

KANAWHA COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
COMMISSION MEETING
October 16, 2024
MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Kanawha County Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Wednesday, October 16, 2024 at Coonskin Park in the Oak Room. This is the annual meeting of the Kanawha County Parks and Recreation Commission and President Tackett called the meeting to order at 2:00pm.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Allen Tackett, Steve Koepsel, Dave Pope, Janet Drumheller, Andrew Jordon, Tyler Ohrn, Pat Donahoe, John Robertson, Karen Haddad,

ABSENT: Chris Hamilton, Crescent Gallagher,

OTHERS

Jeff Hutchinson, Ex Director

Leslie Koepsel (phone)

Brad Maschari, Eddie Amburgey, Cliff Wheeler, Sarah Menefee

Greg Stram, Jeanne Chandler, Connie Roadcap

Dave Schumacker (phone)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Pope made a motion to approve the minutes from September and Commissioner Jordon seconded the motion. All were in favor.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Commissioner Koepsel reported that there are some changes with part time employment, and we had some people no longer working due to various reasons. Sarah informed him that we were on track with our personnel and numbers and staying along budget.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

Commissioner Haddad reported that she is in the process of compiling a list of capital improvements and trying to do it by location. When she gets it all set, she will email it to everyone to sort over your priorities of what you think needs to be done first. She said that we will have each department to represent and then categories like capital improvements, promotions, and those types of things and wants the board input on these items. She said that the staff has given her their input as to what they had on their list.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Commissioner Donahoe reported that the state auditors accepted our audit report. Sarah said they will be here on November 6th and Sarah has already updated things for the auditor through their portal. Sarah reported that attached is the September balance sheet and our checking account ended in \$351,528.98. The next page is the register of the bills for September to be paid in October, it shows a balance of \$134,292. Our accounts payable as of September 30th was \$283,812. The principal and the PNC cart lease were

\$22,565 year to date. July through September all facilities had a total income of \$848,440 with a gross profit of \$824,999. The total expenses were \$668,697 with a net income of \$156,305. The non-recurring insurance is from Geico and the money from Serve Pro from our insurance reimbursed. The non-recurring contribution is the donation from the City of Nitro for their vehicles and those two vehicles totaled \$23,693. That leaves us with a net income of \$210,671. For September alone all facilities had a total income of \$249,577 with a gross profit of \$244,780. The total expenses were \$184,438 with a net income of \$60,342. Add back the two-line items and we have \$89,711.

Commissioner Drumheller asked about the audit and asked if we receive the name on a list of the auditors' office to choose from and how many names are on the list. Sarah said there are about four pages, and we send a proposal to six different auditors and we try to choose locally. The WV State Auditor's Office chooses the firms on the approved list that entities can use on their audits. Sarah said that six proposals were sent out and three responded and the ones that responded are the ones that were scored and selected. Commissioner Drumheller stated that we are not receiving a statement of the check register that we had got in the past and asked why. Sarah said she was told not to attach that by President Tackett. Commissioner Drumheller asked why he told her to do that because some of the members of the committee are interested in that. President Tackett said that we will go back to doing that then. Commissioner Donahoe made a motion to approve the financial report and Commissioner Ohrn seconded the motion. All were in favor.

GOLF COMMITTEE

Commissioner Robertson reported that the Short Course year to date for rounds of golf was 3,166 and that's from July 1st to September 30th. Rounds of golf in September were 885 which was 42 rounds less than the previous September. At Big Bend, the rounds of golf in September were 2,027 which was 42 rounds of golf less than the previous year. This year to date at Big Bend 8,031 rounds of golf during the 1st quarter which is a 43% increase from last year. Commissioner Robertson said that we aeriated the greens at Big Bend and it is in great shape. The equipment that we ordered for Big Bend has arrived.

Commissioner Pope had a comment and read his notes from the minutes from last meeting saying that, Commissioner Pope asked about the benches at the range that were ordered in green metal and get very warm in the summer and they have not been moved form the back of the range from where the old benches have been taken out. Commissioner Pope said the purpose of the benches were to move them to the hitting area where people are hitting from so that people have somewhere to sit and place their drinks and sandwiches. They were at the back of the range, and no one has been sitting in them. Whoever sets up the range has to move at least four of the benches to the hitting area. Commissioner Jordon said we originally bought the benches to move them around the range. Commissioner Pope said since he has been retired, he has been out and is on the executive committee for the WVGA for the last 29 years and is out here quite a bit now. He said he has not seen the benches moved half the time he is out here, and he was out here Monday at noon, on a beautiful day, and the range was not set up. Plus, the last issue he had was the bathrooms not being unlocked. He said twice this week he went up

there and the bathrooms have been locked at noon. He commented that whoever sets up the range needs to step it up and whoever sets up the range in the mornings, needs help, needs instruction, and needs supervision. He said they are not getting it because they are not getting the job done.

