



**OAK RIDGE PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING  
FEBRUARY 15, 2024 - 6:30 P.M.  
(Held in person & electronically via the Zoom platform)**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present**

John Garrett, Co-Chair  
John Browning, Co-Chair  
Phyllis Anders  
Kyle Anders  
Mike Kimel  
Randy Collins  
Chelsea Young, Alternate (not sitting)  
Caroline Ruch, Alternate (not sitting)

Reese Bell, Teen Advisor

**Staff Present**

Terry Lannon, Parks & Recreation Director  
Sandra Smith, Town Clerk/Asst. Town Mgr.

**Members Absent**

Phyllis Clodfelter, Alternate  
Adrian Eckenrod

*Note: This meeting was conducted remotely under N. C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.24 by use of simultaneous communication using the Zoom online platform and in which Parks & Recreation Advisory Board members participated by simultaneous communication. Board members joined and participated in the entire meeting, unless otherwise noted.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Co-Chair John Browning called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**2. APPROVE AGENDA**

*Randy Collins made a motion to approve the amended agenda, adding a discussion of an Eagle Scout project as an item under Old Business, a presentation of proposed events at the Town Park by the H.E.L.P. organization as item 1 under New Business, and a proposal for a kiosk at the MST campsite as item 2 under New Business and John Garrett seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (6-0).*

**3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

*Kyle Anders made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 18, 2024, regular meeting, and Mike Kimel seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (6-0).*

**4. STAFF REPORT**

- Parks & Recreation Director Terry Lannon reported that revenue was 15.4% under budget and expenses were 8.5% under budget.
- Lannon reported little change in the CIP priority list considered in Council's recent CIP work session. He mentioned that Council considered the possibility of moving the fitness station project up the priority list, in which case Lannon proposed

phasing the project in as part of the operating budget as it remained a low-cost budget item.

- Lannon announced a trial operation of the Park's concession stand by an external vendor beginning February 26 through June. Service hours would be Mondays through Fridays, 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm, and Saturdays and Sundays, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm to accommodate scheduled ORYA activities. He noted that the facility would be rented to the vendor at the scheduled fee rate of \$10 per hour.
- Lannon reported that the Park restroom floors would be stripped to concrete and re-poured with a hard surface with an epoxy finish in the next month.
- Lannon updated the construction status of Heritage Farm Park noting that the playground installation had been delayed by two weeks and that he would follow up with the installer to verify the schedule. He pointed out that the dumpster pens were completed and that additional asphalt grading work on the trails were pending in the following month to address the issues of standing pools of water on trails.

## 5. **ORYA REPORT**

- Randy Collins reported that ORYA was raising money to fund field lights at the elementary school.
- Collins announced plans for the Casino Night fundraiser noting that the goal was to raise \$75,000. He pointed out that the event would be scheduled for May 11 at Grey Gables in Summerfield and that tickets would go on sale on February 19.
- Collins reported that soccer and baseball registrations were much improved from the last year.

## 6. **NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Consideration/Approval of H.E.L.P. events at Oak Ridge Town Park**

Ron Chatto, founder of H.E.L.P., announced the addition of two events to the organization's fundraising schedule. The first event scheduled on April 20, 2024, would be the Spring Fun Run for H.E.L.P. whose aim would be to raise funds for a community center for immigrants offering aid to new arrivals and a refuge center for victims of domestic violence. The second event scheduled on June 1, 2024, would be the Filipino Summer Food Festival to spotlight Filipino culture and foods and would be similar to the previously approved Thanksgiving Filipino Food Festival scheduled on November 2, 2024.

Discussion continued on the logistical details of the events such as parking and mapping the course of the run.

