



Garner Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources

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TOWN OF GARNER
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Date: October 21, 2024

- I. Date and Time: Pursuant to the Bylaws governing the Garner Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Committee, a meeting of the Advisory Committee was held on October 21, 2024 at the Garner Recreation Center.
- II. Call to Order and Roll Call
Chair Called the Meeting to Order at 6:07 pm. Committee Members present were Matt Davis (*vice chair*), Dr. LaPonda Edmondson, Tim Montgomery, Hope Webber, and Mon Peng Yueh. Staff in attendance were Maria Munoz-Blanco and Zach Pritchard. Members of the Public present were Mike Caudill and Sarah Morales, representatives of Garner Sports League (GSL).
- III. Approval of Agenda
Motion to Approve: Tim Montgomery
Second: Mon Peng Yueh
Motion Passed Unanimously
- IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes (September 16, 2024)
Motion to Approve: Dr. LaPonda Edmondson
Second: Tim Montgomery
Motion Passed Unanimously
- V. Petitions and Comments from the Public
Mr. Mike Caudill, representative of Garner Sports League (GSL) talked about the petition that was submitted by GSL requesting the naming of South Garner Park Field # 1 after the late Mark Massey. Mr. Caudill shared background information on Mr. Massey, who was a fixture in the community, well-known for his involvement in youth sports with many organizations, including GSL and Civitan Pop Warner, as well as with the Garner High School Trojans. Mr. Caudill noted that shortly after Mr. Massey had passed away, he had been honored during the season opening for GSL and Council Member Phil Matthews had encouraged them to do more to honor Mr. Massey. GSL researched the options and submitted the petition for renaming South Garner Park Field # 1 and supporting documentation.

Matt Davis noted that he had served on the Trojan booster board with Mr. Massey, noting the impact that Mr. Massey had on the youth in the community.

The Committee consensus was to move up the agenda item related to the petition and asked staff to proceed with the presentation.

Maria Munoz-Blanco presented information regarding the Town's Naming Policy, describing the origins of the policy and the objectives and criteria it sets forth. The presentation also provided alternatives should the Committee wish to discuss further options. Printed copy of the presentation was shared with the Committee, as well as the documentation provided by GSL to support the petition.

After the presentation concluded, the Committee discussed the petition.

Tim Montgomery remarked that he had known Mr. Massey for 30, 35 years; known him from GBI, GAYSL, other sports. He said that Mr. Massey believed in Garner, he epitomized that Trojan spirit. He expressed appreciation to the GSL representatives for bringing this forward and said that he agreed that the something should be done to signify his involvement in the community.

Dr. LaPonda Edmondson asked for additional information on the Town's sponsorship policy. Maria Munoz-Blanco provided information about benches as well as program sponsorships received from corporate sponsors.

Based on policy objectives, Mr. Montgomery outlined how Mr. Massey's contributions met the Naming Policy criteria. He also noted that separate from the discussion of how Mr. Massey met the criteria, the Committee should think about the options of the policy and setting a precedent. He noted that Mr. Massey's years of service meet the policy and that he was not against approving the petition, just raising it in terms of the policy and process. He remarked that as someone who has been involved in parks and youth sports, Mr. Massey is deserving, but there are other people in the community who are deserving, as well as former Parks staff like Tom Maynard and Ross Whitfield, among others. He said that his father had served on this committee, a lot of people in this community have been giving to Parks & Rec. He mentioned Mr. Singleton, who has served in the committee as well as in Council and has been a champion for parks.

Mon Peng Yueh asked if instead of naming an entire field, are there other opportunities for commemoration of individuals, other components of the park.

Dr. LaPonda Edmondson noted that these are all fair comments, and that the Committee wants to be clear about the criteria that is used and that sets the precedent. She talked about a process that the Committee can entertain in the future, be more proactive about things that we want to name, or open it up for people who may have interests. So many other names that we may not hear about but that are deserving of recognition, but we haven't opened that up. Open that up to the public, who those individuals that can also be honored.

Mr. Montgomery asked the petitioners about why Field #1. Mr. Caudill said that's where they held GSL's opening ceremony where they honored Mr. Massey. Mr. Caudill added that Mr. Massey spent many years at South Garner Park as well as Thompson Road Park. Mr. Caudill noted that he likes the idea of a recognition wall as well. He cited examples of NCSU's multiple naming options. He said that there are many people who have stood out like Mr. Massey in service to Garner youth sports.

