



OAK RIDGE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING  
MAY 15, 2014 - 7 P.M.  
OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

**Members Present**

Bill Edwards, Chair  
Tracy Street, Vice Chair  
Barry Knight  
Phyllis Anders, Alternate (Sitting)

**Teen Advisor Present**

Madeline Bagby

**Staff Present**

Terry Lannon, Parks & Recreation Director

**Members Absent**

Liz Tice  
John Thomas  
Paul Greiwe, Alternate

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Bill Edwards called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. APPROVE MAY 15, 2014, AGENDA**

Tracy Street made a **motion** to approve the meeting agenda. Phyllis Anders seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (4-0).

**3. APPROVAL OF APRIL 17, 2014, MEETING MINUTES**

Tracy Street made a **motion** to adopt the April 17, 2014, meeting minutes. Barry Knight seconded, and it was passed unanimously (4-0).

**4. STAFF REPORT**

Parks & Recreation Director Terry Lannon presented:

- **Financial report.** Revenues are 2.6 percent below where they should be for the year, but that should be made up with shelter reservations, tournaments, and summer softball league registrations before the end of the fiscal year. Expenses are currently 6.5 percent under the budgeted amount for this point in the year, and Lannon said he expected to finish the year at or slightly below budget for expenses.
- **Canine Capers.** Scheduled for May 17; registration begins at 8 a.m., and events begin at 9. Lannon said it should be a good event and the Bark Park Subcommittee has worked hard. He thanked Madeline Bagby for helping obtain volunteers. Concessions will be available.
- **Dog Wizard permit request.** One of the sponsors for the grand opening of the Bark Park and Canine Capers is the Dog Wizard, which is a national franchise. The local owner would like to run some classes at the park, which would come under the For-

Profit Usage Agreement. He has also volunteered to offer some free classes at the park on dog park etiquette.

**Barry Knight** made a **motion** to approve the request from the Dog Wizard. **Phyllis Anders** seconded, and it was passed unanimously (4-0).

- **RidgeFest.** Planning for the event, scheduled for May 29-31, is moving forward. The Town is handling logistical arrangements for fireworks, portable toilets, dumpsters, etc., and Parks & Recreation staff members will be on hand that day. Lannon said it should be a great event.
- **Redmon Field drainage issues.** Lannon spoke to Robert of R.P. Murray. Robert has been in the hospital, but he is aware of the situation and will work to rectify it.
- **PARTF grant status.** No word yet on this year's awards. The first round of awards is granted in May, with more awards being granted in August.
- **Other.**
  - A couple of new employees have been hired. Kevin Parrish has taken the permanent part-time position of David Lee, who has taken a full-time job. Andy Beeson has been hired as the temporary, 6-week employee.
  - The spring softball season is ending. Registration for summer leagues is ongoing.
  - Tournaments are being held every weekend at the park. Tournaments and shelter rentals have picked up.
  - ORYA is finishing up spring soccer and lacrosse; ORYA baseball and softball are still being played.
- **Request by Melissa Vogelsinger of the Alight Foundation.** Srirm Chandra, a former Northwest High School student, asked permission to hold a 5K run/walk for charity at the park on August 9. He said he had partnered with Vogelsinger of Alight, and the money raised would go to help breast cancer patients. Chandra said his mother was diagnosed with breast cancer four years ago, but had recently been given a clean bill of health. He said he wanted to help others whose families were suffering from breast cancer. Vogelsinger said Alight is a nonprofit foundation that assists newly diagnosed breast cancer sufferers at Cone Hospital. All money raised is used locally. In response to a question, Chandra said he would be handling all aspects of the event. Issues such as the race route, portable toilets, signage, sponsorships and publicity were also discussed.

**Barry Knight** made a **motion** to approve the request for a 5K run on August 9 to raise money for Alight to help breast cancer sufferers. **Tracy Street** seconded, and it was passed unanimously (4-0).

