

Minutes from October Meeting

John Neel calls meeting to order

Members present: John Neel, Brad Epperley, Johana Hicks, Robin Boyd, Kathy Meadows, Reba Smart, Cord Hall, Charlton McCoy

Consideration of minutes – John Neel, correction of name (Neal- correction Neel). Cord moves to approve minutes with correction of name, Reba seconded, unanimously voted to approve.

No Citizen Comments

Director's report

Membership Attendance: Total of 3,114 membership scans through September. Weight Room most popular, we increased weight room max number allowed by one person. Increase of almost 500 scans from August – September. We are following all of the mandates; equipment is at least 10 feet apart and we are cleaning every 45 minutes.

Youth Athletics: Youth Fall Baseball Coach Pitch – four teams with 40 participants, 10U Baseball – two teams with 17 participants, 12U Baseball – two teams with 20 participants. Games have already started.

Youth Fall Softball Girls Coach Pitch – Only had eight participants sign-up. Six girls moved to Boys Coach Pitch League, two moved up to 10U league so they were all able to still play. 10U Softball -two teams with 22 participants and 12U Softball-one team with 14 participants.

We will follow VHSL guidelines for basketball and football. Winter sports beginning in December. Basketball registration will start October 12. Some of the guidelines we will be following for youth basketball: Each child per game/practice will only be allowed two spectators/parents – 32 people outside of team with officials and coaches to maintain social distancing guidelines. Chairs will be placed in front of bleachers, space in between, people seated on upper level of bleachers marked with X's. This allows us to leave the track open. Eight-person team maximum. Basketball spectators and players will use separate entrance, enter from Door #9 Cambria side of building. Working on purchasing thermal imaging cameras, if approved through Care's Act. Will read the temperature of each person by thermal imaging as they are entering the building. If this is not possible, we will have a thermometer at the door to check temperature. Participants will exit thorough Senior Area. We will leave time in between games to disinfect. We also have a fogger system to clean. When teams are playing back to back next team will not be allowed to enter until the first teams leave. Players and Coaches will wait in their cars until Chuck texts to let them know it is time to enter the building. Montgomery County not having youth basketball because schools not allowing third parties to use their facilities. Radford and Blacksburg are still supposed to have league. We will allow Christiansburg residents and those who attend Christiansburg Schools to sign up right away. Participants who are out of town or do not go to a Christiansburg school will be put on waiting list. If we have room available after the second week of late registration, we will call people on the waiting list and let them know they are able to sign-up. There is a waiver and guidelines form that participants sign when signing up for youth sports.

Kathy Meadows commented that she went to a softball game last week, people were social distancing, no one in the complex that wasn't supposed to be; she was very pleased with how things were handled. Kids were very excited to be there.

Community Programs: Zumba is full with 11 participants. Core Balance, Ripped, and P90 Rec also doing well. Senior Aerobics and Senior Motions are also full. Our Coast to Coast Virtual Walk had 41 participants. We made it from Virginia Beach to San Francisco and back to Utah. We have already hosted two flu shots from CVS. We have four more dates scheduled with Christiansburg Pharmacy.

Athletic Special Events: Two baseball tournaments in September, 95 teams in area this past weekend.

Tony Huddleston Fishing Rodeo- We are moving forward with this event this weekend. Participants can be ages 4 -15 years old. Already reached max of 100 participants, one adult per participant will be allowed. Stocking trout Thursday, our staff going to paint white squares every 10 feet, so people have their own space.

Special Events/Farmers Market: September attendance for Farmers Market was approximately 1,100 people, approximately \$6,200 in sales for the year through September approximately 4,911 people. Mr. Neel commented that's a great number, fantastic. Ms. Meadows said she goes almost every week always a crowd of people, always picks up something, it's truly amazing. The Market was lacking additional produce vendors early on, but we have added additional vendors, gives credit to Marty for this. He has worked hard to get new vendors for the Market. We have vendors from other Farmer's Market coming to ours and we are working together with these other Markets. Councilwoman Hicks commented that bringing in different organizations and groups it is very positive that we brought in groups such as the foster kids and United Way. Councilwoman Hicks said she thought big reason for market numbers increase was school hours now. Director Epperley said he feels it is because of what the department is doing. The department has worked hard on this.

Upcoming Special Events – Drive-through Trick or Treat event- police officer positioned for traffic control and barricades set-up for cars. We will have Halloween decorations on the side of recreation center. Public Works, Police, Fire, Rescue will be here giving out different things and Carilion is going to give out safety kits. We have 3,000 bags of candy, coloring books, two novelty toys, snack, bracelet. We will be closing the recreation center at 4 p.m. on Saturday and this event will start at 5 p.m. Councilwoman Hicks said she was super excited about the event, and thanks for doing it. Mr. Neel said this was fantastic, and he could tell a lot of thought went into it, reminds him of saying if you want to do it you will find a way, if not you will find an excuse and we found a way.

Christmas Parade- This will take place at Uptown Mall, Charlton has worked closely with general manager there. We measured it out, mostly floats positioned in particular areas. The size of float will determine how many people can be on their float. We will set our stage up and that's where Santa Claus, Ms. Claus, Elf, and snow machines will be set up there. The parade will be from 7 – 9 p.m. Inclement weather date: December 14. People will stay in cars and drive through the event.

