

TOWN OF CAROLINA SHORES
PARKS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
February 19, 2020
2:00 p.m.

Inspections and Construction Superintendent Sandy Wood called the February 19, 2020 Parks Commission meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and there was a moment of silence.

Members present: Greg Hapner, Ed Lillis, Elizabeth Petito, Kathy Madola, William Hanley, Thomas DiPaolo. Also present: Mayor Joyce Dunn, Commissioner Beverly Mayhew, Board Liaison, Gail Treglia, Code Enforcement Officer, and Sara Brumm, Office Assistant.

Members absent: Paul Richards

Sandy said that at this time the Parks Commission needs to elect a Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson. Member Madola made a motion to nominate Elizabeth Petito as Chairperson. Member DiPaolo seconded the motion and the motion passed. Chairperson Petito asked for nominations for Vice Chairperson. Member Hanley made a motion to nominate Kathy Madola as Vice Chairperson. Member DiPaolo seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Member Hanley made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 13, 2019 Parks Commission Meeting. Member Hanley seconded the motion. Chairperson Petito called for a vote and the motion was approved.

Administrative Reports:

Sandy introduced himself to the Parks Commission Members and those in the audience. Sandy said that work at South Park has stopped and he's been asked to task the Parks Commission to start thinking of ideas on what to do with the space. Sandy said that East Park is coming along well. Sandy said the pavilion is up and fill will be in soon, as well as sewer and electric. Sandy said then the pickleball court will be installed. Sandy said a dog park was always in the plan for phase two of the park but he's been asked to move forward with putting it in now. Sandy said it will be nice when everything is finished.

Gail introduced herself to the Parks Commission Members and those in the audience. Gail said she's in charge of concerts. Gail said that there's a concert scheduled for May 20, 2020 and the Sea and Sand Band is coming back to perform. Gail said she's lined up a Polish food truck as well. Gail said the concert for September will need to be scheduled soon so it can be put in the Brunswick County Concert flyer. Sandy asked Gail if she needs more volunteers. Gail said she will be calling on the volunteers she has.

At this time, Dan O'Reilly from the audience said that he has requested a microphone to be put at the podium. Mayor Dunn said that the Town has a headset for the hearing impaired that he can request if needed.

New Business:

Chairperson Petito said the Parks Commission needs to gather ideas on how to turn the South Park area around and make it useable. Chairperson Petito said we can let it become green space. Chairperson Petito said that since the trees were cut down, we could plant some new ones and maybe that will help with the water situation.

Public Comment:

Nancy Larkin, Gate 6: Ms. Larkin said that many of us have approached the Board of Commissioners about South Park and had we waited to come to the Parks Commission we wouldn't have had the same outcome. Ms. Larkin said that she found out the Parks Commissioner are only volunteers and only make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners, so she felt it would have been unfair to bring the petition to the Parks Commission. Ms. Larkin said she had no idea the Parks Commission existed until recently but now that she does she will be attending the meetings. Ms. Larkin asked why there is no new business today and asked who plans these meetings. Ms. Larkin asked who runs the greenway. Ms. Larkin asked if there will be a time to give input on the greenway. Ms. Larkin said she wants the park to be greenspace.

Mayor Joyce Dunn, 41 Gate 1: Mayor Dunn said that John Williams had ideas that he brought to the Board of Commissioners and she will get a copy to anyone who wants one. Mayor Dunn said perhaps a subcommittee of the Parks Commission can be formed to gather ideas about the South Park space and in her opinion it should just be residents in the Carolina Shores subdivision. Mayor Dunn said that in the last couple of weeks the Beacon and Star News have had good articles about other parks. Mayor Dunn said perhaps a group could take a bus tour and look around at other parks.

John Williams, 33 Gate 6: Mr. Williams said that he was pleasantly surprised at the outcome of the last Board of Commissioners special called meeting. Mr. Williams said he's prepared to present a compromise for the park area. Mr. Williams says he has ideas and thinks we should talk about them. Mr. Williams said if there is a park, he had a different vision for it.

