



**TOWN OF HOLDEN BEACH
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 2021- 2:00 P.M.**

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) of the Town of Holden Beach, North Carolina met at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 5, 2021 in the Town Hall Public Assembly. Present were Members John McEntire, Olivia Gomez, Suzannah Tucker, Candace Vick, Mike Pearson, and Grace Bannerman. Member Melanie Champion alerted Assistant Town Manger Ferguson that she would be late due to a traffic congestion issue and arrived at 2:11 p.m. Assistant Town Manager Christy Ferguson was also in attendance. Town Manager Hewett was in the audience.

CALL TO ORDER

Member McEntire led the meeting and called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion to approve the agenda by Member Vick; second by Member Bannerman; approved by unanimous vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was clarification regarding memorial benches and if we needed to include that today. Motion to approve the minutes by Member Tucker; second by Member Vick; approved by unanimous vote.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Member McEntire asked if Assistant Town Manager Ferguson would like to do introductions. She mentioned that Member Champion was a retired physical education teacher and was instrumental in getting Bridgeview Park started. She said that Member Bannerman is a retired physical education teacher and has been involved in the yoga program for years. She has also been assisting with tide dye since the beginning of the summer. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson continued that Member Pearson was previously on the Inlet and Beach Protection Board and is eager to stay involved in town committees. She said he had a history of working with her on placement of Christmas trees to build the dunes and with making recommendations on locations for blue mats at accesses. She said she would let each of them add anything they like. Member Pearson stated he was happy to be on the board and enjoyed helping with tide dye the previous week. Old board members introduced themselves with Member Tucker stating she is from Fayetteville, NC and retired from the education system. She said that the PRAB was a working board, and she thinks the new members will enjoy it. Member Vick said she resides here and Raleigh, NC. She has been on the board for three years and welcomed the new members. Member Gomez said she has been here for four years and welcomed the new members. Member McEntire said he has been a resident for 18 years and on the board a few years.

Assistant Town Manager Ferguson passed out ordinance 21-23 for the PRAB that was passed by the BOC in July 2021 and said that the added duties were listed. She said everyone could have a month to review and then could bring any questions back next month.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Member McEntire opened the floor for nominations. Member Tucker nominated Member McEntire saying that he had already been willing to lead meetings in the absence of a chair and vice chair.

Motion by Member Tucker to elect John McEntire as chair; second by Member Bannerman; approved unanimously.

Member McEntire opened the floor for nominations of vice chair.

Member Vick nominated Member Tucker. Said she had been on the board for a while.

Motion by Chair McEntire to elect Suzannah Tucker as vice chair; second by Member Vick; approved unanimously.

PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES UPDATE

Assistant Town Manager Ferguson reported concerts and tide dye are going well. She said the last concert is scheduled for Labor Day weekend and the last tide dye is scheduled for Tuesday, August 10th. She continued with the program getting rained out this week, she will evaluate how many shirts are left and may run one additional week. She stated the boy scouts had been contacted about painting landscape timbers around the PAR course and building a little free library. Member Champion arrived at 2:11 p.m. and introduced herself as a former physical education teacher and having a history in grant writing.

Town Manager Hewett asked the chair if he could make a statement from the floor about concerts and consternations and things that go on the day of the event. Town Manager Hewett said that Assistant Town Manager goes through a large ordeal on the day of the concert with go or no-go decisions based on weather events. He says there are very important risks involved in those types of decisions. Chair McEntire says he thinks he can speak on behalf of the board regarding the good job that Assistant Town Manager Ferguson does for the Town, the additional load, and results that she produces.

MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Chair McEntire said a draft of the plan was presented before the last meeting as part of the agenda packet and the PRAB supplied changes at the meeting. He said the board has a new draft for this meeting and everyone has had an opportunity to review. He said there were concerns on content and things that were asked for. He will ask for Ms. Bryan from McGill to give an update.

Ms. Bryan said that her team was on the phone in case they needed to answer specific questions. Ms. Bryan said that prior to working for McGill as a consultant, she worked as a recreation resource consultant for NC State. She helped communities get grants and to get plans together and she worked with the town on Bridgeview Park. Ms. Bryan said the consultants listened to the boards' comments last time. What they are trying to do with the plan is match the feedback with the community. It doesn't dictate what happens in the future, instead it is a guide. She said this is flexible and a guide for the citizens based on feedback. She stated they updated the census numbers with NC Office of Budget and Management numbers to just include our zip code. Suggested items were added to the inventory. Under the public input section, the word was changed to [Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Regular 8/5/2021]

public input sessions instead of public meetings. She continued that she spoke to Recreation Resources Services (RRS) and that language is acceptable. Since the town has not had public meetings during Covid the wording was changed. NRPA standards are shown on page 56. She said that NRPA now says that national standards are not all that should be considered. Communities should include what the citizens say as a guide as well. She said she knew there was conflict on the dog park section, but they had to respond to the BOC request to provide alternatives for a dog park. They focused on available town owned property. Member Vick said she went and looked up some guidelines for dog parks. They should be .5 acres or more and the two right-of-way proposals don't meet that guideline. There is no national standard but there are guidelines. Member McEntire says that he feels that the language needs to be in there that the board feels strongly that those properties are not suitable, and that language should be in the report. Member Tucker said when we get to a point that we approve this plan, the PRAB doesn't feel comfortable in endorsing those areas.

