

Town of Swansboro
Swansboro Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
February 21, 2024

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

The Swansboro Parks and Recreation Board met at the Swansboro Recreation Center for a regular board meeting on Wednesday, February 21, 2024. Jennifer Steele called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Members present were Jenifer Steele, Lawrence Abalos, Debra Pylypiw, and Matthew Prane. Members absent were Debbie Harnatkiewicz and Elena Messenger. Anna Stanley was present on behalf of the Town. The Board of Commissioners present were Doug Eckendorf, Joseph Brown, and William Justice.

- a. Election of Chair and Vice Chair- Jennifer Steel nominated to elect Deb Pylypiw as Chair. Lawrence Abalos seconded the motion. All were in favor, except for Matthew Prane who abstained from voting because he did not know the person well enough. Per North Carolina General Statue 160A-75 a board member who is physically present and has withdrawn from voting without being excused by a majority vote of the remaining members present, shall be recorded as an affirmative vote.

Deb Pylypiw nominated to elect Lawrence Abalos as Vice Chair and Jennifer Steel seconded the nomination. All were in favor except for Matthew Prane who abstained from voting because he did not know the person well enough. Per North Carolina General Statue 160A-75 a board member who is physically present and has withdrawn from voting without being excused by a majority vote of the remaining members present, shall be recorded as an affirmative vote.

II. Adoption of Minutes

- a. November 15, 2023, meeting minutes- The board reviewed the meeting minutes from November 15, 2023. Matthew Prane asked if the three vacant staff positions were filled. Director Stanley replied that three Recreation Aides were hired in November, but only two of those new hires are currently on staff. Matthew P asked if the third position is now vacant. Director Stanley will review staffing later in the meeting. Matthew P. asked about the CAMA permit for Ward Shore and if any projects would occur. Director Stanley replied that recommendations were made by NC Coastal Management and previous consultants that if a CAMA permit is expiring that a request to extend the permit should be made. The process to extend a permit is less difficult than having to apply for a new permit. The only work that may be done in the near future is additional marsh plantings. NC Coastal Federation has been contacted to consult if additional plantings are needed, but no response to date. Mr. Prane asked what had been done in the past at Ward Shore. Director Stanley replied that a Living Shoreline was completed in 2019 and parking spaces were added in 2020. Mr. Prane inquired about the tennis and

pickleball lessons and how the process worked. Director Stanley explained that the Pickleball league is run by the department and lessons are contracted through Tennis Bloc. The Parks and Recreation department receives a percentage from instructors contracted. Jennifer Steel asked if the department had reached out to Emerald Isle to inquire what they were doing. Director Stanly explained that the league was restructured in 2022 with new rules and regulations. Lawrence A. made a motion to approve the minutes, Matthew P. seconded the motion, and the meeting minutes were unanimously passed.

III. Reports

- a. **Monthly Report-** The November and December 2023 managers' report was provided to the board for review. Deb P. asked about ARP projects and Director Stanly replied she will discuss later in the meeting.

IV. New Business

- a. Board Meeting Times-The Board of Commissioners changed their board meetings to 6 pm. The Director was asked if the Parks Advisory Board wants to change their meeting time. Lawrence A. made a motion to keep the meetings at 5:30 pm, Jennifer S. seconded, and all board members were in favor.
- b. Master Plan Review-Director Stanley asked everyone to review recommendations in the Master Plan before next meeting.
- c. Staffing: Director Stanley went over staffing. Parks and Recreation has 2 full-time employees and just hired a new employee (Program and Event Manager) who is going to start to work March 18th. The Recreation Assistant is supposed to assist the Program and Event Manger for festivals, camps, and programs, but that position has been vacant on and off since 2019. Currently we have two Recreation Aids that serve as the Camp Supervisors and oversee the summer camps. They have been facilitating camp since 2021. At other times during the year, they assist with special events or any other kids' programming. The department has received many applicants for Recreation Assistants, but state they do not want to work with children. Recreation Aids cover the Rec Center, Visitor Center, reservations, answer the phones. They work 10-20 hours a week. Matthew P. asked where he could find information on the festivals. Lawerence A. and Director Stanley explained the festivals and smaller events Parks & Recreation offer. Matthew P. also asked how the schedule works for festivals and events. Staff for the festivals and events are scheduled for 8 hours and the town staff also help with each event. Matthew P. asked as the advisory board, what does he do to help the festivals? Director Stanley said that each month she will tell them what events she needs help with, and they can volunteer. Several members brought up the Easter event and Director Stanley provided more insight to this year's event in terms of coordination and sponsorship. It will be held on a Saturday morning, and she had

to rework the budget this year due to a lack of sponsorship. Matthew P. had one more question regarding staffing about budgeting for staff. Director Stanley explained that it was not budgeted for the number of staff members, but for the number of hours needed for staff. Matthew P. asked if we are hurting for the missing positions and Director Stanley transitioned into New Budget Requests to answer the question.