Gere Dale, 46 Calabash Drive: Mr. Dale said he's been involved in the parks project for 2 years and was happy to see the progress until it stopped a month ago. Mr. Dale said he was told some people were distressed about it and when I asked them why, he was told that the park was a safety concern because people who frequent the park might get hit by a golf ball. Mr. Dale said he has lived on this golf course for 32.5 years and has only had 2 golf balls in his yard and has never been hit by one. Mr. Dale said he lives on the 8th hole and the park location is around the 9th hold and his house in in a similar spot so he can't comprehend the problem since the Town was diligent with leaving trees as a buffer. Mr. Dale said he has 6 trees as a buffer and there's at least 3 times that many trees at the park. Mr. Dale said there are 229 homes in the Carolina Shores POA that are on the golf course and he's never heard anyone say they were distressed by being hit by a golf ball. Mr. Dale said he thought the parks plan that was done 1.5 years ago was very comprehensive and the venues were approved. Mr. Dale said he is very distressed that it has been stopped and he hopes the board will endorse having the park move

forward.

Pete Larkin, 39 Gate 6: Mr. Larkin said he lives on the golf course at the 10th hole and he's had 2 broken windows from golf balls and has 18-20 trees and a big net to help prevent balls hitting his house.

Member Hapner said he plays golf and has attending all these meetings and a representative of the golf course was here. Member Hapner said he was curious so he played a round of golf at the Carolina Shores golf course and got past the 9th and 10th holes before he realized he had passed the park, because it's not visible from the golf course. Member Hapner said I didn't speak up at the special called meeting and maybe I should have but I didn't want any conflict. Member Hapner said he played golf to see how the park looked from the course. Member Hapner said he spoke to the maintenance workers who were at the park and has been involved in emergency management and he thinks the Town does an excellent job with stormwater. Member Hapner said maintenance said they've seen thousands of golf balls in the ditches along the roads that they clean up but they didn't find any golf balls in the park area when they were cleaning it up.

Mary Conover, 3 Lakeview Court: Ms. Conover said that having a public park in the middle of a community is a concern. Ms. Conover said who is doing parking upkeep, who is keeping up with who uses the park, who is maintaining the park. Ms. Conover said there there's been a comment that the Carolina Shores POA has amenities so this park's amenities have no benefits to the residents of Carolina Shores.

Chairperson Petito said the amenities at the Carolina Shores POA are only for those residents and the parks are for the whole community.

Michael Griffin, 455 Cornflower Street: Mr. Griffin said that because you anticipate the public using the parks, not just members of the town, how do you police that. Mr. Griffin said East Park will be crowded. Mr. Griffin said a subcommittee on South Park should not just have Carolina Shores POA residents in it.

Member Hapner said that the Parks Commission will be looking for volunteers from all the communities in the Town.

Sue O'Reilly, 27 Pinewood Drive: Ms. O'Reilly said that if the parks are public for anyone to use, who would maintain the bathrooms and if the bathrooms are open, would there be a key to lock them?

Sandy said the bathrooms would only be open during the day and the Town maintenance staff would be cleaning and locking and unlocking the bathrooms.

Ms. O'Reilly asked if the bathrooms would be open to anyone. Sandy said yes.

Member Hapner said to follow up to that, he doesn't know the stats but the Calabash park is open and he's never heard of any problems with crime or drugs.

Gail said she went to speak with administration and police with Sunset Beach, Calabash, Ocean Isle Beach, and Shallotte and asked them about these issues and none of them had any incidents of crime and the bathrooms are secure. Gail said the bathrooms at the Shallotte parks have automatic timed locks.