President Tackett asked who's responsible for setting the range up. Jeff said that Kevin and his guys set the range up and the trash people unlock the bathroom. Commissioner Pope said he is up there and has not seen the benches moved. Jeff said the benches are on the back of the range for a reason today because we are about to close the tee.

Commissioner Pope asked why. Jeff said because its Bermuda grass and not growing. Commissioner Pope said the grass isn't dead yet. Jeff said if we let it go with the amount of people that use the range than we won't have grass come spring. Commissioner Pope disagreed and if you move the hitting area every day, the more play we will get and a little bit of brown is going to hurt. He said you know as well as I do that when the ground temperature gets above 80 degrees the Bermuda takes off. He said Bermuda will grow over a sidewalk and almost like a weed. If you use it until it turns brown than hit off the mats. He said to move the hitting area everyday two club lengths and don't leave it at one spot. When it turns brown then close it. Commissioner Pope said again that you can't kill Bermuda and once the ground temperature is above 80 degrees for three days that grass pops up.

Commissioner Jordon said they met last Wednesday, and he said he knows that the benches have not been moved. He came up on Sunday and three of the benches were moved to the hitting area and there was a person sitting on one and asked him about the benches. They guy said that they are a great addition to what we have and he doesn't like to walk across the pavement with his spikes. So, he carries his shoes out to the hitting area an put his golf shoes on while sitting on the benches. He bragged about the range and how much better it is from the competition and had no issue sitting on the benches when it was hot. Commissioner Pope said that the reason for rereading this and bringing this up is that golf committee has a passion for golf and looking at it from a golf standpoint and we care about golf. He said that reading these minutes and saw that, and that is what he wants to say again. Commissioner Pope said that we aren't getting things done that we asked to be done and its not that difficult and is called supervision.

Commissioner Jordon asked about the bunkers being painted. Jeff said that we are not painting them and they are finished just like they are done at Edgewood. Commissioner Jordon has been asking for five months to paint the bunkers in white like we did in the past that made them stand out. Jeff asked if he has seen the bunkers today?

Commissioner Jordon said he did see them today and they have sand all over them and are not white. Jeff said they have sand in them because the paint wears off to quickly and they are done exactly like they do at Edgewood. Commissioner said we could put small white rocks in the bunkers to give it more definition and still drive the picker through. Commissioner Jordon said when he built it, it had white rock in it. Jeff said that was crusher run and was white for a while. Commissioner Pope said that we painted it and Jeff said that we did but only lasted two months. Commissioner Jordon said that the white makes it look better and stand out and he wouldn't have asked about it five months

ago if he didn't want it done. Jeff said you don't think that it stands out with the sand in it and Commissioner Jordon said no, not like when it was white. He added that if it didn't matter, he wouldn't have asked five months ago and he was told for four or five months that we would paint them and that hadn't been done. The discussion to put sand in it is ok was not run through the golf committee before the discussion was made. Jeff said that he will have them take the sand and all the rock out and have them go back and paint it if that's what you want. Commissioner Jordon said before you do that let's have the golf committee talk about it first. Commissioner Robertson said he will have a golf committee meeting before the next Pre-Meeting and he will let us know the date. Commissioner Jordon added that he was going to go up and paint them himself.

Commissioner Jordon brought up again about ways to get to more play on the Short Course at Coonskin with promotions. He said the guy he talked to at the range has never played the Short Course and he hits balls three or four days a week. He said he loves to play the Short Course but has never thought about it because we don't promote it. One of the things we could do is give them a discount at the course if they purchase a bucket of balls. Or vice versa and certain things like that. He said that makes it more attractive to come and play golf at Coonskin. You don't have to discount it a lot but give them a few dollars off. Commissioner Pope agrees and it may be too late to think about this winter because of the weather but it would be a good challenge for the golf committee and Jeff to come up with a plan and have it in place by March 2025.

Commissioner Haddad added that when she was working her ideas that long range promotion was a separate category on her list. She said that we need promotion for a lot of things. She was hoping that long range planning can work with the golf committee to set up some kind of promotions. She would like to have an event at least once a month related to something that is going on. For example, in February have a Valentines or Sweetheart event. She said we need to be creative and promote the park and golf. She said that her brother plays the Short Course and was out the other day and was a nice day. He and another person were the only ones on the course. So, she agrees that we desperately need some promotion. Plus, promotion for rental of the room, shelters, and the park in general. She said that is her top priority for long range because the more the park is being used the more the word gets out and then more likely we can get funding from new resources. Commissioner Jordon agrees that we need to do more promoting and Commissioner Pope said there are lots of ideas that we can use for promotions. Commissioner Haddad said that it is marketing and that is what we need for parks and rec and we need it for all locations. Whether it be on social media, radio, tv, or whatever outlet we can use. Jeff said for those who haven't been on the board, for whatever your tenure is, we have done tv promotions, deals with the ball park, and radio. He said that we've done it all and done trading and paid for promotions.