Assistant Town Manager Ferguson said a few individual members had contacted her independently since they received their packet. She said based on all her discussions with RRS the granting agencies need to see that the PRAB endorses the plan. She suggested that in Section 4 when you get to the dog park, under each picture of the small lots, there can be a note that says the PRAB does not support a dog park in this location due to size, etc. She said what they are going to need is for there to be a board motion.

Member Champion made a motion that under each to clarify the PRAB's position; Member Vick seconded; approved by all.

Member Champion made a motion that under each individual parcel description of the .35- and .33-acre sites on page 73, that there is a summary paragraph in bold at the bottom that states the PRAB does not condone or support a dog park in these areas based on size and location; second by Member Vick; approved by all.

Regarding focus groups, Assistant Town Manager Ferguson brought to the PRAB's attention the problem that including names from focus group members could have in the future. She referenced page 40 of the plan and the appendix. She stated that McGill has not included full names in plans before and that it could cause hard feelings if someone's name is matched with a specific recommendation even though that person may not have made the comment during the focus group. Member Tucker said we either needed to have names or not have names but if we have them, they need to be correct. She said she didn't think we gave focus groups enough attention in the plan. She continued they need total group numbers and the total number of people that gave feedback. She said it wasn't given enough explanation based on the time commitment that was involved. She also thinks we need to pull the 10 common items in each group and list commonalities. Member Vick agrees that she thinks those can be pulled out to form another paragraph in that section. She said it dovetails back to the survey respondents and she thinks it is a nice triangulation between the feedback. She also thinks total numbers of participants in focus groups can be included instead of individual names. She said the focus groups did a good job of beefing up the survey. Member Vick stated that if focus groups were held in person that names would not have been taken because they are informal. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson stated that the thank you paragraph from the appendix should be added on page 40. Member Tucker thanked McGill for changing the terminology on the public meetings.

Chair McEntire thanked McGill for removing sections not applicable to Holden Beach like railroad tracks and revitalizing the business district from the plan since the initial draft. He continued that he asked about a definition and breakdown regarding target populations: full-time residents, second homeowners, renters, tourists, and day trippers. He would like a tool or simple table to use in planning. In looking at people on and off island and growth rates, he is thinking that off island will drive demands. The primary population here is senior citizens and they may want year-round programs. Ms. Bryan said she wouldn't know how to go about looking at day trippers. Chair McEntire said that we don't have a lot of data and that we must optimize what we have. He said he doesn't like jumping from bar chart to table and the plan should be consistent. Member Vick

[Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Regular 8/5/2021]

stated that population of day trippers may not be available in the data. She thinks a population group listing may be helpful if there are no definite number breakdowns. Table 5.1 needs to reflect the town's data. Member McEntire stated that on page 83, in reference to Table 5.1, the data is of no value and the table should be taken out. Member Vick said that people do use it to encourage increases but if Holden Beach doesn't report that information to the state, it could be removed. Ms. Bryan said she will ask Town Manager Hewett and Assistant Town Manager Ferguson before removing.

Member McEntire asked if it would be possible to pluck out low hanging fruit that could be completed. Member Vick said maybe we should call it a project list. Ms. Bryan said that sometimes people donate money, and they pick from the list. If the board prefers, they can call it projects instead of priorities. Vice Chair Tucker asked that they take it out of the section of pg. 84 and just reference and mention that it is in the appendix or make it bigger in the document. She thanked the consultants for expanding the programs list and she appreciates it being added. Member Gomez asked about Appendix A and said that she is not sure if it is due to printing, but it is hard to read. She asked who created the questions for the survey. Ms. Bryan responded that McGill worked with staff to make the list. Member Gomez asked if she could get the survey without the answers. Lastly, she asked what the timeline was. She feels this is rushed. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson responded that it was due to the Board of Commissioners last month, but we pushed an additional month to make corrections. Chair McEntire said he thinks we need to have a special meeting in two weeks. Vice Chair Tucker said she thinks that McGill needs a week to complete changes and turn the document and then the board has a full week for review before the special meeting. She said someone from McGill needs to check for spacing and grammar. Ms. Bryan responded that spacing is square justification and normal for this type of document with pictures, but they will check for spelling. Member Vick said she had to think what she really didn't like about the document in reviewing it. She said the meat of the document is 70 pages in. Maybe in the descriptions they could say there are four different types of parks and two would not be seen on Holden Beach due to size. List what might be seen and then say for a detailed description of each of these see the appendix. Look at what can be placed in the appendix. Member Vick said some of this is general stuff and some is good for Holden. It needs to be easier to get to the meat. Ms. Bryan asked about possibly making a more robust Executive Summary. Member Vick agreed that would be a good way to approach it and then people who wanted to read more could look further into the document. Member Vick said there is a lot of great information, and it took too long to find it. By the time you find it, you are tired or aggravated. Member McEntire asked for comments from the newer members. Member Champion said we appreciate everything McGill is doing. Chair McEntire said we need to get to a timeline. McGill said they will have it done by next Friday, August 13th. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson asked that everyone send their schedule through the 31st of August to try to coordinate a special meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments or questions.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn (3:19 p.m.) by Member Champion; second by Member Tucker; approved unanimously.