

**Zebulon Parks & Recreation Department  
Advisory Board Meeting  
November 16, 2020**

The Zebulon Parks and Recreation Advisory Board will meet Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup> at 6pm at Zebulon Town Hall located at 1003 N. Arendell Avenue.

**Board Member Attendance:** Erica Parsons, Andi Wrenn, Dexter Privette, Brandon Wiggins, Garrett Underhill

**Late Arrival:** None

### Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order

**Start – 6:00 PM**

**Erica called the meeting to order.**

2. Approval of Agenda

**1<sup>st</sup> - Andi Wrenn**

**2<sup>nd</sup> - Dexter Privette**

**All voted in favor.**

3. Public Comment: *Due to Covid-19, all wishing to speak must submit comments, 400 words or less, to Hannah Blische ([hblische@townofzebulon.org](mailto:hblische@townofzebulon.org)) by 3 PM on October 19<sup>th</sup>. Comments will be read as written to the Parks and Recreation Board at the time of public comments.*

**No Comments**

4. Consent

**Erica called for a motion to adopt the minutes.**

- a. Adoption of Minutes
  - i. October 19, 2020

**1<sup>st</sup> - Brandon Wiggins**

**2<sup>nd</sup> - Andi Wrenn**

**All voted in favor**

5. Presentations

- a. Park and Recreation Master Plan- Community Engagement Findings and Visioning

**Sheila Long introduced, Withers and Ravenel representative, Gary Warner who provided a presentation to Share initial findings and community input online surveys.**

- **Zebulon currently has 12.4 acres of park land per 1000 residents. NRPA recommends 12 acres for a population of our size. By 2030, without acquiring additional park land, we will be short.**
- **NRPA recommends 3 playgrounds for a town our size. Zebulon currently has 3 playgrounds.**
- **NRPA recommends 1 community center for a town our size. Zebulon currently has 1 community center.**
- **Zebulon currently does not have any soccer fields (that we own). NRPA recommends 2 for a town our size.**
- **We had 388 responses to our online survey.**

- Level of Satisfaction: People overall were very happy with our services / parks. People did not feel like they had good access to greenways / trails.
  - Zebulon Community Park was visited very often, school parks and Gill Street park were least visited.
  - People were generally happy with the fees, availability of information, and ease of registration. Highest satisfaction was in the customer service by staff category
  - A lot of activities, the community did not feel as though we were meeting their needs (Examples: dog park, aquatics, adult sports, gym access, etc.)
- Future Community Needs: Number one was trails / greenways, teen programs, parkland, preschool programs, etc.
- Limits to Parks Visits: Not aware of facilities, lack of personal time, lack of amenities, conditions of parks
- 82% said they travel outside of Zebulon to use parks.
- Youth Sports: Large number of people who would like to participate in additional programs (Lacrosse, Off-road biking, etc)
- Adult Programs: A very large number would like to participate in additional programs
- Senior Activities: A large number of seniors would like to participate in additional activities
- Events: Most attended event was the farmers market, second was disc. golf
- People prefer to seek grants for additional funding. Second funding choice would be impact fees.
- Early Takeaways:
  - Management and Operations: Advertise what you have, better Maintenance of facilities
  - Facilities: Additional parks and park land, expand trails, splash pad, more courts, playgrounds, and fields
  - Programs and Events: Additional classes and programs
- Top 10:
  - Greenways / trails
  - Playgrounds
  - Splash pad / water play
  - Ampitheater
  - Community Gardens
  - Dog Parks
- Little River Park
  - Trails
  - Playground
  - Education
- Community Park
  - Playgrounds
  - Splashpad

- Whitley Park
  - Dog Park
  - Tennis Courts

Discussion was had amongst the board with the following summary of comments:

- Where did pools rank?
  - Pools have been mentioned, but initial assessments indicate more interest in a splash pad
- How did we get such a high number of survey respondents?
  - Conducted a statistically valid survey with outside company
  - Also offered the online survey
  - Withers and Ravenel were able to work with the outside firm to digest the statistics
  - Advertised online very well
- What is Withers' overall number one recommendation?
  - Continue to buy park land. If you have the land you can then decide what to do with it whether it be build trails, build a playground, offer programs, etc.
  - Sheila Long mentioned that we need to continue to work with private developers to build trails / greenways and work with them to partner with our endeavors
- Did anyone mention accessibility to Mudcats?
  - No one specifically mentioned the stadium in the survey
  - Current greenway plans include the stadium. Developments in surrounding area have plans to include the stadium in trails

## 6. Open Discussion

Erica Parsons asked what are the next steps with the Master Plan: Sheila Long responded that information presented tonight will also go to the commissioners. Withers will take this feedback, feedback from this board, feedback from focus groups and stakeholders, etc. to continue to build our Master Plan. The implementation plan will then be presented to this board.

Garrett Underhill mentioned revitalization of downtown and the board had discussion. A summary of those comments included: The Alley looks great. Would love to have recreational facilities in downtown area, such as senior center. Downtown buildings need a lot of work. But we can focus on having events and activities downtown to pull attention and foot traffic to downtown. What are the other small things we can do to help downtown (example: parking signs and making it aware of where people can park publicly for free).

Sheila Long mentioned that downtown conversations meetings are open if anyone wishes to attend. Please RSVP to Sheila if interested in attending.

## 7. Staff Updates

### a. Department Update

- Veterans Day this year was rethought due to COVID-19 concerns with our seniors. Staff came up with the idea of a gift bag. Sent invitations to veterans to come pick up a gift bag. We have gotten

great feedback from the community and our veterans regarding the celebration

- Our Toy Drive still going on like a “Toys for Tots” drive. Please encourage people to participate, share info with networks
- Santa Cruise will be December 5. Please continue to share that info with your networks.
- Winter Markets in The Alley on December 5 and 12.
- Working with ZDAC to continue storefront decorating contest.
- Working on photo opportunities downtown for people to pose with holiday characters around town.
- Landscaping contract continues to go well. Continuing to assess our parks maintenance. COVID has brought new challenges for our park's maintenance crew. For example, a new group of soccer players have been playing almost every day on the ZES field. Within a week you can see the wear and tear of the field, our staff continues to move goals around.
- Programs being offered are doing very well.
- Community Center has been running smoothly since its opening. A lot of communities around us have kept their centers remain closed, and our staff worked very hard to be able to open safely.

b. Next Regular Meeting: **December 21, 2020**

i. Goal- Deliver Master Plan Draft for review and possible recommendation to elected board

ii. It is possible a special meeting may be needed the week of December 28th

- i. All board members indicated they would be available.

8. Adjournment

Erica called for a motion to adjourn the meeting

1<sup>st</sup> - Brandon Wiggins

2<sup>nd</sup> - Garrett Underhill

All voted in favor

End – 7:01 PM