Christmas Market- Planned for Thursday, December 10 we will do this on Main Street to spread people out. We are waiting on confirmation from health district to see if it's a 250-person event or 1,000-person event. We would tie this in with the Christmas tree lighting. The Christmas Market will be 4 – 8 pm. Christmas tree lighting 6:45 p.m. Vendors will have more crafts and Christmas oriented things for sale.

Councilwoman Hicks requests list of possible Farmers Market locations. Director Epperley said he can get her a list. They have looked at a lot of locations and gone through the pros and cons of each location. Mr. Hall asks if we make the recommendation to Central Business District or is Recreation Commission hands off with that? Director Epperley said we are hands off; Central Business would make that decision because the Farmers Market falls under them. It's not through the Parks and Recreation Commission, that would have to be council approved to change it.

Outdoor facilities: Eagle Scout David Fox has completed the picnic shelter at Depot Park. Councilwoman Hicks comments it is absolutely amazing, kids love it, she loves it. Two other Eagle Scouts contacted us- one wants to do another picnic shelter, the other one wants to add kiosk (seven) throughout parks and trails.

New bridge, backside of Depot Park- connects park to aquatic center and skate park, and hopefully in time will connect back to the Huckleberry Trail. Councilwoman Hicks recommends put up fencing between skate park and trail. Director Epperley says engineering department is looking into that now.

Emergency call towers received their bi-monthly testing, all working properly.

Shred-a-thon – Oct 20 3 – 6 p.m. at the recreation center

Mr. Boyd asks how bike rentals have been? Brad says they have been great, before Virginia Tech came back the recreation center and mall were in the top three of usage areas for two or three months. We were hoping to have E-assist bikes here by the end of the year, but not possible with Covid-19 and Gotcha switched ownership. New CEO is moving to Salem so it will be nice that he's so close. No actual date on E-assist bikes but probably summer of next year.

No student representatives present-Director Epperley will speak to Mr. Cromer about getting a new student representative to replace Kendall Lewis.

Councilwoman Hicks asks what the new student is expected to do? Director Epperley says it's informal, Athletic Director at CHS will let us know who he would like to be student representative. Usually have one male and one female (one junior and one senior). Talk with them about being voice for their student population, things going on at the high school, things we can do for the student population. We have had great success with other student representatives in the past.

New Business

Cares Act Funding- Pre-made Restroom facilities- Director Epperley met with Public Works on what it would cost us to run water and sewer lines. Looking at two different locations, Downtown and Depot Park. Downtown Park ran into issues because they need a crane, because the area where we would put actual restroom is unlevel ground. Director Epperley recommends possibly putting it in next year's budget and stick building restroom there. These pre-made facilities will be \$42,500 each to put one at Depot Park and one at Circle Park. These will be very simple, sink and restroom facility and also electric heater so it could remain open in winter. Because we are using Cares Act money, it must be done by the end of December, unless they extend deadline. Circle park and Depot Parks with hook-ups and everything somewhere around total of \$95,000 - \$100,000. Mr. Neel comments to keep in mind once you buy the bathrooms the recreation department must take care of it indefinitely and needs to reflect in budget and staffing. Director Epperley agrees with Mr. Neel. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission unanimously recommended Brad to move forward with the two restrooms with Cares Act Funding.

Old Business

Discussion and possible recommendation of Parks and Recreation public usage of land donated in Town of Christiansburg by VDOT

Director Epperley contacted Miss Utility there is very little interference with underground utilities. Director Epperley met with VDOT David Clark; he is very supportive of doing trail connection to the recreation center. Still issue crossing railroad, Wayne Nelson is working on that.

Director Epperley's recommendation for the land is to provide a trail connection, smaller pocket park that give kids in that community access to a playground. Dress up the property with flowers and plants, possible small tree garden.

Mr. Boyd makes a motion to support the director's recommendations for the land, Councilwoman Hicks seconds the motion, Advisory Commission unanimously voted in favor of this.

Future Christiansburg Regional Park – Mr. Neel filling in for Chairperson Fenton on this and after discussing it with her, in the previous minutes it was mentioned that the PPEA committee unanimously recommended Town Council to move forward with the park. Director Epperley has worked hard for 6 -7 years and has taken Town Council's original vision making it into something that can happen. After speaking with Chairperson Fenton, the thought was that since Recreation Commission has been engaged in this process as well, we might want to send a recommendation, or letter of support to Town Council supporting the park. Councilwoman Hicks says there is not enough information about how we are going to pay for it. Our department hasn't seen the videos. Mr. Neel explains this is just a letter to say whether we are supporting the park or not. Director Epperley says as far as the financial part, that must be a decision from Town Council. Mr. Neel says we saw the citizens come out in public meetings in support of the park. The question is does the Recreation Commission support the park and trust Town Council to figure out the financial part.

Ms. Smart makes motion to write a letter to Town Council in full support of the park, Ms. Meadows seconds the motion. Councilwoman Hicks says right now we need knowledge of financial situation that we are dealing with, the Coronavirus and many other subjects. She will have to say no to this at this time.

Mr. Neel says we have previously sent our support and we just want to reiterate that we still support the park. Vote: Neel – yes, Boyd-yes, Meadows-yes, Smart- yes, Hicks-nay (financial decision). (4-1 in favor of writing a letter to Town Council in full support of the park.) Councilwoman Hicks wanted it noted on record that her nay was due to financial reasons. Mr. Hall had to leave meeting prior to this discussion.

John Neel adjourned meeting.