



Town of Beaufort, NC

701 Front St. - P.O. Box 390 - Beaufort, N.C. 28516
252-728-2141 - 252-728-3982 fax - www.beaufortnc.org

Town of Beaufort Parks & Recreation Advisory Board 6:30 PM Thursday, May 11, 2023 - Train Depot, 614 Broad Street, Beaufort, NC 28516 Monthly Meeting

Call to Order

Agenda Approval

Minutes Approval

- [1.](#) April 2023 Minutes

Public Comment

Items for Discussion and Consideration

- [1.](#) Community Gardens - Johnna Davis

Staff Report

Board Comments

Adjourn



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**Town of Beaufort Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
6:30 PM Wednesday, April 12, 2023 - Train Depot, 614 Broad Street, Beaufort, NC 28516
Monthly Meeting**

Call to Order

Vice Chair Johnna Davis called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Doug Williams, Johnna Davis, Peter Crumley, Brian O'Haver and Sheresa Elliot

Members Absent: Chair Michael Rave and Barbara Francis-Heckman

Staff Present: Rachel Johnson, Parks Coordinator

Agenda Approval

A motion was made to amend the agenda to switch items of Discussion & Consideration #1 & #2. Motion carried and the agenda was approved unanimously.

Minutes Approval

- 1. March 2023 Minutes

The March 2023 Minutes were approved unanimously without any changes.

Public Comment

No Public Comment was made.

Presentations

No presentations were scheduled.

Items for Discussion and Consideration

- 1. Arts in Beaufort Mural Project

Staff Rachel Johnson introduced the item. Arts in Beaufort received permission from the Board of Commissioners upon recommendation by the Parks & Recreation Board in the summer of 2022 to pursue a mural on the shower house at the end of the boardwalk. Johnson introduced BJ Vincent of Arts in Beaufort.

Vincent discussed there were a few changes from the original approval that they will seek the Board of Commissioners permission to pursue and asked that the P&R board make a recommendation. Changes include painting the mural directly on the shower house. Vincent said she and the Arts in Beaufort board realize there is a chance the building will be torn down but said they are hopeful that will not happen for 5 years or more. Vincent asked if the Town can remove the existing fence and the current shutters. The area where the shutters are will need to be replaced with solid wood. These changes are due to costs and the creation of a smooth and visible space for the mural.

Vincent stated that the Call for Artists received 7 entries from as far away as Thomasville to include submissions from New Bern and Beaufort artists and that the theme was "Blue." The group was also looking for something that is technically well done and a design that can be identified from blocks away.

Vincent shared the entries with the parks board. She stated the Arts in Beaufort group had narrowed them down to the top 3 and had selected one they recommend.

Members of the Parks & Recreation board viewed the entries and discussed them at length.

A consensus was reached that the board also agreed with the top selection. They did however express concerns about the amount of blue in the design and said it needed more contrast to define the letters and to lighten the sky.

Vincent expressed that the artist is willing to make changes and work with the suggestions from Arts in Beaufort.

The Parks Board also discussed making a recommendation to the BOC to possibly use one of the designs at Louis Randolph Johnson Jr. Park along the fence.

The Board made 3 motions/recommendations to share with the BOC regarding the mural project:

- 2. Community Gardens - Johnna Davis

This item was moved to the May 11 meeting.

- 3. Connectivity & Sidewalks Recommendation - Peter Crumley

This item was moved to the May 30th meeting. (June meeting was moved to Tuesday from Thursday of the same week.)

Staff Report

Rachel Johnson provided the following information:

* Town has been accepted as a part of the NCDOT Bicycle Initiative and will receive 50 bicycle helmets to distribute in the community.

* The Town has received bicycle lights to distribute.

* Staff applied for and received a \$5,000 grant to start a self-guided Walk with Ease program. Staff is working to put the program together and anticipates launching it in May 2023.

* Reported that 98% of the kayak spaces have been assigned. There are a few that have not been picked up and will be reassigned to the next person on the waiting list.

* Freedom Park's dog park is open to the public. There is not a code required. When the gate is locked the dog park is closed. This is not operated by the Town.

* Discussed the 2011 Comprehensive Plan and asked the board to start reading over it to update it using the topics that are being discussed each month in 2023.

* Shared the Monthly Manager's Report - available online under the Mayor's Corner.

* Staff has conflicts with the regularly scheduled May and June meetings. The board voted to reschedule the meetings for May 11 and May 30 at 6:30 p.m.

1.

1. Countywide Cleanup

9 a.m. Saturday, April 22 - Beaufort site meets at Grayden Paul Park

2. Arbor Day

1-3 p.m. Saturday, April 29 at Louis Randolph Johnson Jr Park - free pizza, tree seedlings, tree crafts, drinks, games and the opening of the splash pad for the 2023 season.

3. Art in the Park

Staff will not be able to start the program until July and will need physical assistance with the program during July and August.

Board Comments

No additional comments were made.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned a little after 8 p.m.

Community Gardens

Community gardening involves cultivating people and relationships, as well as the soil. There are 4 main steps with the first one being critical.

