



**OAK RIDGE TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING/WORKSHOP
DECEMBER 14, 2017 - 12:00 P.M.
OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

Members Present

Spencer Sullivan, Mayor
Jim Kinneman, Mayor Pro Tem
George McClellan
Doug Nodine
Ann Schneider

Staff Present

Bill Bruce, Planning Director/Interim Co-
Town Manager
Sandra Smith, Town Clerk/Interim Co-
Town Manager
Terry Lannon, Parks & Recreation Director
Sam Anders, Finance Officer

Workshop Facilitator

Randy Billings

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Spencer Sullivan called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m.

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Councilman Doug Nodine made a **motion** to approve the meeting agenda. **Councilwoman Ann Schneider** seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously (5-0).

3. 5-YEAR CAPITAL WORKSHOP

Mayor Sullivan explained that while this was a public meeting, it was not a public hearing. However, he said he had invited several people to provide resources as the Council dealt with items approved at the Capital Improvement Plan in January. Town staff and representatives of the Parks & Recreation Commission, Oak Ridge Youth Association and Merchants of Oak Ridge were in attendance. Sullivan said this was a time to look at the progress that had been made, to affirm the choices made in January, and to change the plan if warranted.

Facilitator Randy Billings suggested the Council consider four goals for the meeting:

- To review decisions made previously.
- To get an update from staff on finances.
- To discuss decisions and perhaps get input from the community on decisions made last year regarding funds allocated for parks and recreation.
- To decide how to move forward.

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Planning Director/Interim Co-Town Manager Bill Bruce presented the list shown below of the projects approved in January for the current fiscal year and the amounts allocated, and provided updated costs on those projects.

<u>2017-18 CIP Projects</u>	<u>Approved</u>	<u>Revised</u>	
Mountains-to-Sea Trail	\$170,000	\$130,000	(Phase 1)
Sidewalks 1 and 2 (SECU to Tarleton Drive, Tarleton Drive to Billet Road)	28,000	86,000	
Three tennis courts	300,000	352,000	
Fields 5 and 6	450,000	460,000	
Fitness Trail	12,000	16,000	
Beach volleyball courts	18,000	126,000	
Two lighted crosswalks	50,000	50,000	

Bruce said a consultant had been selected to do the engineering and design for Phase III at the park (which includes fields 5 and 6, three tennis courts, fitness trail, and beach volleyball courts), and a consultant had been selected for sidewalk 1 (along NC 150 from State Employees' Credit Union to Tarleton Drive), sidewalk 2 (Tarleton Drive to Billet Road) and sidewalk 3 (Billet Road to Williard Road/Chalet Drive).

In response to questions, Parks & Recreation Director Lannon said the increase in the updated cost of the sand volleyball courts was primarily due to lighting.

Bruce provided additional information and revised figures for the remaining years as follows:

<u>2018-19 CIP Projects</u>	<u>Approved</u>	<u>Revised</u>	
NC 68/150 improvements	\$200,000	\$200,000	
Mountains-to-Sea Trail	50,000	60,000	(Phase 2)
Sidewalk 3 (Billet Road to Williard Road/Chalet Drive)	22,000	67,500	

<u>2019-20 CIP Projects</u>	<u>Approved</u>	<u>Revised</u>	
NC 68/150 improvements	\$200,000	\$200,000	
Mountains-to-Sea Trail	50,000	130,000	(Phase 3)

<u>2020-21 CIP Projects</u>	<u>Approved</u>	<u>Revised</u>	
Sidewalks 4 and 5 (NC 68 to Zack Road, Zack Road to Bastille Lane)	\$50,000	\$172,000	
Suspension bridge at park	225,000	225,000	

Bruce said the total estimate of all projects had increased from \$1,825,000 to \$2,275,000, or an increase of \$450,000.

Town Clerk/Interim Co-Town Manager Sandra Smith then provided a report on the current and projected fund balance as of June 30, 2018, and pointed out committed and assigned funds.