Commissioner Haddad asked if we have done it on a consistent basis and that is the key with her background in auto sales and running newspaper ads every weekend. Whatever we do has to be on a consistent matter and consistent location so when they get to a point where they want to use the product they know where to go to find information. Commissioner Drumheller said that St. Albans promotes so much stuff through social

media and they don't only do it once, but they do it every day. Commissioner Drumheller said that she had a name of a person that she submitted to us and he not only does social media but drone activities and would do excellent work for us. He could really promote what we do and give ideas for great activities but never heard back about using him. She added that you have to do it consistently. Commissioner Robertson said when you're here all the time you don't see the forest through the trees and its helpful to have another way of looking at things. He said that UC requires public service every semester and he used people from the universities at the Civic Center. Commissioner Drumheller said they do that as well with their events. Commissioner Haddad said that we could get a college student to help us with our social media or someone who is much more contemporary than what we are using. To start out we need to pick out what ever media we are going to use and use that consistently. She said you can't sporadically but something up then three months later put something else up because you already lost your audience. Commissioner Drumheller said you also have to change the website constantly. Commissioner Haddad asked if we had a monthly calendar telling us of everything going on our website. Commissioner Ohrn said you have to consistently post on social media to get it to pop up in peoples feed and if you don't post very often then its not going to show up. Commissioner Robertson said to keep that data so that you have some since of what works and what doesn't work and it puts you in a position of how many people are coming to the park. Then when you compare them and verify the numbers it helps you in the long run when you need to seek sponsors and funding.

PUBLIC SAFTEY

Chief Amburgey reported that they are going to provide us with a cruiser that we can take parts off so we take some parts off it to fix our two nicer vehicles. The Chief reported that he put in for the public safety grant and he put in for some new radios, graphics for his two new vehicles from The City of Nitro, and uniforms for his officers. Lastly, he met with the Coonskin Trail Coalition and Kanawha Valley Trail Collation and it was a good meeting and educational for everybody. They are starting to work on the Alice Knight Trail and come up with proper signage and make it more visible. The new Coonskin Trail Coalition will be a good thing and they already provide a few updates on the trails and put together a map where you can scan it in and report any issues.

DIRECTORS REPORT

Jeff reported that we aerified Big Bend last week and all the greens look good except on the front end that we had problems with during the summer and come spring it should come back. Hole #3 the grass filled in pretty good between the tee and water hazard. We can start using that and we got two new pieces of equipment for Big Bend. We got a rotary mower and greens mower and it likes like its brand new. There has been about \$1.2 million spent on Big Bend alone with the work on the riverbank, the equipment, and the repaving everything and cart paths.

At the end of the day, we have a lot going on all over the county. The guys are working furiously on the Holiday Lights and the tree lighting will be December 3rd at 4:30 and Santa will be here 5:00-8:00 and the train will run from 4:30-9:00. There will be vendors at the clubhouse from 5:00-7:00. Commissioner Ohrn commented that Chief was nice

enough to take us down to maintenance to look at the light displays after the finance meeting. He said the man hours and time spent trying to piece all that together to get in working in incredible to him and after this holiday season that we take a very hard look of ways to reimagine the holiday lights. The amount of resources it takes is shocking and it is a never ending process.

Jeff updated the board on the insurance and has been in communication and they are ready to wrap all the miscellaneous claims and stuff up and get us our checks. We had quite a few claims so when it comes to renewal we are going to pay. Jeff said that he, Cliff, and Megan had a meeting and picked out some equipment from Mircle and some add-ons. It's in their graphic department and their designers now and we should have it back by this time next week. It will go on the agenda for approval at the Commissions November 12th meeting. We will get two large playgrounds. One at Coonskin and one at Meadowood. Then get smaller structures at East Bank that is similar in size that they have now.

President Tackett said while we are talking about East Bank, they are shutting the middle school down and that is where are pool and stuff is located. He said that the mayor called him and he also talked to the school board about the possibility of the city taking the gymnasium and baseball field. The mayor wants to try tie it into the pool and become part of the park and the park board would run that facility. He doesn't know what that would end up costing but will bring it up with the county commission. When they shut that school down there will be nothing to do on the eastern end of the county and the mayor wants to keep the gym open and the baseball field but doesn't know if the town can afford to do it. Commissioner Robertson said you have to consider insurance, liability, and labor and need to look at the physical facilities and what long term requirements it will take to keep it up.

LEGAL REPORT

PUBLIC COMMENT

Written notes available upon request.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Pope made a motion to adjourn.

President Tackett called the meeting adjourned 2:55pm.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, November 20, 2024 at 2:00p.m.

Respectfully Submitted: Jeffrey K. Hutchinson, Director