



**Town of Garner  
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Committee**

**MEETING MINUTES  
February 16, 2026**

I. Date and Time: Pursuant to the Bylaws governing the Garner Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Committee (PRCRAC), a meeting of the Committee was held on Monday, February 16, 2026, at the Garner Recreation Center. PRCRAC members in attendance were Chair Matt Davis, Vice Chair Dr. LaPonda Edmondson, Cameron Hayes, Amanda McCloskey, Tim Montgomery, Pauletta Thompson, Mark Wood, Senior Citizens Committee Liaison Ernestine Durham, and Council Liaison Kelvin Stallings. Town staff present were Assistant Town Manager Matt Poole, PRCR Director Maria Munoz-Blanco, and PRCR Parks & Greenways Manager Matt Beard.

II. Call to Order

Chair Davis called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm, pending quorum, asking if there were any questions on the meeting or the agenda. Ms. McCloskey asked to add to the agenda a discussion of art on the pedestrian bridges at parks.

At 6:05 pm, the Committee met quorum and Chair Davis moved forward with the agenda.

III. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve: Mr. Montgomery  
Second: Mr. Wood  
Motion carried unanimously

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes (December 19, 2025)

Motion to approve: Mr. Montgomery  
Second: Ms. McCloskey  
Motion carried unanimously

V. Petitions and Comments from the Public

None reported.

VI. Committee Members Concerns/Comments

Ms. McCloskey brought up the pedestrian bridges at parks. She recommended partnering with the Arts Committee to beautify the bridges. She shared an idea to use steel cords beaded with glass beads, or beads made of other durable materials, to add to the exterior of

the bridges, on the outside, almost like a charm bracelet. She added this would be something more durable than paint or stain, have more longevity. She explained that when she attended the Engage Expo in Raleigh the activity they had included buckets of beads in multiple colors, that the participants used to create strands to represent what they thought created community, so everyone had a different strand. Using that concept could create beaded décor along the bridge. This would be a good discussion to have with the Arts Committee.

Mr. Montgomery mentioned the utility boxes that have been done around Town by the Arts Committee.

Mr. Poole noted that the Arts Committee will meet on March 4, this would be a good opportunity to bring this to the Committee's attention. Mr. Poole updated the PRCRAC on the projects that the Arts Committee is involved in, including the Art Park. Ms. McCloskey noted that she has a slide deck with examples and will share that information with the Art Committee.

Mr. Davis suggested having a member of the PRCRAC to serve as liaison to the Art Committee. Mr. Stallings asked whether this was something to formalize as the Art Committee is formed. There was discussion about having a PRCRAC member as a liaison, similar to the Senior Advisory Committee liaison.

Mr. Montgomery brought up the basketball season that just finished up. He wanted to complement the staff for the schedule adjustment made due to the winter weather, and mentioned Kevin McClaine and his work. He noted that staff did the best they could with the weather cancellations by adding a consolation bracket, he attended the championship night and the night was wonderful, place was packed. He noted it was nice to see the basketball league thriving. He added that he heard some negative comments about the change of schedule, adding that staff did the best they could with the circumstances and recommended having a good plan as we go into next year. He said there were complaints from parents about communication of the changes.

Mr. Wood noted that his son played in the league and from his perspective, they did well with communication with parents. Mr. Wood said that the coaches communicated well, the Town did a good job communicating as well.

Dr. Thompson noted that her husband coaches and her child plays in the league, and compared to other towns, the Town sets the bar. She added hats off to the staff. She also shared that in that same vein as the Town added the third season, her daughter plays volleyball and there is concern about burnout from the coaches, some will say that they may not play in the summer. She wanted to share that information and ask if there is a recruiting mechanism for coaches. Ms. Munoz-Blanco shared that staff work on the recruitment of coaches, offering incentives such as discounted or free registration for a coach's child.

## VII. Senior Citizens Advisory Committee Update

Ms. Durham presented the report from the Senior Advisory Committee Meetings. The SAC met in November 2025 and thanked former Council member Kathy Behringer for her years as liaison. Senior Center Program Manager Torrey Blackmar shared that the NC Division of Aging is updating the certification process, they are discontinuing the old process and coming up with a new process for certification. Ms. Durham also reported on the January meeting of the Senior Advisory Committee. She shared that Mr. Singleton is the new Council liaison and in his report to the SAC included information about the escalating costs for the Jones Sausage Road improvements; the new development along E. Garner Road with 900+ units and transportation issues related to that development; and the sidewalk improvements being made by the Town. Ms. Durham also reported that Ms. Blackmar had informed the Committee that the Senior Center renovations won't start until Fall or Winter and the work will be done in phases to avoid having to relocate. Senior Center staff have contacted the Lions Club as an alternate location in case the building needs to close for renovations. Overall attendance was lower in December, but their annual Holiday event was well attended. The Committee is planning more events for 2026 and one of the main ones is to celebrate Older Americans Month in May. They will be preparing gift baskets and Ms. Durham asked if anyone has contacts with businesses to share. Dr. Edmondson asked if there was anything specific needed. Mr. Davis asked if it was a raffle. Ms. Durham said that all gifts are welcome to include in the baskets.