## 5. OLD BUSINESS

- **Music in the Park update.** Edwards commended Phyllis Anders the job she has done in putting the events together. He said the May 17 event has been advertised in the Northwest Observer and a Facebook event page has been set up. Anders reported nine students from Northwest High School will be volunteering for the event. Edwards and Knight volunteered to cook hamburgers and hot dogs. Knight also said he would help move the concession trailer to Shelter 2. Anders said Sam Anders would provide free popcorn. Sandra Smith and Annette Joyce have volunteered to help. Other volunteers, a cash box and publicity were also discussed. Edwards asked if bug spray could be provided.

- **Movies in the Park.** Edwards confirmed a movie event will be sponsored by the Summit Church on June 14, when "Despicable Me 2" will be shown. On July 12, the church will sponsor "The Lego Movie."

## 6. NEW BUSINESS

- **Parks & Recreation Commission mission and vision statement proposals.** Edwards said he had drafted mission and vision statements and emailed them to Commission members for their input. He proposed the following mission statement:

The Oak Ridge Town Park provides a quality environment for both passive reflection and active recreation with an emphasis on family enjoyment, healthy lifestyles and an improved quality of life.

**Phyllis Anders** made a **motion** to approve the mission statement. **Barry Knight** seconded, and it was passed unanimously (4-0).

Edwards said he had also emailed Commission members and staff a proposed vision statement for the park and asked for input. The proposed amended vision statement is:

The overall goal of the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Town's Parks and Recreation Department is to oversee and maintain the Town's recreational facilities in such a way that:

- provides a safe and healthy recreational environment for play and relaxation
- promotes family-friendly programs and events for all ages and abilities
- encourages charitable causes for nonprofits
- fosters a fun, responsible and memorable recreational experience
- allows for planned and controlled growth and expansion
- protects the Town's investment
- reflects well on the Town and its residents
- maintains a high standard of excellence in presentation of recreational programs and facilities

**Tracy Street** made a **motion** to approve the vision statement. **Barry Knight** seconded, and it was passed unanimously (4-0).

- **ORYA 8-year field rental request.** Lannon said several issues had arisen after Oak Ridge Youth Association members did not respond to his request in December for field reservations. As a result, ORYA had not been given as many field dates as they wanted this year. Saying they wanted to be pro-active, ORYA representatives had emailed Lannon a request for the next 8 years, even though the Usage Agreement the Town has with ORYA is only for one year at a time. Lannon said he assumed perhaps ORYA was asking for an 8-year agreement to coincide with its lease agreement for part of the maintenance building at the park. He said he had not brought the request to the Commission's attention earlier because it is not the proper time of year to discuss that type of issue, which occurs each year when the Usage Agreement is negotiated. Lannon said ORYA was essentially asking for use of one baseball field and one multipurpose field every day of the year; if they did not intend to use it, they would notify Lannon so he could try to rent it to someone else. Lannon recommended the Commission not agree to the request.

Knight said the only thing ORYA pays for is an \$8 per player fee for any player who does not live in the Town of Oak Ridge. Street asked if it would be possible to charge ORYA up front for a percentage of what the Town would receive to rent the fields; Lannon said Brent Streeter, ORYA treasurer, had argued that ORYA could just rent the fields and use them for whatever purpose they wanted (games or practice). Lannon said if ORYA wanted to not have a User Agreement and become just an organization that leases fields, his opinion was the organization should not receive the money from the concession stand and what they receive for selling signs to sponsors, and that they should have to pay for field preparation. Edwards said ORYA would have to pay in advance for the time they have booked the fields, and the Commission would have to consider how to handle cancelations. He said ORYA had brought up the fact that the Town has not been strict on collecting fees for field rentals, and the issue is a double-edged sword: If the Commission enforces collecting fees in advance, which it might do, ORYA would be the first to be charged based on their recommendation to require some advance payment for field rental.

