



Town of Beaufort, NC

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Town of Beaufort Parks & Recreation Advisory Board 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM Wednesday, December 03, 2025 Beaufort Train Depot, 614 Broad Street, Beaufort, NC 28516 2026 STRATEGIC RETREAT MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8 AM by Chair Ron Dupuis

Board Members Present: Chair Ron Dupuis, Vice Chair Doug Williams, Carol Beard, Lora Fasolino, Bruce Mann, Taylor McCune, and Victoria Sullivan

Board Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Town Manager Matt Zapp

Staff Absent: Jennifer Welborn, Community Engagement Director

Elected Officials present: Mayor Sharon Harker

Guests Present: Alesia Sanderson, Parks & Recreation Subject Matter Expert

8:00 – 8:30 AM

Facilitator Matt Zapp welcomed the group and opened the retreat. He discussed the retreat's focus, basic operation goals for the PRAB and what "excellent" would look like at the conclusion of the day. Unfortunately, Community Engagement Director Jen Welborn was unable to attend due to illness.

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM

Dr. Liz DeMattia and a group of Duke University Marine Lab students presented findings from John Newton Park Surveys. They covered topics including results of the public engagement findings, community surveys, and feedback from Beaufort locals.

9:00 – 9:30 AM

State of Parks & Recreation – 2025 Snapshot

Facilitator Matt Zapp led an open conversation surrounding active Town projects, including the USDA funded utility construction, the status of Ann Street Park, and the Eury Park concept. A review of the latest 10- Year Plan (2015 – 2025) also took place.

9:30 – 9:45 AM

Break

9:45 – 10:45 AM

Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan Review

Facilitator Matt Zapp led an open conversation of the Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan (adopted 04/08/24). A full-time Community Engagement Coordinator now in place for Beaufort. The team discussed Project Priorities (page 68), the Moore Street Water Access project (page 73), Trestle Walk/ Greenway (page 81), Dog Paks (pages 82-83), Community Garden (pages 84-85).

10:45 – 11:00 AM

Break

Subject Matter Guest/Expert Alesia Sanderson arrived to the retreat.

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Facilitator Matt Zapp welcomed Alesia Sanderson. She introduced herself and shared her 3-plus decades of local Parks & Recreation Management experience. Facilitator Matt Zapp then led an open conversation surrounding Events Programming in Beaufort. The strengths of local volunteers and opportunities for consistency were addressed.

12:00 – 12:50 PM

Working Lunch

Food catered by Turner Street Market

12:50 – 1:00 PM

Break

1:00 – 2:30 PM

Project Identification and Ranking

The group identified three top goals for 2026:

1. Beaufort Greenway
2. Moore Street Water Access
3. Events

2:30 – 2:45 PM

Break

2:45 PM – 3:50 PM

The group agreed to perform a deeper dive into special events held in Beaufort: concepts, partners, existing programming, SWOT analysis, and idea generation.

3:50 – 4:00 PM

Closing, Next Steps, and Adjournment

What worked well?

Three top goals were identified.

A clear path forward has been established for the PRAB in 2026.

PRAB will diagnose and update a 10-year plan (in the next year).

PRAB Chair Ronald Dupuis adjourned exactly at 4:00 PM.

MINUTES PRODUCED BY MATT ZAPP

See attachments.

Event Notes:

PRAB 2026 “Green Light” PRIORITIES

1. Beaufort Greenway

- a. Funding for this project will be widely variable and likely phased.
- b. A small group of PRAB team members agreed to focus on this area:
 - Ronald Dupuis – Chair
 - Bruce Mann
 - Lora Fasolino

2. Moore Street Water Access

- a. Costs for this project will be reviewed by town staff
- b. Funding Ideas Include
 - RCCP, CAMA, Beaufort Community Development Foundation which may include a (50/50 match with Parks Reserve Funds.

3. Events (PRAB)

- a. A desire to reestablish Rock the Docks in 2026
- b. A small group of PRAB team members agreed to focus on this area:
 - Carol Beaird
 - Taylor McCune
 - Victoria Sullivan
- c. Jen Welborn will be asked to develop a non-government organization (NGO) event evaluation list and report for the PRAB (January or February 2026).

4. Research All Recreation Programs in the Beaufort Area

5. Replace Water Fountain at John Newton Park

- a. Both fountains are working as designed.
- b. Water was shut off for the winter 2025/2026 to avoid issues with freezing.

