

TOWN OF CAROLINA SHORES
PARKS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
August 18, 2021
2:00 p.m.

Chairperson Kathy Madola called the August 18, 2021 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: Kathy Madola, Thomas DiPaolo, Marlene Vandergrift, William Hanley and Jeannette D'Abbondanza. Also present: Commissioner Beverly Mayhew, Board Liaison; Chad Hicks, Town Administrator, Gail Treglia, Code Enforcement Officer and Nicole Hewett, Assistant Town Administrator/Town Clerk.

Members absent: Nancy Larkin and Greg Hapner

Ms. Hewett asked that 2 items be added to the agenda. Ms. Hewett said under 1a., we would like to add Oath of Office for Member William Hanley. Ms. Hewett said under New Business and as item #6, Ms. Gail Treglia, Code Enforcement Officer is here today to speak about the TOCS Concert.

MEMBER DIPAOLO MADE A MOTION TO ADD THE OATH OF OFFICE AND DISCUSSION OF THE TOCS CONCERT TO THE AGENDA. MEMBER VANDERGRIFT SECONDED THE MOTION. CHAIRPERSON MADOLA CALLED FOR A VOTE AND MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.

Oath of Office:

Ms. Hewett swore in Member William Hanley as a Parks Commission Member.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

MEMBER HANLEY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE PARKS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 19, 2021 WITH THE CORRECTIONS OF MEMBER HAPNER WAS ABSENT AND CORRECT THE SPELLING OF MEMBER D'ABBONDANZA'S NAME. MEMBER D'ABBONDANZA SECONDED THE MOTION. CHAIRPERSON MADOLA CALLED FOR A VOTE AND MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.

Administrative Reports:

Update on East Park - Mr. Hicks said the lights have been installed by Brunswick Electric and we had been waiting on that for quite a while but they are done. Mr. Hicks said the bathrooms are still closed due to Covid picking back up. Mr. Hicks said everything has been completed except for a few things that we will handle in house. Mr. Hicks said people are using the park, it's really being used and we are proud of that. Ms. Hewett will e-mail out pictures of the lights to the Parks Commission.

Review of Quote from Hughes & Hughes Nursery – Mr. Hicks said we had Hughes & Hughes Nursery go out to the park and he, Niki, Beverly and Member Madola met with them. Mr. Hicks said we discussed with them on some way to create a buffer around the back of that ditch line. Mr. Hicks said there are spaces where there is no greenery to the next-door neighbor and the back sections. Mr. Hicks said the young lady that came out did some designing and came up with some ideas. Mr. Hicks reviewed the proposal with the Commission. Mr. Hicks said there was a concern between the dog park and the pickleball court being so close together and so we would have some plantings planted in between there. Mr. Hicks said the quote was \$10, 803.00. Mr. Hicks said it is a good quote and that is a lot of work. Mr. Hicks said that if we are charged tax, we will get the \$683.00 back. Mr. Hicks said the plantings don't really require a lot of upkeep. Mr. Hicks said that staff would like to recommend that the Parks Commission review and if you like what is proposed you can take action on it and send it to the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Hicks will check to see what type of guarantee the plantings have from Hughes & Hughes. Ms. Hewett said she just wanted to make note that the Board of Commissioners have talked about doing a buffer back there at a few of their meetings. Ms. Hewett said she didn't want the members of the Parks Commission to think that this was something that was done on a whim. Ms. Hewett said there has been great thought about that and it made perfect sense to bring it to the Parks Commission for input and a recommendation.

New Business:

Discussion of Tree City USA – Ms. Hewett said Member Nancy Larkin was unable to be here today. Ms. Hewett said that Member Larkin wrote an email and asked that Ms. Hewett share it with the rest of the members and also an attachment of the Tree City USA Qualifying Expenditures which Ms. Hewett handed out to the members. Ms. Hewett said she would like to read this email before the discussion, so you may hear her comments and hear her input. Ms. Hewett read Member Larkin's email verbatim (a copy of this email and attachment is on file with the Town Clerk). It was the consensus of the Commission to have Ms. Hewett do some research and give them a general description of how the money was spent to qualify for Tree City USA. Ms. Hewett said in regards to Member Larkin's comment about having the whole Commission meet Hughes & Hughes at the park, it comes down to the open meeting laws and would be considered a meeting because you would be conducting Town business. Ms. Hewett said that was the reason Town staff selected Commissioner Beverly Mayhew, Board of Commissioners Liaison and Member Madola as the Chairperson of your Commission. Ms. Hewett said in regards to Member Larkin's comment about using someone local such as Carolina Greens Garden Center, she checked and they are located out of Little River, South Carolina. Ms. Hewett said that Hughes & Hughes is local and that's who we use for our Arbor Day celebration trees. Ms. Hewett said the money spent for Tree City USA must be spent on Town property and not private property, which is the case for any Town money spent per State Law. Ms. Hewett discussed the Tree City USA process. Ms. Hewett said in the past 10 years, we have doubled our expenditures. There was discussion on replanting trees for private house construction and subdivision construction. Mr. Hicks said that is something that we can look into further. Mr. Hicks said he hasn't checked over the past couple of days but the General Assembly was trying to ban any type of tree ordinances/regulations for towns. Mr. Hicks said that would tie our hands and allow anyone to clear-cut. Mr. Hicks said he just wanted the Commission to be aware.