Caroline Bosman, Cleek Court: Ms. Bosman said the bathroom at the 15th hole on the golf course is a busy place and anyone stops to use it, even town employees. Ms. Bosman said if there's a bathroom on the road, people will stop to use it. Ms. Bosman said she knows the golf course bathroom is cleaned once a day and a park bathroom would need cleaned twice a day. Ms. Bosman said that as for golf balls, as a golfer, if your ball causes damage you are liable, not the town.

Lyn Penta, 7 Brassie Drive: Ms. Penta asked if anyone has figured out how to get to the park. Ms. Penta said that she tried to walk to it from Country Club Road and she couldn't do it, or bike it, without safety issues because there's no turn lane. Ms. Penta said that there won't be enough parking for people to use. Ms. Penta said as for golf ball safety, the people that move here knew the risk when they bought their home. Ms. Penta said even anyone who is trying to cross over Country Club Road to get to the park would have a safety issue.

Sandy said that during the planning phase of the park, the town went to NCDOT and had them assess it and NCDOT said that no turning lane was required, even at East Park. Sandy said NCDOT did a traffic count when taking a turning lane into consideration. Sandy said there will be 17 parking spaces at the park.

John Williams (second time at podium): Mr. Williams said the vote last month was 3 to 1. Mr. Williams said where do we go from here. Mr. Williams said he's happy with green space but down the road how do you heal the scar. Mr. Williams said remember, the project was stopped so that should be accepted.

Nancy Larkin (second time at podium): Ms. Larkin said she wants to know who is in charge of the greenways and how can she give input on them.

Sandy said I do know there's a greenway plan but Jon, the Town Administrator, would have to speak on it because he doesn't know what the plan is moving forward. Sandy asked Mayor Dunn if she had any information. Mayor Dunn invited Gere Dale back to the podium since he is very knowledgeable about the greenway.

Mr. Dale said many years ago he read about the Maine to Key West greenway that was to cover the entire east coast. Mr. Dale said the idea was to link up with that. Mr. Dale said a lot has been accomplished with the greenway in 15 years with parts in process or being planned. Mr. Dale said the Board of Commissioners thought that because Carolina Shores is situated in this corner of North Carolina that the greenway should go through the town. Mr. Dale said that there have been plans to continue the greenway behind the maintenance shed but there has to be a bridge over some water to get it to the South Carolina line.

Robert Bosman, 6 Cleek Court: Mr. Bosman said the planned greenway is 46 feet from his back bedroom and if it goes there, we need a security fence so people can't see his property. (Mr. Bosman points to Mr. Dale) Mr. Bosman said he proposes this greenway goes through my backyard and that's not fair. Mr. Dale said you should remove your hat when you come into this chamber.

Chairperson Petito asked if the greenway goes through the Planning Board. Sandy said no, it goes through the Parks Commission. Sandy said this is a very long term project.

Mayor Dunn said that the plan was to build the greenway along the deep ditch where there's already an access road. Mayor Dunn said financially it will take a long time, especially where it has to cross over waterways. Mayor Dunn said the town is in no rush on this project.

Dan O'Reilly, 27 Pinewood Drive: Mr. O'Reilly said he wants to see the plans for the greenway paths because he doesn't want them in his backyard. Mr. O'Reilly said the greenway opens the community up to burglars and the access to Thomasboro Road opens people up to the community, and it's a violation of privacy. Mr. O'Reilly said that he knows there's easements at the ditches and he can put up a fence but not everyone can. Mr. O'Reilly said people who can't put up a fence will have people walking through their back yards.

Carolyn Bosman (2nd time at podium): Ms. Bosman said she wants to address golf balls again because a golf ball has hit her husband. Ms. Bosman said that the greenway is supposed to cross Country Club Road and that's a busy street. Ms. Bosman said would you let your child walk on the greenway without protection.