6. Research/Assign a Volunteer Coordinator

- a. Community Engagement Director Jen Welborn will serve as the Beaufort Volunteer Coordinator

7. ToB/PRAB Town Operation Calendar (to help educate PRAB team)

- a. “Project SOP”
- b. Matt Zapp and Jen Welborn will work on this task.

8. PRAB to Develop a Fresh 10-Year Plan (in 2026)

9. Celebrate Ann Street

10. Access to PRAB Data

- a. Enhance the town’s online data and search bar capability
- b. Consider a drop box or single location for all Parks related data

11. Add the PRAB January 8th Meeting to ToB Calendar

- a. Done per Jen Welborn

12. Physical Park Tours

- a. Tuesday tours to local parks for members of the PRAB
- b. Matt Zapp and Jen Welborn will attend

13. Invite Guests to Visit PRAB meetings in 2026

- a. BHA, BHA, F3, Boys & Girls Club, BES, BMS...

PRAB IDEAS

1. Moore Street Water Access

2. Trestle Walk

3. Dog Park

- Questions/Options:
 - Help Freedom Park?
 - New ToB Dog Park?
 - Partner with private entity?

4. Community Garden

- Identify a new partner that will consistently support the Community Garden
 - Enhance existing community gardens
 - Potential Partners: BES, BHA, Garden Club, Boys & Girls Club, Lynn Hurley.

5. Events (General Ideas)

- BBA, BHA, Chamber
- Kids/Teens
- Volunteers/Ambassadors
- Rock the Docks is of HIGH INTEREST to the PRAB
- Art Walk

6. Welcome Desk/ Visitors Center

- Manned by volunteers at Town Hall

7. West Beaufort – Natural Trails, Kayak

- Kayak storage + launch

8. Trail Around Airport

- Bike/Walk Connection from Beaufort Club to Downtown

9. Research All Rec Programming availability in/around Beaufort

- Jen Welborn to lead this activity; seek input from Commissioner LoPiccolo
- Review & compile what's available

10. Multi-Modal Lanes

- Live Oak & Cedar to connect North & South

ANN STREET PARK- Take Aways of the Process

- **Town Staff Expertise is a POSITIVE**
 - Engineer, Public Works, PIO, etc.
- **Drop-ins / Community Conversations are working well**
 - Represented the Town of Beaufort vision
- **Town Leaders' Vision**
 - "Keep it Public."
- **Volunteer Group Representative Participated**

EVENTS

1. **Develop a Master Calendar** ✓
2. **Rock the Docks** ✓
3. **Jen Welborn to evaluate existing Beaufort Area events**
 - Assess: **POC, Status, Risk**
 - Includes: small chart sketch with green/yellow/red shading
4. **PRAB to review event analysis in Q1 2026**
 - Months: **January, February, March**

BEAUFORT EVENTS

Annual / Recurring Events

- Christmas Parade
- Mardi Gras
- Pirate Drop (12/31) — *Becky & Kris (The Wink)*
- Pirate Invasion

- Rock the Docks
- Train Show
- Candlelight Tour
- July 4 Parade
- July 4 Ice Cream Social
- Chander — NCMM Friends
- BHA Events (box):
 - Summer Party
 - Fall
 - Volunteer Picnic
 - Old Homes
 - Jumble Sale
 - CCA(?) Show
 - Easter Egg

Other Events

- Flotilla
- Wine & Food
- Crabcake Cookoff (NCMM Friends)
- Wooden Boat Show
- Oyster Roast (BBHF)
- Music Festival — *May '26*
- Art Walk
- Ice Rink @ BFT Hotel?
- OBFM Christmas Market
- Business After Hours & Wing-Off (NCMM Friends) — *Oct*
- Pet Photos w/ Santa — Lions Club
- **Fireworks** — *Gallants Channel*
- **Easter Egg Hunt '26**

An Excellent Retreat...

- Clear path forward
- Activities / Action Steps
- Diagnose the **2015–2025 Plan**
- New Ideas
- Narrow Focus / Funnel
- Start to Finish (Plan / SOP)
 - Noted: “0–18 months”
- Measurable Goals / Assignments
- Municipal Cycle / Timeline
- Team Strengths

PARKING LOT ITEMS

- **Placer.ai** – Tracking tool
- **Rock the Docks (Food)** – Partner with brick & mortar
- **Communication Enhancements:**
 - Porch Talks
 - App
 - Text
 - Email list
- **Donated/Grant Funds = Process?**
- **Community Garden**
- **Update Bike Route (& Signage)** – “Rogue?”
- **Private Donor Funding**
- **Volunteer Coordinator**
- **Community Calendar – Filter by Category**