial gate off the World Series and that is bought in as a revenue, we got \$3,000 for that. We also raised \$1,000 off the Home Run Derby for Jill's Buddy Camp for next year. The other part for USSSA we don't do all the bells and whistles for that, they ended up having 300 hotel rooms used for the weekend. We did have a volleyball clinic in July we had 27 participates in that. Right now, we are in the final stage of starting to install sponsored items on the Huckleberry Trail, we have gotten a number of things people have paid for. We will have water station, picnic tables, benches and those types of items. There will be a sign of who is sponsoring that item beside of the item they have.

- We have the 8 Mile Walk on September 16, which is the same day as the Wilderness Trail Festival. We are hoping people will come to our thing and go down there after. Gay & Neel has always been a sponsor for the walk. The event has done very well, in the past 2 years we have averaged 70-80 participates. The BT will come over and pick us up at 8:30 a.m. and take us to the Blacksburg Library and then walk back. Also, the Huckleberry Hustle 5K "Getting Scary on the Huckleberry" will be Saturday, October 28. We plan to work with the Christiansburg High School and Track Team on that. Charlton has also worked on doing the Truck or Treat again this year.
- Brad Epperley had someone contact him about a Summer Adoption Program for dogs, cats, and exotic birds. They want to setup at one of our parks and bring out those animals to be able to adopt through those shelters. She is working with our local shelter, Giles County, as well as Pulaski County. They are talking about doing hot dogs to raise money for the shelters. Brads only concern with this is that we don't have a restriction with dogs. She wants to it Labor Day weekend, Labor Day is a busy weekend at all of our parks. Brad is concerned to commit to that because it could interfere with other people using the parks. Jim Williamson asked if she could do it another weekend, but she wanted to do that weekend because it is a big weekend. Tonia Winn asked if she was a private person, she works with exotic birds rescue. She has her own group that rescues exotic birds and tries to get them adopted, she was trying to work with shelter for everyone to see. Richard Polikoff asked if Brad knew how big it would, he thinks she would rather have it large but with it being the first time he has no idea. Other question was is it an all-day event, earlier day event. Mike Saylor mentions if it is an earlier day event it should interfere with the community but if it was all day he could see Brad's point. Brad gather that it would be an all-day event. Tonia Winn sees where she is coming from with wanting to do it on a busy weekend and doesn't see a problem with it. She is looking to do this Downtown Park. Charlton McCoy suggest that she go up to the big field at the park. Brad is going to get some information before a decision is made, Commission does not have a major issue with it, but there is some concerns.
- Another thing Brad wanted to talk about is Downtown Park, he wants to be able to turn a negative into a positive. It will probably be out on social media soon, there is a number of Black Locust Trees. They are probably 50-70 years old, Black Locust Trees are known to get a fungus in them that rots the tree from the inside. Generally what happens is limbs will fall off the tree for little of no reason. This is a huge safety risk for us. Brad met with Michael our tree expert, and he broke down all the trees that are going to have to come out. There is about 18 trees that are going to have to be removed from the park, what we have now done is moving forward with replanting new trees there. We are trying to turn it from a negative to a positive on the replanting. We are planting more trees than we are taking out, we are planning on planting some red woods and some more flowering trees around the playground. There is an area at the top of Downtown Park that is open with a concrete pad there, Brad's invasion was to put some screening trees back there and build our picnic area on that area. That open area could be used for anything. The Town Manager, members of Public Works, Engineering, Planning Department, and Public Relations all of them were there for the meeting to make sure the l's were dotted and the t's were crossed. The removal will start a week from today, the park will not be closed until we started that. The Town Manager does not feel it is that huge of a risk that the tree is coming down right now, but we have had one large limb come down a month ago. The removal will take 3 days, August 14-16, then on August 17-18 the Public Works staff will start drilling holes for the new trees, on Saturday, August 19 we will have a public park day to come and plant trees at 9 a.m. that morning. Our tree expert is our Horticulturalist for the town, he is going to do an educational piece on the trees as well. Robin Boyd asked if we thought we were going to have back lash from it, Brad doesn't think that will happen if our Public Relations presents it in a manner that this is a safety concern and this is what we are doing with the replanting. To give Commission an idea the cost of the tree replacement is \$713, which it is actually going to be \$1,000 because there is a few extra trees. Brad wanted to plant a few extra up in the open field for a border, we are looking somewhere

around \$6,200 - \$7,000 for it. That price includes stump removals and everything. John Neel thought Brad was going to mention that the swap between the town and Armory had taken place for more parking for the Armory and take away from the park. For years the property the playground was on was not the Town's, and then things happened with National Security. The Armory came to talk to us because they want additional parking and they wanted to make sure we didn't lose the playground so there was a swap that took place. We have always had a great relationship with them and work closely with them.