Knight said he hoped the Commission would not consider the proposal because if it does, it would give people the opportunity to do as they want with the fields and the Town would not be able to maintain the facility as it has in the past. Street said she feared the fields would be abused and Knight agreed, saying the Town also would not be able to say anything about it. He said he thought it was best to continue making decisions on a case-by-case basis. Street said if the fields are not kept in good condition, organizations who are now renting them might not want to continue to do so. Lannon said if the Commission allows ORYA to have one baseball field every weekend from 9 a.m. to noon, it will generally prevent both fields from being rented for tournaments on most weekends.

Knight said in the past, ORYA had played all its games on weeknights and when some of its coaches decided they wanted to play on weekends, the fields were already booked for this year. He said he thought the Commission needs to consider the revenue that is generated by allowing other organizations to rent both fields for tournaments on weekends. Although the Town is not realizing a profit, Knight said the money generated helped defray the cost of field maintenance. He also said he wasn't sure ORYA could generate the money necessary if it were required to pay to rent the fields as they have suggested, since currently they only pay for the electricity for lights and the \$8 charge per player for children who do not live in Oak Ridge. Edwards said he thought issue boiled down to a lack of scheduling on the part of ORYA.

Lannon said the issue started when the Commission received complaints about children who never get to play their games at the park, which he said only applied to T-ball and coach pitch (Pinto). He said there had been nights where their games could have been played at the park if scheduling had been done properly. He added that the fields much too large to play T-ball on. Street asked if a new person was in charge of ORYA scheduling this year. Knight said he thought the complaints were started by three people who wanted their children to play games at the park on Saturday mornings. He added that the parents who had complained about not playing games at the park were also ORYA coaches. Edwards said that fact was not mentioned in the articles printed about the issue in the Northwest Observer, or when the three made their presentation to the Commission.

Edwards said the User Agreement between the Town and ORYA will be considered before it is completed for 2015, and the Commission would discuss whether there are issues that might need to be changed in order to be fair and more transparent for all.

**Bill Edwards** made a **motion** to deny consideration at this time of an 8-year field rental request by ORYA. Lannon asked whether addressing the issue at this time might give credence to the issues expressed by ORYA, and said he planned to not respond until about November when he would ask for the field rental dates request from ORYA for 2015. Edwards agreed and withdrew his motion.

Knight said at some point the Commission should decide whether to enforce the deposit policy or get rid of it. Lannon said the deposit policy was intended for shelter rentals, and since it didn't seem to be particularly applicable, he thought it should be eliminated. Edwards said in August, when the Commission begins the process of reviewing the Usage Agreement, those items should be discussed. Street suggested sending out a copy of the Usage Agreement to all Commission members so they could review it, and Edwards asked Lannon to send that to Commission members in July.

Knight said he also thought the Commission should discuss the use of the park for charity events. As more requests for events are received, he asked if there should be a requirement that groups be organized as 501(c)(3) organizations in order for the Commission to waive rental charges. Edwards said he would draft a policy and email it to Commission members, which could be discussed at the next meeting. Knight suggested Edwards check with other municipalities, and Street said Paul Greiwe might be able to provide information from Greensboro.

## **7. OTHER DISCUSSION ITEMS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS**

- Canine Capers – May 17, 2014 (8 a.m.-12 noon).
- RidgeFest – May 29-31, 2014
- Movie in the Park – “Despicable Me 2” – June 14, 2014
- Music in the Park – Robert Tilley and the Hard Times Band – June 21, 2014
- Next scheduled P&RC meeting – June 19, 2014
- Award. The park received an award from the National Softball Association for Outstanding Park 2013. Edwards thanked Lannon and the park staff for all their hard work in making this possible.
- Lending library project. Edwards asked Commission members to consider approving a project like this, perhaps as an Eagle Scout project, for the park. The issue will be discussed at the next meeting.

## **8. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

**Barry Knight** made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. **Tracy Street** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (4-0).

Respectfully Submitted:



Sandra B. Smith, Town Clerk

  
William H. Edwards, Chairman  
by Tracy Street, Vice chair