- c. New Budget Requests-Director Stanley submitted in the budget for another full-time position, Recreation Coordinator. This person would oversee the summer day camp and assist in developing and facilitating programs. Matthew P. asked for do we have documentation that proves we need these positions because of the growth. Director Stanley explained that with another full-time position, then part-time hours would decrease. Having someone here full-time would have part-time drop to just nights and weekends Director Stanley stated that she is trying to not to increase the budget too much, but there are areas that need to be increased. This includes pickleball which needs more balls, new nets, and something better to clean the courts. Programming supplies will increase because of pickleball and summer camp. Matthew P. asked about lights. Director Stanley called Duke Energy and put in a work order, but she has not heard from them since. The Directors has the plans; but new quotes are needed for the finance department. The lights are to be put around the trail, the courts, and on Recreation Way. Matthew P. asked if the lights were included in the budget, which they have not because new quotes are needed from Duke Energy. Matthew P. asked about the skate park and if it was going to reopen. Director Stanley and Lawrence A. responded that the lawyers have provided no updates and courts are to remain closed until further notice.

V. Old Business

- a. Splashpad Enhancements- Director Stanley reviewed the plans for the splashpad enhancements and pointed out the drawing in the packet. The concrete will be extended around the pad and the seating wall will be halfway around. Pavers will be in front of the building instead of concrete. The budget was \$50,000, the concrete work came to \$35,650, so there is about \$14,000 remaining. Director Stanley provided two options for shade and amenities. Option 1 is one shade is 14 x 14 and 18 x 18, which came to \$28,000. The second option is one 20 x 20 which comes in at \$20,000. Deb P. asked if the shade has rollers because if it does, then it may be expensive to fix. Director Stanley said they are quick release and can be taken removed during storms. Matthew P. asked if these were the only options to go with before making a motion to move forward with option 1. He suggested building a permanent gazebo that can withstand a hurricane, with 30-year shingles. Director Stanley said that could cost \$50,000 and could investigate it, but time is of the essence. Matthew P. thinks it would be a lot cheaper to build a gazebo and worries about the cost and frequency of replacing the canvas material because of the sun. Director Stanley is worried about time and having the funds

encumbered by the end of the year. Deb P. recommended doing the motion via email once a quote is made so that they could move faster. Matthew P. even suggested local businesses do metal roofing and even lighting eventually. Three companies have conducted site visits but did not respond. Matthew P. expressed concern over the material of the shades and stated that a simple gazebo could be cheaper than \$28,000. Matthew P. asked what the timeline was, and Director Stanley said that the funds need to be used by the end of the year. The concrete company was ready to start in March, but we need everything else installed beforehand.

VI. Comments

Commissioner Justice-Thanked the Parks Department for what they do and understands that sometimes they are the last to get funded. He stated that he is more than happy to help in any areas needed and reach out to companies that are not following back up with Director Stanley. He thinks the more people that call, the better. If there is additional funding needed for programs and events, he suggested to come to the board.

Commissioner Brown- Asked about a particular concrete company, and Director replied that the company was contacted, made a site visit, but never responded to correspondence requesting a quote. Commissioner Justice suggested Task Contracting and the Director stated that is company the department is using. Justice asked if the price was comparable and Director replied that yes, compared to the quote received last year, but that quote did not even include the seating wall.

Commissioner Brown also said that he is here to help, to get to know Parks & Recreation, and for Parks & Recreation to get to know him.

Commissioner Eckendorf- He believes Matthew is a good addition to the advisory board and that Parks & Recreation does great work. He said that he is glad to be there and is looking forward to the other meetings.

Matthew P. asked if there is anything they need to have more guidance and high priority. Director Stanley explained that the advisory board is to make recommendations and support the department. Director Stanley stated that the role of the advisory board is to make recommendations related to projects, events, and budget. Staffing and budgeting is the biggest challenge. The department has made progress to be like the other departments in the town. Matthew P. is excited to be a part of the board and lend a hand in the town.

Commissioner Brown- Asked about staffing and how many hours were needed each year, and Director Stanley said it was about 4,500 hours and said that she would like one more full-time staff member, but also limited on office space. There is a

workstation in the classroom, but a staff member would not be able to occupy that space during the summer because of summer day camp.

Deb P. said that regarding the shades there was a motion on the floor from Lawrence, but it will be tabled for next month.

Matthew P. asked what the next big event was, which is Touch a Truck on April 20 and then PirateFest is May 11. The next festival is Arts by the Sea on June 8.

Commissioner Eckendorf asked about selling shirts at festivals and Deb P. responded that it is a huge risk because of potential cancellations. and now there is a deal with a sponsor that is no risk. Once the festival is over, the vendor sends us the check. It suggested that the department setup a permanent kiosk with Parks and Recreation shirts, cups, etc.

VII. Adjournment

Jennifer S. made a motion to adjourn at 7:08 pm and Matthew P. seconded the motion. All members were in favor.

Next Meeting March 20, 2024