Member Hapner said in the grand scheme, the greenway is across many states and through many cities. Member Hapner said the Parks Commission has talked about connecting to existing greenways. Member Hapner said that he has family in Raleigh and the residents of cities like that consider greenways an amenity and people seek houses nearby by and they get a lot of use. Member Hapner said that many years ago it was suggested to tie all the communities of the town together to get access from one to another without getting on Highway 17 or Thomasboro Road. Member Hapner said he thought it'd be nice to have access to another community to visit friends. Member Hapner said there's a Parks and Recreation Master Plan that people said they've never heard of but the Town couldn't do more to advertise. Member Hapner said these meetings are in the newspaper, sent through emails, there are on the website, they go through community emails. Member Hapner said he has a hard time believing people have never heard of these things before this petition was started. Member Hapner said as for the Parks Commission and the Planning Board, these parks are designated on town property and were to be put to good use. Member Hapner said there was a survey conducted and the number one thing people wanted were walking trails and number two was a park with picnic shelters. Member Hapner said one thing people say is they want it but not near their house. Member Hapner said residents in the Farm at Brunswick would love to have a park. Member Hapner said he disagrees with the comment about amenities because he has the survey right here.

Mayor Dunn said as for the people that think that elected officials don't communicate, people don't pay attention until they see something that makes them mad. Mayor Dunn said people

should pay more attention. Mayor Dunn said everyone community has an email network and she even has her own separate email network.

Chairperson Petito said that coming from up north, she knows a lot of retirees come down here but new people want the northern life here and things for kids. Chairperson Petito said retired people couldn't care less about this stuff if it's not golf, but things are changing. Chairperson Petito said if we are to appeal to younger people, they want different things. Chairperson Petito said the town is slowly converting from a retired community. Chairperson Petito said that we have to look 20 years into the future and think who will be here, what can we do to put things in place now.

Sue O'Reilly (2nd time at podium): Ms. O'Reilly said that when she answered the survey she thought of it in general terms, not those things being directed to one location. Ms. O'Reilly said she didn't know that's what it meant. Ms. O'Reilly said if we are appealing to younger people why isn't a playground being put in.

Chairperson Petito said that is a good question and maybe it should be added to East Park.

Ms. O'Reilly said she's specifically referring to South Park.

Chairperson Petito said we've already established that South Park isn't happening.

Dan O'Reilly said that you're talking about a 5+ acre park and things small parks can't supply. Mr. O'Reilly said that you'd have to buy a big property on Highway 17 to build a big park.

Jack Bendy, 5 Niblick Court: Mr. Bendy said you have to buy parcels before they are developed. Mr. Bendy said we had an idea of putting a park near Shingletree but Pulte grabbed it. Mr. Bendy said there's plenty of land for sale and the town should grab it to put in a big park. Mr. Bendy said Mulberry Park in Shallotte is beautiful. Mr. Bendy said for South Park he sees nature space with benches and a place to relax.

Mary Conover (2nd time at podium): Ms. Conover said does the dog park at East Park have a completion date.

Sandy said that he's thinking next month if the weather is good. Sandy said people can call him and he can set up a meeting with them and show them maps of everything. Sandy said he's met a lot of people that live where the greenway would be on Northwest Drive and it's close to them but along the drainage canal.

Member Hapner said that right now nothing is preventing people from walking the ditches. Sandy said the town put up some barriers but people can still walk. Sandy said the town is trying to keep 4-wheelers and motorbikes out.

Member Hapner said there was talk of putting a dog park at both parks and a lot of people wanted that. Member Hapner said we could make this green space next to Town Hall a gathering place on Saturdays. Member Hapner asked if people would be against putting a dog

park there. Nancy Larkin said she'd have the same concerns there as a regular park. Mary Conover said she thought the dog park was taken out of South Park because of parking concerns. Mayor Dunn said there's not much green space at Town Hall for a dog park.

Chairperson Petito said that people used to use the golf course to walk their dogs but the golf course nixed that idea so people started wanting a dog park. Chairperson Petito said that there would be a concern of people walking their dogs in the street and getting hit.