*John Browning made a motion to approve the Spring Fun Run on April 20, 2024 and the Summer Food Festival on June 1, 2024. Kyle Anders seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).*

### **B. Consideration/Approval of Kiosk at MST Campsite**

Mike Kimel, member of the MST Committee, proposed a kiosk to be located near the MST campsite at the Town Park to provide hikers along the trail with information and maps on the MST as well as a bulletin board of events. He noted that the kiosk would be fully funded by the MST Committee and was anticipated to be established

in the spring, 2024. He stressed that the proposed location of the kiosk would not pose an impediment to any traffic. Kimel mentioned that a trail journal would also be included at the campsite to document through-hikers' experiences. Lannon expressed his favor of the proposed project.

*Randy Collins made a motion to approve the placement of the MST Kiosk, and John Browning seconded. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).*

## **7. OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. Consideration/Approval of Eagle Scout Project**

Andrew Gunter of Troop 600 Oak Ridge proposed a hammock garden at Oak Ridge Town Park for individuals to relax and enjoy nature. The garden would consist of six 8'x5" wooden posts arranged in a pentagon shape and embedded in concrete for sturdiness. He explained that five hammocks would hang from these posts off lag screw bolts and the foundation would be covered in mulch for ease of maintenance. Gunter explained that one aim of the project was to discourage the hanging of hammocks on trees which result in damage to the trees. Lannon added that the garden would measure approximately 110 square feet. A discussion on the proposed construction and location of the hammock garden ensued.

*Randy Collins made a motion to approve the construction of a hammock garden in the back portion of the Oak Ridge Town Park with the modifications in construction discussed. Phylis Anders seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).*

### **B. Update on Grand Opening at Heritage Farm Park**

Browning opened the discussion of a grand opening ceremony at Heritage Farm Park with a question as to the status of the restrooms' construction. No date for completion of the restrooms was determined. Discussion centered on the scope of the ceremony and on the date to hold the ceremony. Concerns regarding the date of the ceremony centered on the timing of completion of the restrooms and playground. Chelsea Young suggested holding the ceremony in the afternoon with an ice cream vendor to service the attendees and added ideas to plant a commemorative tree or offer the opportunity for children to plant flowers during the ceremony. Caroline Ruch suggested committing to a date to work towards and adjusting that date if construction were to be delayed. The committee agreed on May 4, 2024 as a tentative date for the ceremony.

### **C. Update on the Farmhouse Community Center**

Phylis Anders reported that the construction of the Farmhouse Community Center had slowed down due to manpower being redirected for work at Heritage Farm Park. A completion date for the center was not available. Lannon added that bad soil was discovered at the foundation of the farmhouse and studies were being conducted to determine best remediation solutions and associated costs. He explained that excavation of the soil and installation of posts or joists to hoist the ceiling were being considered. Smith added that concrete piers were being discussed as a possible remedy.

**D. Update on 2024 Music in the Park Series**

Caroline Ruch reported on the slate of businesses who had committed to be sponsors for Music in the Park. She noted that Randy Collins had secured Smith Marketing Group as Platinum level sponsors, and that Oak Ridge Commons would repeat their platinum sponsorship. She noted that Domino's of Oak Ridge and Craft & Vine would return as Gold sponsors, and that Grassmasters would be an event sponsor. She pointed out that a deadline of March 15 was set for securing sponsors in order to meet the advertising deadline with the Northwest Observer. She reported that five of six bands needed had been contracted. Smith added that alcohol beverage vendors had also been secured.

**8. OTHER DISCUSSIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS**

Young reported that Canine Capers was scheduled for April 27, 2024, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and that the first meeting of the committee would take place the following week. She expressed that the committee was looking for vendors and sponsors for the event.

Collins confirmed the Town's assistance in advertising ORYA's Casino Night.

Next regular meeting: March 21, 2024

**9. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Lannon expressed his appreciation of his tenure with Parks & Recreation at his 180<sup>th</sup> and last Advisory Board meeting.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

*John Browning made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:24 p.m., and Randy Collins seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (7-0).*

Respectfully submitted:

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Sandra Smith, NCCMC, CMC  
Town Clerk/Asst. Town Manager

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John Browning  
Co-Chair