- Last thing Brad wanted to mention was there next is on Labor Day, and normally that meeting is cancelled. Brad wanted to check with Commission to make sure that was what they wanted to do. If anything was to come up Brad would call a special meeting. If everyone is good with that they will plan to cancel the September meeting due to it being on Labor Day. The next meeting will be Monday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Everyone gets a chance to come out to the Tony L. Huddleston Fishing Rodeo on October 7<sup>th</sup>. The first year we had it was just the fishing Rodeo with 20 children there. Brad spoke to Nick about naming this Rodeo after him to be able to recognize him and he loved to fish. Atoms gas came down and fixed hotdogs for the children.
- Student Report: The school board voted to add lacrosse for this season. John Neel asked if they would have to travel far for the games, they compete in the 4A which consist of William Byrd, William Fleming, Hidden Valley and Cave Spring. School starts Wednesday.
- New Business: Robin Boyd he doesn't want to turn a positive into a negative. Everything turned great and he wanted to thank everyone. Robin had a concern about the trophy size and what the standards were. Brad mention that there were not any standard to his knowledge but he would get them another trophy to the standards. At the State Tournament Robin has never seen the sportsmanship like he has down there. They had a coach touch one of their player foot on a call, the umpires never seen it. They disputed it and the coach got ejected for the next game and if they played them again that coach would not be on field when playing Christiansburg. Then when walks to first base on the first inning. Robins wants us to look at the rules from Dixie because the keep changing. Chuck Muncy sent an email to the State Director, National Director, District Director, and Brad Epperley all in regards of the incident with the foot. Our District Director sent a short email and the others never respond. After the girls finished Brad sent an in-depth email to all of those people, and voiced his problem and attached the video. He told then that for the next step they needed to have plan in place and if not we need to look to play somewhere else. He asked for a responsive from them and have not heard from any of them. Robin thinks Dixie is a thing in the past and they don't want to work with anyone. When Chris Slusher gets back to work they are going to talk about different organizations. Brad thinks that we have handle this situation the right and going the proper channels. Mike Saylor mention that is not Dixie it's the people that run it. Tonia Winn asked if the Recreation Department has done anything to recognize the girls for going to state. Brad mentions that there were social media post and on the sign. Diane Fenton suggest having them recognized with the varsity girls at one of their games. Other thing we could look at is getting them recognized at one of the football games at halftime. John Neel asked if the commission should suggest to the staff to investigate in looking at other organizations. John Neel mention with the events that happened at the state tournament and the unresponsive of the Dixie Youth Organization he makes the motion to look at other organization, Robin Boyd second that.

Tonya Winn	Yes
Richard Polikoff	Yes
Matthew Davidson	Yes
Jim Williamson	Yes
Mike Saylor	Yes
Diane Fenton	Yes

- In order for this to work, we have to do this as a region and Brad would have to get them on board.
- Another thing Brad wanted to bring up is, the only times the Recreation Center closes for the Home Show and we close it for 3 days. That show brings in a lot of things into our community, with closing down we do hear some things from our patrons. We have changed it for AAU Tournament and only shut down the courts and track. Charlton was approach from Virginia Techniques whom we work with they host a large gymnastic meet. In the past they used Radford University and

some High Schools. It could be up to 3 days starting Friday afternoon through Sunday. Last year they had 750 athletes, this would be good revenue and the impact with the community would be good. He wanted to bring it to commission before shutting the Recreation Center down, it will be January 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>. Tonia Winn mentions “that we came from boys baseball now we have more than just that and that’s important to everyone in the town. Gymnastics is a very completive sport and that is nice to draw some attention to other stuff beside baseball. If you give people enough notice, it’s no different than the Aquatic Center closing for swim meet. We never close not even for the holidays and those types of things, to do one thing once a year it would be great to support something different in the time.” Virginia Techniques likes this location better than the schools. They want all the rooms in our facilities. We want to build a great relationship with Virginia Techniques and have this every year. Tonia Winn mentions that’s just like the pool closing. Tonia Winn mention that when the pool has swim meets during the summer when camp is going, why couldn’t they come here to the Recreation Center and use the multipurpose room. Brad mentions that is hard for us because we have classes going on during the day.

- Meeting adjourned, next meeting October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017.