Carolyn Bosman said the two pieces of land the town is building parks on were given to the town. Member Hapner said no, they were purchased for \$1. Mayor Dunn said the county wanted to give the town the property and take the water tower out. Ms. Bosman said the property wasn't bought for a park. Mayor Dunn said the Town had been looking for property to build a park on but no one was selling. Mayor Dunn said this popped up and it was a good price. Ms. Bosman said we don't know where Highway 31 is going why not wait. Member Hapner said that could be a couple years. Ms. Bosman said no its just months away. Mayor Dunn said NCDOT has no money to extend Highway 31 into North Carolina. Member Hapner said it's more likely NCDOT will have Highway 31 take farmland routes because it's more cost effective. Sandy said if developers waited for NCDOT to build roads before they developed property, they'd never build. Sandy said this Highway 31 extension into North Carolina has been talked about for 10 years now. Nancy Larkin asked where the park at Shingletree would have been. Mayor Dunn said near the library but that area wouldn't have worked so it didn't move forward. Ms. Bosman said new developments are required to have parks. Sandy said that's not true. Member Hapner said they are only required to have a little green space. Mayor Dunn said they have to have a certain amount of green space and that's how the idea of East Park came forward because a developer didn't have enough green space so the plan was for them to provide for this park. Member Hapner said in other states developers have to provide money for these kinds of services but North Carolina doesn't do that. Ms. Bosman said what about water runoff from these developments. Mayor Dunn said the new developments are better for water runoff than what it was before it was developed. Sandy said the older community of Carolina Shores has no stormwater design.

Member Hapner said this is a town of over 4,000 people with 6 communities and residents of the town need to start thinking about the whole town and not just their community. Member Hapner said this isn't one community pitted against another, but looking at the whole town and doing things to make it better. Member Hapner said that people talk about outsiders and crime at amenities but hasn't there been crime reported at the basketball courts at the Carolina Shores POA. Mayor Dunn said yes. Peter Larkin said there was a drug problem there but it's been addressed. Nancy Larkin said that the survey only had 500 respondents and thinks the subcommittee should do a new survey. Ms. Larkin said she doesn't want a park across from her house. Member Hapner said originally the Parks Commission thought that South Park would be more accepted because it's close to houses where East Park is kind of off on it's own and thought it'd be worse there because less people are nearby. Member Hapner said there's crime close to all these houses. Ms. Larkin said didn't Calabash Lakes just put in a pickleball court. Member Madola said it's been there. Member Hapner said lots of people travel to play pickleball and residents he talked to said they'd be happy to have a court nearby. Member Hapner said the idea to have pickleball courts at both parks was due to the thought that they'd

be busy.

Chairperson Petito asked when the next meeting is taking place. Sara said it's in May. Ms. Bosman asked who decides on when these meetings take place. Mayor Dunn said the Board of Commissioners. Chairperson Petito said she doesn't want the meeting bogged down and we need to move along. Chairperson Petito said people can always express their opinions and she's glad that people have come out. Chairperson Petito said she hopes people stay involved and come to meetings. Ms. Bosman said that everything should be posted on the website and agendas should be more detailed. Member Hapner said everything is posted online. Mayor Dunn said South Park wasn't on today's agenda because the special called meeting of the Board of Commissioners that lead to South Park being shut down was last minute. Member Hapner said that there's a volunteer meeting on February 25th and he'd love for a lot of people to come so that they can take this input and help make our jobs easier. Commissioner Mayhew asked what time the volunteer meeting is on the 25th. Sara said at 10 am and the town has sent 2 emails out with the meeting information.

Adjourn:

Member Hapner made a motion to adjourn the February 19, 2020 Parks Commission meeting. Member Madola seconded the motion. Chairperson Petito called for a vote and the motion carried by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Chairperson

Submitted by: Sara Brumm, Office Assistant