Step 1: Make sure you are not alone

- It's imperative to pull the people together first, get a commitment, and then begin the garden. It doesn't matter if you've found the perfect spot, provided infrastructure, and prepared the soil. If people aren't interested, the garden will fail.
- You need 3 to 5 people in a planning committee to get a community garden started.
 - The best way to find people to be on the planning committee? Talk about the garden:
 - Friends and neighbors
 - Churches
 - Neighborhood associations
 - Civic associations
 - Clubs
 - Shelters
 - Apartments
 - Businesses
 - These organizations can help spread the word, may have resources to help, may be willing to sponsor the garden, assist with insurance issues, and lend financial support.
 - If the garden is for the benefit of a particular group or neighborhood, that group must be involved in all phases of the garden organization.
- Ask for help. It is not always best to use email blasts or Facebook posts – most people don't respond or do but aren't truly interested. It is best to ask for help individually/specifically.
 - "(Name), we are trying to start a community garden. I need your help. Could you please (fill in the blank)."

Step 2: Make a plan

- Now that you have organized a planning committee, be prepared to do everything yourself. ☐ You won't but that will keep you organized.
- Consider creating business cards with an address, email, phone number, Facebook page, and website. Doing so will help people take the committee more seriously. They'll be more likely to help if it looks like you know what you're doing. A business card is an inexpensive way to send that message.
- Hold a meeting of your planning committee and discuss these topics:
 - What is the purpose of the garden?
 - What are the long- and short-term objectives?
 - How will leaders be chosen?
 - Who will the garden serve?

- How will the produce be divided?
- Will there be conditions for membership (residence, dues, agreement with rules)?
- How will plots be assigned (by family size, residency, need, or group)?
- How large will the plots be?
- How will the plots be laid out?
- When someone leaves a plot, how will the next gardener be chosen?
- If the group charges dues, how will the money be used? What services, if any, will be provided to gardeners in return?
- How will decisions be made?
- Will the gardeners meet regularly?
- Will trainings be held in the garden?
- Will there be rules concerning the use of chemicals or specific areas for organic gardening?
- How will minimum maintenance (especially weeding, weeding, and more weeding) be handled both inside plots and in common areas (including along fences, in flower beds, and in sitting areas)?
- How will work be shared? Who does what?
- Note, many gardens are very informally organized and operate successfully for years.
- New groups may benefit from several planning meetings. Once the planning committee has met and roughed out a plan, hold public meetings, and advertise them enthusiastically.
- If no one shows up to the public meetings, either you didn't advertise well enough or there's not enough interest. You will need committed gardeners to start a community garden.
- Try out suggestions from the planning meetings and see what works. After a few months, you will be in a better position to develop bylaws or organizational guidelines.
- Consider seeking a sponsor. Many gardens support themselves by collecting dues, but a little money from a sponsor can go a long way. Sponsoring organizations can help in other ways too:
 - Provide tools
 - Provide land
 - Help with liability insurance
- If the garden is to be a non-profit organization, a non-profit sponsor may be able to include your garden in their status.
- At every meeting, record the contact information of every person who attends and note their expertise and talents.

Step 3: Choose a site

- Picking the right site will take time.
- There are 3 requirements. The site must have:
 - Sunlight
 - Water

- An identified owner
- A vegetable garden must have at least 6 hours of sunlight per day.
- Water is also critical.
- Liability insurance protects the organization that owns the land from being sued and held legally liable for injury or negligence. Liability insurance policies cover both legal costs and any legal payouts for which the insured would be responsible if found legally liable.
 - Garden insurance is relatively new, and many insurance carriers are not familiar with it. Shop around because prices can vary considerably.
 - We may be able to include the garden on the town's insurance for very little risk or cost.
- The garden should be close to gardeners; preferably within walking distance or, at most, a short drive away.
- A site with a secure fence is a plus.
- Locked storage buildings for tools, water hoses, and other supplies used by gardeners are also desirable.
- Have the soil tested. Contact your local Cooperative Extension for submission forms, instructions, and sample containers.
- If results suggest contamination, you may want to choose another location or install raised beds over plastic liners or other impervious surfaces.

Step 4: Agree on garden rules

- All community gardens, and especially new ones, need rules.
- Rules spell out exactly what is expected of a gardener.
- They make it much easier to remove inactive gardeners with abandoned plots.
- Here are some sample rules:
 - I will pay a (monthly/annual) fee of \$_____ to help cover garden expenses.
 - I will have something planted in the garden by (date) and keep it planted all summer long.
 - If I must abandon my plot for any reason, I will notify the garden leaders.
 - I will weed my plot and maintain the areas immediately surround my plot, if any.
 - If my plot becomes unkempt, I understand I will be given a one-week notice to clean it up. It will be reassigned or tilled in if it is not cleaned.
 - I will keep trash and litter cleaned from the plot, as well as from adjacent pathways and fences.
 - I will participate in the fall cleanup of the garden.
 - I will plant tall crops only where they will not shade neighboring plots.
 - I will pick only my own crops unless given permission by another plot user.
 - I will not use fertilizers or pesticides that will in any way affect other plots.
 - I agree to volunteer hours toward community gardening efforts (include a list of volunteer tasks your garden needs).
 - I will not bring pets to the garden.

- It is also very important that each gardener/volunteer signs a Hold Harmless clause. This will protect you, your landlord (if any), sponsoring organizations, and your garden organization. Below is a sample clause.
 - “We the undersigned member of the (name) garden group hereby agree to hold harmless (name of landowner, garden group, and sponsoring organizations) from and against any damage, loss, liability, claim, demand, suit, cost, and expense directly or indirectly resulting from, arising out of, or in connection with the use of the (name) garden group; its successors, assigns, employees, agents, and invites.”
 - Check your clause with a lawyer to make sure you are covered.
- Eventually, a more formal structure may be chosen for the garden and formal bylaws may be developed; the garden may even incorporate.
- Many community gardens are nonprofit corporations.