Council then began a discussion, primarily related to the construction of fields 5 and 6 and what type of fields they would be, and about developing a strategic vision for how the Town wants to develop and what it wants to be in the future. Lengthy

discussion ensued about topics such as what ORYA wants versus what it really needs, whether there was room at the park to fulfill their request for full-size multipurpose game and practice fields, whether the Town wants to become a sports destination, and the need for additional information. Billings said he gathered Council was having second thoughts about whether or how to spend the money that was allocated for park projects in January. Schneider said she thought it was odd to have a capital planning meeting without first identifying any possible threats and opportunities. She added that she thought a full strategic planning meeting should be held after a new town manager is hired, and that she was not in favor of spending the majority of the fund balance.

Sullivan said it was possible to earmark the money in the CIP for future years to allow time to do some planning. He added that Finance Officer Sam Anders' recommendation was always to keep at least one year's operating budget in reserve, and that Town growth will allow money that is spent to be somewhat replenished each year. Nodine said that he always thought the Town's fund balance was very high, and Sullivan said his thought was that the money had been accumulated with the intention of spending it at some point. Schneider said she did not necessarily want to add every element mentioned on the parks needs assessment survey. She said this might be the time to consider updating the park master plan.

Sullivan said all the community stakeholders had submitted a report to the Council regarding fields 5 and 6. Lannon asked if ORYA was now requesting two full-size game fields with game-quality lighting. Sullivan said if full-size fields were desirable, the Town would need to look at acquiring more land as there is likely not room in the currently open fields along Linville Road. Councilman McClellan suggested moving the \$460,000 it would cost to build athletic fields at the park to a future year and assess the Town's needs and future desires. ORYA President Brady Young said the organization was grateful for anything it could get, but its primary need is for both game and practice space for turf sports. Sullivan said ORYA could be using the outfields of fields 3 and 4 for practice of turf sports, which could alleviate some problems, but more information was needed from ORYA.

After additional conversation, Sullivan said while there were many questions surrounding the additional athletic fields, it seemed much clearer on the other park elements. He asked if Council wanted to proceed with construction of the tennis courts, volleyball courts and fitness trail. Conversation turned to the volleyball courts, and Lannon's earlier comment that lights had been added so that tournaments could be scheduled on them after dark. Billings said that begged the question of why does the town want volleyball courts – for casual use or for tournaments – and what does the Town want to be. Schneider said she had heard no rationale regarding building competitive beach volleyball courts, and Nodine said he thought it seemed crazy to spend money when it was not certain it was being spent correctly. Schneider also asked if constructing additional elements at the park was compromising the ability to put on community events such as RidgeFest and Heritage Day. Kinneman said he thought a strategic plan should include not only the park, but additional recreational needs of the Town and whether additional land needs to be acquired.

Council members agreed by consensus to continue with construction of the fitness trail. Billings said he understood Schneider's proposal was for the Council to do some strategic visioning and engage in a mini strategic plan rather than a full-scale,

12- to 18-month strategic plan. He asked if Council was willing to do that, and Council agreed by consensus. Schneider said she thought the planning she proposed was something that would best be done after a town manager is hired, and Council also agreed by consensus.

Council agreed by consensus on the following:

2017-18 and 2018-19 CIP Projects

Mountains-to-Sea Trail	\$190,000
Sidewalks 1-3 (SECU to Tarleton Drive, Tarleton Drive to Billet Road, Billet Road to Williard Road/Chalet Drive)	153,500
Fitness Trail	16,000
Two lighted crosswalks	100,000

Council also agreed by consensus on the following:

- Do strategic visioning once a new manager is hired
- Formally develop a fund balance policy
- Create a capital expense plan for park equipment, vehicles, etc.
- Create a parks and recreation master plan

4. **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

None

5. **ADJOURNMENT**

Councilman McClellan made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 2:06 p.m. **Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman** seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously (5-0).

Respectfully Submitted:

Sandra B. Smith, NCCMC, CMC
Town Clerk

C. Spencer Sullivan
Mayor