Discussion of Town Budget – Mr. Hicks said on the qualifying expenditure form, it says at the bottom items that are non-eligible for Tree City is tree work on non-public property, so the idea of splitting money up between communities would not work. Mr. Hicks said we do invite everybody to the Arbor Day Celebration, nobody is excluded. Mr. Hicks said we did include \$10,000.00 in the budget. Mr. Hicks said the census numbers aren't out yet, so there may be a little cushion. Mr. Hicks said the Board of Commissioners has been very supportive of being a Tree City USA

member. Mr. Hicks said there is also money in Public Works that we could use towards it as well. Ms. Hewett said the Town budget runs from July 1st to June 30th of each year. Ms. Hewett said that it had been mentioned that the \$10,000.00 that was allocated in the budget was for the Parks Commission only but it's not. Ms. Hewett said it is in the budget for everything such as buying mulch, dirt, planting trees and the Arbor Day Celebration to name just a few.

Public Comment:

Mr. Larkin, 39 Gate 6 – Mr. Larkin said he travels the Thomasboro Road and never sees anybody in there. Mr. Larkin said the question about Carolina Greens Gardens, that was just something that Nancy put out there. Mr. Larkin said does the money spent have to be in North Carolina? Mr. Hicks said we like it to so that we can get our sales tax back. Mr. Hicks said we try to buy as local as we can. Mr. Larkin said his position is that spending \$10,000.00 on a park that is not even open yet, to him is kind of frivolous. Mr. Larkin said he doesn't see what taking care of a barking dog has to do with putting a tree up. Mr. Larkin said he just thinks the money could be spent elsewhere. Mr. Larkin said that \$10,000.00 could go to a lot of places and not in just one park.

Commissioner Mayhew said on behalf of the Commissioners, it was not a resolution to just do general projects but this year to have it spent on the park. Commissioner Mayhew said they wanted the park finished. Commissioner Mayhew said when Covid is over, we can open the restrooms. Commissioner Mayhew said the park is open right now. Commissioner Mayhew said you can use the pickleball court, the dog park or sit and eat your lunch. Commissioner Mayhew said let's get the park done and that is what she heard from the Commissioners at their meeting. Commissioner Mayhew said a majority of the quote is for the buffer that will be out back.

MEMBER DIAPAULO MADE A MOTION TO RECOMMEND THE HUGHES & HUGHES PROPOSAL TO THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS. MEMBER D'ABBONDANZA SECONDED THE MOTION. CHAIRPERSON MADOLA CALLED FOR A VOTE AND MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.

Commissioner Mayhew said she would report this recommendation to the Board of Commissioners at their next meeting.

Discussion on Open Meeting Laws, Quorums and E-Mails – Ms. Hewett reviewed the information that was placed in the Parks Commission packet. Ms. Hewett said because the Parks Commission is an appointed Commission, you have to follow the Open Meeting Laws. Ms. Hewett said your emails are considered public record. Ms. Hewett said she's been asked about giving email addresses out. Ms. Hewett said rosters are public record and she can and will give them out but keep in mind if you hit "Reply All" and start conversing about Town business, you are conducting town business illegally. Also, if a public record is submitted for copies of your town emails, we have to comply. Ms. Hewett said if you have questions, please call and we will be happy to answer them for you.

Discussion on Town Hall Concert – Mrs. Treglia said on September 24th from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., we are going to have a concert at Town Hall. Mrs. Treglia said it will be the Sea & Sand Band. Mrs. Treglia said the Lobster Dawg food truck will be here starting at 5:00 p.m. Mrs. Treglia said the rain date will be October 8th. Mrs. Treglia said if you would like to volunteer, please let her know. Mrs. Treglia said we will also hand out popcorn, water and soda. Mrs. Treglia said we will be sending out a flyer and asked the members to hang them up at their POA office. Mrs. Treglia said we will also put out a resource table. Mrs. Treglia said that our Maintenance Department will help with parking.

Commissioner Mayhew said she would like to thank the Town maintenance staff as they were in the rain at the park and planting grass. Commissioner Mayhew said BEMC kind of tore up the lawn and they were planting and raking grass in the pouring rain and she appreciated that.

Commissioner Mayhew said we have been in compliance every year with Tree City USA. Mr. Hicks said we will go back a few years.

Adjourn:

MEMBER HANLEY MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE PARKS COMMISSION AUGUST 18, 2021 MEETING AT 2:52 P.M. MEMBER DIPAOLLO SECONDED THE MOTION. CHAIRPERSON MADOLA CALLED FOR A VOTE AND MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.

Chairperson

Submitted by: Nicole L. Hewett, Assistant Town Administrator/Town Clerk