#### VIII. Reports/Discussion Items

##### a. Director's Report/Department Updates

Ms. Munoz-Blanco noted that a written report was sent earlier and asked that Committee members let her know if there are any questions. She presented an update of the White Deer Park splash pad and options for group policies, asking for the Committee's feedback. Ms. McCloskey noted that it feels restrictive to have a reservation process for groups, kids may be disappointed. Mr. Davis asked to hold it to a future meeting to have a discussion.

Mr. Beard presented five zoning cases:

SB-25-005 Green Valley Subdivision: 18 single family lots, access from Ackerman and from Hazy Hills, subdivision separated by a creek. Staff recommendation is fee-in-lieu, based on the size of the site and the proximity to Meadowbrook.

Mr. Montgomery asked for clarification of the fee in lieu.

Motion to adopt staff recommendation of fee-in-lieu by Mr. Montgomery

Second by Dr. Thompson

Motion carried unanimously.

CZ-MP-25-004 Starks Property: 60 single family lots, adjacent to Meadowbrook Park. Across the street is another development called Homestead at Bryan Farm, to the south is South Garner High School. The property to the north is where Meadowbrook's main access will be developed. The developer proposal is to dedicate land to the Town; per

UDO, they would be required to dedicate 2.12 acres, they are proposing 2.13 acres dedication. The area they are proposing to dedicate is the eastern edge along Meadowbrook property. If the land dedication were accepted by the Town, it would shift the property line to the edge of the Neuse River buffer. The developer is proposing to use the area as tree preservation, a requirement of the UDO, including the area to be dedicated as parkland. Committee Member Mon Peng Yueh could not attend the meeting due to a family emergency, but she sent an email asking about the tree preservation and land dedication area. Mr. Montgomery noted that this may be a legal complication, but it would be nice to add some parkland near the existing park. Mr. Davis asked what the use of the dedicated land would be. Mr. Beard explained how the additional land would expand the buffer. Mr. Davis noted that it adds flexibility to the Town. There was a question about the pedestrian path shown on the site plan. Mr. Beard noted that this is a developer proposal, but that PRCR would prefer to have a controlled entrance to the park. Ms. McCloskey asked for clarification on the tree preservation requirement. Dr. Edmondson asked about the removal of trees within the tree preservation area. Mr. Beard provided insight into the tree preservation process and the UDO requirements for land dedication.

Motion to adopt staff recommendation for land dedication by Mr. Montgomery.  
Second my Dr. Thompson  
Motion carried unanimously.

SUP-SP-23-03 Timber Drive Mixed Use - Part of a larger mixed-use proposal, combines residential and commercial. This project includes 276 residential units. Meadowbrook and Yeagan are nearby. Staff recommends collection of fee-in-lieu given proximity to the other parks.

Ms. McCloskey asked about land dedication considering the potential impact of the residents of 276 apartments in Town parks. Dr. Thompson asked about the potential use of the fee-in-lieu to improve existing parks. Mr. Beard noted that fee-in-lieu funds are for park development, which includes improvements, and land acquisition. Ms. McCloskey noted that it would be good to know more information about the recreation options in the development. Mr. Montgomery noted that for all apartment projects something that Council asks for is recreational amenities, such as pocket parks or open play space.

Motion to adopt staff recommendation of fee-in-lieu by Dr. Edmondson.  
Second by Mr. Montgomery.  
Friendly amendment to add to the recommendation that the developer provide recreational amenities to the residents.  
Motion carried unanimously.

CZ-MP-25-003 - Verdant Subdivision: Mr. Beard noted that this project may be changing so he asked to remove from the PRCRAC consideration at this time.

CA-MP-25-001 - Weston Road Subdivision: 38 single family attached project (townhomes). Staff recommendation is fee-in-lieu.

Motion to adopt staff recommendation of fee-in-lieu by Mr. Montgomery

Second: Dr. Thompson

IX. Council Updates

Council Member Stallings noted that Council meets February 17 and that they will have the Council retreat on February 19-20. He noted that going into budget season, with many things on the horizon, and asked Committee Members to reach out to him if they have questions.

X. Announcements

None Reported

XI. Other Business

Mr. Montgomery brought up the budget recommendation discussed at the December 2025 Committee meeting. He asked about how Yeargan Park will be used and if it will be rented for tournaments. He wanted clarification on how the facility will be used and to better understand the role of the four positions that have been added.

Ms. Munoz-Blanco explained that one position has been filled, and the four positions will be filled closer to the opening date of the park. Their role will be part of managing the venue for tournaments and other uses. She explained that tournaments are usually Thursday-Sunday, allowing other weekdays to be used for other activities. Mr. Poole gave the example of GPAC and the Rocky Mount Sports Complex, where town staff manage the events and handle logistics of the venues.

XII. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn: Dr. Thompson

Second: Mr. Hayes

Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Next PRCR Committee Meeting: March 16, 2026 at the Garner Performing Arts Center