



OAK RIDGE PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
JUNE 19, 2025 – 6:30 P.M.
(Held in person & electronically via the Zoom platform)

MINUTES

Members Present

John Browning, Co-Chair
Caroline Ruch
Mike Kimel
Phyllis Anders
Kyle Anders
John Garrett, Alternate (Sitting)
Chelsea Young, Alternate (Sitting)
Ty Lindsay, Alternate (Not sitting)

Reese Bell, Teen Advisor

Staff Present

Sandra Smith, Asst. Town Manager/Town Clerk
Brock Dunigan, Parks Superintendent

Members Absent

Adrian Eckenrod, Co-Chair

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Browning indicated that the absence of a presenter for Agenda Item B necessitated its removal from the agenda.

Kyle Anders made a motion to approve the amended agenda, and Chelsea Young seconded. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

John Garrett made a motion to approve the minutes from May 15, 2025, regular meeting, and Chelsea Young seconded. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

4. STAFF REPORT

- Park Superintendent Dunigan presented the financial report and noted that 96 percent of the fiscal year had occurred with 94 percent of operating expenses spent. He explained that budgeting efforts had produced \$32,000 in savings, which were allocated to projects scheduled for the following year.
- Dunigan reported that the ORYA spring season had concluded and noted significant improvements over past issues, notably with soccer goals being left out. He

commended his staff for successfully managing numerous special projects in addition to their regular responsibilities.

- Dunigan reported that Piedmont Site Works had done an outstanding job repairing the drainage issues near the swimming club. He noted that while the project had originally been scheduled for next year, he was able to move it into the current year.
- Dunigan pointed out that installation of fencing around the playground at Heritage Farm Park was also shifted into the current year despite delays due to weather. He noted that Seegars Fencing would install the fence.
- Dunigan stated that the only remaining issue with Bar Construction was drainage inside the multipurpose fields' fence lines. He noted that MidSouth Irrigation would complete the four-day repair along with alleviating standing water at the frog pond site and on the rear exterior end of the fence line contingent on weather conditions.
- Dunigan reported that the third shipment of engraved brick pavers for the Veterans Honor Green had been delivered and was awaiting installation. He noted that Phase Two involving the construction of a boardwalk in the pine plot behind the monuments, was pending permit approval, with completion expected within 110 days of the contract's issuance.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration/Approval of Heritage Farm Park Phase Two Community Feedback Survey

Appearing remotely via Zoom, Jim Ford with McGill Associates Engineering Services presented the preliminary draft of the Heritage Farm Park Phase Two Community Survey for discussion and feedback. He explained that collecting demographic information would provide valuable data for securing grant funding and that responses would be organized by household. He added that the survey would be accessible through a publicized QR code on the Town's website and promoted through social media and public events. He noted also that work sessions with members of Council would be scheduled towards the end of the survey period to garner input on survey data. Discussion ensued centering on the survey's timeframe, distribution into extraterritorial jurisdictions, safeguards against duplicate respondents, adding a contact person to the survey and rewording and reorganizing the survey's questions.

Co-Chair John Browning made a motion to approve the survey with the recommended changes and for the survey to be active through early August. Caroline Ruch seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

B. Consideration/Approval of Summer Fest

Removed from agenda

Caroline Ruch left the meeting at 7:11pm and Ty Lindsay assumed her seat.

C. Consideration/Approval of Lease of Park Maintenance Building to Oak Ridge Youth Association

Dunigan stated that the lease agreement terms were unchanged from previous agreements and that the renewal would be applied retroactively to the previous year, remaining in effect for three years. Dunigan pointed out that the lease rate was \$1 annually and that a public hearing would be held at the next Town Council meeting to formalize the agreement.

Mike Kimel made a motion to approve the lease agreement to be valid through June 30, 2027, and Chelsea Young seconded. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

D. Update on Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Ordinance

Assistant Town Manager/Town Clerk Sandra Smith explained that the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board ordinance had been revised to limit the Board's trail management responsibilities to those within the park, removing oversight of all other trails throughout the Town. The ordinance was also amended to eliminate ORYA representation on the Board and, conversely, to remove the Town's representation on the ORYA Board. Smith added that Council would then approve moving one of the Board's alternates to a regular seat and appoint an additional individual to fill the vacated alternate's seat to maintain the Board's membership.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A. Update on Farmhouse Community Center Open House

Dunigan stated that the Farmhouse was not available for public rental but that soft rentals were possible. He referred to a baby shower and meeting of the Northwest Women's Club which had recently taken place at the Farmhouse successfully. Ann Schneider interjected that the acoustics were poor and needed improvement. Dunigan added that the open house was tentatively scheduled for September 14 with a rain date scheduled for September 21.

B. Update on Park Entrance Master Plan

Dunigan reported that a final walk through had been conducted six weeks ago and that remaining issues included the reconfiguration of the parking lot to comply with the required slope and drainage remediation to alleviate water retention around the flower beds surrounding the Farmhouse. He added that two lighting scopes had been obtained from Duke Energy and Oak Ridge Electric, which would require Council approval.

C. Update on 2025 Music in the Park Series

Dunigan reported that approximately 1300 people attended June's Music in the Park event. He raised the issue of staffing the concession trailer at future events, noting it had gone unused at the past three events due to a shortage of volunteers. Discussion centered on strategies to expand the volunteer base and consensus was achieved to maintain efforts to keep the trailer operating, given the demand for lower-priced meals at events.

D. Update on 2025-2026 Music on the Lawn at the Farmhouse Community Center

Phyllis Anders reported that The Grassifieds had been booked to perform at the first Music on the Lawn event on August 31. She stated that the band played bluegrass and gospel music. Questions were raised regarding volunteer support for the events, timing of the event before the open house, issuance of the certificate of occupancy and the budget allocated to the events. Dunigan responded that a temporary certificate had been issued and was valid through August 31 but that he was confident that the permanent certificate would be issued before then.

7. OTHER DISCUSSIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS

Music in the Park	July 12, 2025
Next regular meeting	July 17, 2025
Movie in the Park (rescheduled) - Despicable Me Four	June 20, 2025
Piedmont Shakespeare presents Hamlet	June 21, 2025
Kids Bike Parade	July 4, 2025 (10am-12pm)
Farmhouse Community Center Open House	Sept. 14/rain date Sept. 21

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ann Schneider expressed support for extending the survey period beyond two weeks. She also recommended expanding volunteer sign-up opportunities to cover the entire span of volunteer needs rather than scheduling month to month.

Chelsea Young stated that the Canine Capers event in April raised almost \$7000 which would allow them to donate \$1400 to each of four participating rescue organizations.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Kyle Anders made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m., and Ty Lindsay seconded. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Respectfully submitted:

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

John Browning
Co-Chair