He added that Mr. Massey was in the band in high school, not a football player, but he believe in growing youth through sports. He added that they both joked about him being unofficial mayor of Garner. He said that this person eclipses other names on the wall, do you do something more for those folks. He added that an entire park could be named after him, but they didn't want to put that out there; doesn't want to call it overkill, but when people come to play at SGP, they know where it is. Putting Mr. Massey's name on a field feels appropriate because he was all about the sport.

Hope Webber said that she was supportive of having the recognition in honor of Mr. Massey. She noted that if this petition is the first one received, here is enough criteria met from the community. She added that there can be more people on a wall, but some need a step up. This naming would honor Mr. Massey in a fair fashion. This should be something we could consider.

Mon Peng Yueh added that the petition met criteria for nominating.

Matt Davis spoke about people in the past who have made impact, as well as people in the future... whoever sits at these tables there's an outline of what needs to be done to recognize individuals. He added that the committee shouldn't tie their hands to what happens in the future to recognize one person, while acknowledging that you open up a bit of a door.

Motion to approve the recommendation to name South Garner Park Field # 1: Hope Webber
Second: Mon Peng Yueh

Tim Montgomery spoke about a friendly amendment, to add that based on the objectives of the policy to recognize outstanding accomplishment, the length of service to all the organizations, and add why this committee approves and is forwarding its recommendation to Town Council. He suggested adding the reasons why the Committee is approving the naming option, give the details, to help Council make their decision.

Matt Davis asked Tim Montgomery to draft the information and email to staff.

Tim Montgomery agreed. He also said that it would be appropriate to pass along to Council that we are interested in other opportunities to recognize people who have made a contribution, as well as establishing criteria for that.

With no further discussion, Committee members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

The Committee asked to be made aware when this will be presented to Town Council.

VI. Committee Members Concerns/Comments

None discussed.

VII. Senior Citizens Advisory Committee Update

Report was presented by Liaison Jo Cicci. The replacement of the sewer line on Garner Road is complete, the next step is to get NCDOT to resurface the road. Councilwoman Behringer attended a presentation of the Well Check Program from the Sheriff's Office and suggested having a presentation at the Garner Senior Center. The Senior Advisory Committee discussed moving the picnic to May, which is Older Americans Month, and combine with an open house. The tentative day is May 14. Council woman Behringer reminded the Senior Advisory Committee that seniors can ask for discounts at restaurants and the Committee discussed having a guide of places where there are discounts for seniors.

VIII. Reports/Discussion Items

a. Director's Report/Department Updates

Maria Munoz-Blanco informed the Committee about the departure of Megan Young, who had been with the Town for about seven years, and who left to take on a new position at Wake County. She then introduced Zach Pritchard, new Superintendent of Recreation & Athletics. Zach Pritchard provided Committee members with an overview of his professional background.

Maria Munoz-Blanco presented to the Committee the recommended update to the PRCR Revenue Policy. She explained that unlike the updates presented in June and September for the donations and sponsorship policies, this change is more of a housekeeping update, to align the policy with the current practice and with the Town's Fee Schedule. A marked up copy of the proposed changes was provided to the Committee in their agenda packet.

Motion to approve recommended changes made by Hope Webber, second by Tim Montgomery. Motion approved unanimously.

b. Council Updates

None discussed.

c. Announcements

Matt Davis Ring of Fire competition, funding to support community organizations, this Saturday in the Breezeway subdivision, from 12-6 pm. Judging around 2 pm. This event raised about \$10,000 last year, about 300 people attended. The event started eight years ago as a fundraiser for the Y. There will also be live music, attendees can park at Thompson Road Park.

Tim Montgomery noted that Megan Young has done a great job, wish her well with Wake County, and commended her for her service to the community.

IX. Other Business

- a. PRCR Officer Elections for the term through June 30, 2025
Nominees: Matt Davis for Chair, Dr. LaPonda Edmondson for Vice Chair
Motion to Approve Nominations: Tim Montgomery
Second: Hope Webber
Motion Passed Unanimously

X. Adjourn -

Motion to adjourn by Tim Montgomery, Second by Hope Webber.
Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm