

**TOWN OF WEDDINGTON  
SPECIAL PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING  
MONDAY, JUNE 6, 2011 – 7:00 P.M.  
MINUTES**

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board of the Town of Weddington, North Carolina, met in a Special Session in the Town Hall Council Chambers, 1924 Weddington Road, Weddington, NC 28104 on Monday, June 6, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. with Chairman Stephanie Belcher presiding.

Present: Chairman Stephanie Belcher, Sharon Sanders, Robert Gilmartin, Mike Lee, Barbara Harrison and Tonya Goodson

Absent: Vice-Chairman Scott Buzzard and Jeff Perryman

Visitors: Walker Davidson, Brook Dunwoody, Tracey Clinton, Sue Fitch, Mayor Nancy Anderson and Lerin Tusing

**Item No. 1. Open the Meeting.** Chairman Stephanie Belcher called the June 6, 2011 Special Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Item No. 2. Determination of Quorum.** There was a quorum.

**Item No. 3. Presentation by Tracey Clinton – WCWAA.** Ms. Tracey Clinton discussed the following information regarding WCWAA:

**Governance**

- We are a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization.
- We are run by a board of 12 volunteers (no pay!) These volunteers are made up of President, Vice President, Secretary, and then the 9 sport commissioners for the sports listed below.
- We have key positions in our organization filled by paid contractors. These include treasurer, administrator, and facilities maintenance director.
- We operate via a set of bylaws, a governance policy and mandate that our board complete a conflict of interest form annually.

**Membership**

- 2642 Families participated in our association in the last year. There were almost 4000 different children served by our programs.
- Based on UC Athletic Council data, WCWAA serves 36% of all families who participate in a UC based recreational program.

**Facility**

- We lease 19 acres of the park from the Weddington Optimist Club (top section closest to Southbrook) to operate our programs.
- In 2001, WCWAA purchased 33 acres (bottom section) to expand the park and provide more field space for our growing programs.
- WCWAA leases other field space and gym space as necessary to operate our programs. Much of this is leased from UC Public Schools and local churches in the community.
- In 2008 (approximate date), we analyzed the cost / benefit of a turf field and with the help of Weddington Optimist Club who co-signed the loan, were able to build a turf field for use by our football, lacrosse and soccer programs. This field has a 10-year payback period and gives us an

almost maintenance free field to use without having to worry about wear & tear and recovery time.

### **Programs**

- WCWAA provides year-round youth-based athletic programs. Our programs include Baseball (Little League & Babe Ruth), Soccer, Softball, Cheerleading, Football, Lacrosse, Special Needs Sports (currently baseball, bowling, basketball), and Basketball.
- Over 6,900 program registrations in the last year.

<b>Season</b>	<b>Total Participants</b>	<b># Programs</b>
Summer	1000	9
Spring	2640	7
Winter	770	4
Fall	2500	6

### **Government Assistance**

- We have received donations from the town of Weddington in the past
- We are eligible for Union County matching grants made available to the UC based athletic associations. Based on our number of families, we are typically eligible for approximately \$50,000.

### **Community Partners**

- Partner with schools to provide field usage and supply them a revenue source by renting their facilities for our programs (Basketball, Cheer)
- Partner with Southbrook Church to share facilities (Parking, meeting space, field space, etc.)
- We provide jobs in the community – we contract professional services like accounting, CPA services, administrative help, facilities management, concession services, umpires / referees, travel program /clinic leadership and coaches, and many others
- We use local businesses for physical maintenance of our property
- We supply a concentrated population of families that need goods & services that our local businesses provide (Weddington & Wesley Chapel shopping centers)

### **Financials**

- \$1.7 Million budget (See breakdown below)
- We contract a bookkeeper / accountant to manage our finances
- We create and approve an annual budget for each sport and the overall association
- We have a CPA compile our financials annually and complete our 990 (Tax return for non-profit)
- We went through a full-audit with a CPA in 2009

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Mr. Mike Lee questioned why WCWAA does not use Weddington High School for basketball.

Ms. Clinton did not know the answer but did say that WCWAA continually challenges the Sport Commissioners to make the right decisions for the organization with regards to finances. She advised that most of the basketball takes place at Marvin Ridge because they give a good break on rental fees versus what other schools provide.

Ms. Sharon Sanders said that there is no space available at Weddington with volleyball and football players having indoor practices.

Ms. Clinton said that WCWAA's philosophy is to make decisions based on what is right for the program and membership.

Mr. Robert Gilmartin asked about the 14% that goes to coaches for stipends.

Ms. Clinton responded that it is for their soccer challenge and classic programs where coaches are brought in who have experience in order to compete with the other Charlotte areas.

Ms. Barbara Harrison asked what percentage of kids that participate are from Weddington, Wesley Chapel and the surrounding area.

Ms. Clinton answered that she did not know the answer to that. She mentioned that she had tried to figure that out at one time and there was not a high percentage from any given municipality.

Ms. Clinton stated, "WCWAA has been working for years trying to resolve the floodplain issue. It is hindering the ability to maintain the lower fields. WCWAA has wanted to do safety improvements like putting in nets on the little league fields to prevent foul balls from coming into the fans. WCWAA gets stopped when neighbors call to complain. The original engineers for the park were fired. WCWAA brought in US Infrastructure to help with the flood study. The flood study has been redone and a remediation plan has been put together that spends all available funding. Guidelines have been followed which were given by a FEMA consultant/attorney. The attorney recently reviewed the plan and the next step is to take the new flood study and remediation plan forward. It will be submitted to Union County and Weddington. The proposed time line would be that the public hearing occur before the end of the summer. The remediation plan will cost approximately \$200,000 with all fields to remain intact."

Mr. Brook Dunwoody, who lives in the Wedgewood Subdivision, spoke about the floodplain issue. He said the natural floodplain was taken away when the fields were added and his house had been here for 10 years, long before the park was started.

**Item No. 4. Consideration of Approval of February 28, 2011 Regular Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting Minutes.** Mr. Gilmartin moved to approve the February 28, 2011 Regular Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting minutes. Ms. Harrison seconded the motion, with votes recorded as follows:

AYES:	Sanders, Gilmartin, Lee and Harrison
NAYS:	None

**Item No. 5. Update and Discussion on Scheduling of Meet and Greet with Local Schools, Churches and Other Organizations.** The Board received the following information:

- Talking Points for Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meet and Greet Initiative developed by Chairman Stephanie Belcher
- Notes from Meeting with Weddington High School Principal William Breedlove
- Weddington Organization List and Status of Upcoming Meetings that have been scheduled

Ms. Belcher reported that she has met with Weddington High School, Weddington Middle School, Chesterbrook Academy, Weddington Swim and Racquet and Steve McLeod who owns Weddington Corners and that the meetings have been very successful.

Suggestions that have come from the meetings:

1. The Town's newsletter needs to go to the administration of the schools and to the local businesses.
2. There needs to be a Community Board (electronic) announcing events.
3. Mr. McLeod would like to partner with the Town to develop a Farmer's Market concept and is also willing to help with the Elementary and Middle School BFF Town baskets.
4. Chesterbrook Academy wants to schedule a field trip to Town Hall.

Chairman Belcher asked that staff continue to schedule meetings with churches and other organizations.

**Item No. 6. Research on Scholarship Fund.** The Board received the following memo from Town Administrator/Clerk Amy McCollum:

I have been asked on numerous occasions to research whether the Town of Weddington could give money to the local schools. I have received the following information from a Professor at the School of Government:

*In NC, the statutes have to give specific authority for what activities a city, county, or public authority may engage in – ABSENT that specific authority, it can't be done. So, in the General Statutes, Chapter 160A (which traverses many different articles), the specific authority for activities of a municipality are laid out. Spending for education is NOT included, therefore not considered a public purpose for a municipality.*

I posted the question on the Clerks List Serve that goes to other Clerks within North Carolina. I received a response from the Town of Highlands who actually had a Senate Bill passed to allow them to set up a scholarship fund from which they give out approximately \$35,000 to graduating seniors and continuing education students each year. She is sending me the information on how they did this and a copy of their Senate Bill. I spoke again with the School of Government Professor to share this information with her and she said that we would be able to give to the local schools also if we received Special Legislation from the General Assembly as did the Town of Highlands.

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Chairman Belcher advised that this idea came out of the Meet and Greet with the High School to create some type of Town scholarship program. She stated, "There is one town that manages a fund and administers it. All funding is through donations."

Ms. Sanders said that the way to work with the schools is to directly work with each of the clubs and to have them be at the events. She advised that last year the cheerleaders sold snow cones at Weddstock and made \$500 which was a huge fundraiser for them.

**Item No. 7. Final Report on Recent Parks and Recreation Events to Date (Easter Egg Hunt and Spring Litter Sweep).** Chairman Belcher advised that the Litter Sweep Event was not successful. The Optimist Club and Wesley Chapel did a litter sweep the same day and it was also the same day as the prom which affected the high school age attendance. Ms. Clinton suggested the Town partner with the Optimist Club and Wesley Chapel in the future.

Chairman Belcher reported that the Easter Egg Hunt was a huge success from an attendance perspective.

**Item No. 8. Discussion of Plans for 2011 Weddington Festival.** Ms. Sanders reviewed the following outline with the Board:

- 5K race, 1 mile fun run, 50 yard stiletto dash - Sponsored by Weddington High School Cross Country team and other local clubs.
- Cowboy Breakfast – Pancake breakfast after 5k and races sponsored by local youth groups with help of Providence Fire Department.
- Main Stage from Noon -11 pm - Various local bands, appearances by middle & high school bands, cheerleaders, dance squads. Stage sponsor TBD.
- Kids Area – 11 am – 8 pm – Stage with entertainment, games, crafts, old time games like ring toss, inflatables, etc. Sponsored by Home Depot, 107.9 Radio and local churches.
- Food Wagon Train – variety of local vendors selling turkey legs, ice cream, hamburgers, hot dogs, caramel corn, homemade fries – BBQ. Percentage of sales to Kids First.
- Beer/Wine - Local restaurant to run area. Percentage of sales to Kids First.
- Water/soda – By charity volunteers.
- Parking – show pros & local youth group to run. Sponsorship TBD.
- Ticket Sales & Collection – Lisa Stewart - Former organizer & head of Scottish Society & Scottish games. She has organized and implemented many years of events. Lisa has also worked with group for over 10 years at Elementary and Middle School events running pre-sale ticket sales, night of ticket sales, money collection and financial statements and accountability for all of our events.
- Teen Area – DJ, local dancers, cheerleaders, sponsorship by local dance group and local church.
- Artists/Vendors – A huge variety of local talent, painters, iron art, hobbyists, dancers, weavers. Vendors pay small fee for space.
- Fishing in the Pond – Using pond to allow children to catch a fish! This will be sponsored and run by local fishing store in Mineral Springs.
- Petting Zoo/Milk Barn/Pony Rides – Sponsored by The Hunter Farm.
- Wagon Rides – Free throughout the day, they act as a shuttle to the different areas of fun!
- Volleyball Games – Throughout the day.
- Auto Show – Cars from 1960's and 1970's at show - Sponsored by Local Auto Club.
- Paintball Exposition – Secure safe area set up. Kids will get to experience the excitement of paintball! Sponsored by Weddington High School Paintball Club under supervision of Officer Louie, School Resource Officer.

Ms. Sanders said they still need to put together a Sponsorship Letter. She asked for clarification on how this event will operate. She stated, “There are 14 women from Weddington Middle School that have volunteered to assist in putting the festival on.”

Ms. Sue Fitch asked for a clear understanding of who the group was accountable to. She stated, “Are we able to just run the event and do a report? We understand the amount that has been given. There is going to be more of a spotlight in making sure everyone is being responsible. It needs to be balanced so that the committee is able to do what the creative event requires. Everything has multiple moving parts. Everyone takes their own piece to make sure it comes together as a collective whole. Is there an accountability with the actual moving parts of the event or is it really more from a financial perspective? Where do the roles and responsibilities lie?”

Chairman Belcher - The way it was presented to Council was that the group is looking to the Town to pay for a significant portion of the key funding with the understanding that sponsorship dollars would be added. The event would be run by this independent group that would do all the planning and details. There was no expectation preset that every decision would have to be funneled back through the Town Council. The expectation was there would be some transparency of how the money is spent and full debrief of financials would be done at the end. Council agreed that some money would come back if possible on the sponsorships and they wanted the name to be modified.

Mr. Gilmartin - The festival was a success last year. The Town needs a clear understanding of what kind of funding mechanism is in place. Based upon your budget, the Council agreed to \$20,000 and retained earnings could be put back into our general fund netting out the \$20,000 difference. I assumed Sharon and her 14 would run it as they saw fit. I am not in favor of changing the name.

Chairman Belcher - The name change was a contingency of the money.

Ms. Sanders - The new name would be Electric Cow comes to Weddington.

Ms. Fitch - If more than \$17,500 in sponsorship money is garnered then the Town would get any money above that back? The charity will be going to their resources and capabilities to raise almost double the amount. A small amount went back to the charity after all was said and done. What is the incentive for the charity if there is no potential to make money? Proceeds will be nominal.

Mayor Anderson - There are two issues that need to go before the Council – the name and clarification around sponsorship.

Ms. Harrison shared an example of Coke giving \$5,000. She stated, “The \$5,000 helps to mitigate expenses across the whole board. Those were the sponsorships that I thought the Council was thinking about such as Home Depot, Lowes or Harris Teeter - not the individual groups that are sponsoring but more of the bigger corporate sponsors.”

Mr. Gilmartin - Sponsorships help defray operating expenses. It should be a retained earnings/net income number. That is the number that will go to the charity.

Ms. Sanders - With the \$17,500, we were looking at breaking even.

Mr. Gilmartin - All the expenses is your bottom number. Your top number is going to be everything you brought in – sponsorship or whatever the case may be. Whatever is left over, that is the amount based on the budget you put together. It might make more sense if we take the retained earnings (what is left over) knowing that would be the amount that would go to your charity. From there, the Town will figure out what portion of each dollar the Town gets.

Mayor Anderson – It did not make sense for the Town to give you \$20,000 but condition that if the group makes more than that we are going to take it back.

Mr. Gilmartin will put together some analogies and business cases that can show some ways to do that. He stated, “If there is any money left over for your charity, for the first \$5,000 (arbitrary) the charity gets “x” amount based on a sliding scale. The next \$5,000 we get .40 cent on the dollar. The next \$5,000 we get \$.75 on the dollar. It will be a sliding scale where everyone is winning. The Town has been trying for years to get something like this festival started.”

Chairman Belcher - The Town should be last. The Town is not paying anyone to run this event. The \$20,000 is to pay for the bands. I would like to see \$.10 on the dollar. If we hired an event coordinator, it would cost us \$35,000 for that alone.

Ms. Harrison - It must be made clear the Town is giving the money. Does the Town get a name on it? It was not understood by several of the Councilmembers about the sponsorships. The Town tied it together. It should cost the Town \$20,000 to put their name on the festival.

Mr. Gilmartin told Ms. Sanders that she is running the event with the help of her group.

Mayor Anderson asked if the Committee wanted to endorse the name.

Chairman Belcher stated that in her opinion as long as the stipulations of what the Council voted on were fulfilled then it was up to the committee to name the event.

**Item No. 9. Consideration of Developing Guidelines for Sponsoring Town Events.** Chairman Belcher stated, "Different companies and organizations are asking can they pitch a tent and hand out stuff at Town events. The Town has been reluctant and not sure if we should ask for sponsorship money. Does the Town want sponsors? The sponsor for the Easter Egg Hunt was great because of the small Town budget. How should the Town respond to this request? Does the Town let them come since the Town wants to support local businesses? Should pitching the tent be contingent on a donation and/or handing out food? A clear policy is needed."

Committee members advised that they wanted to charge something. Ms. Sanders suggests that whoever is doing the event should handle. She stated, "I did all of the fundraising at the elementary school for 12 events a year. We would look at all 12 events and determine how much she needed for donations and then determine who to ask to sponsor. We can lay out a plan after looking at the whole year."

Mr. Lee moved to approve that money will be collected for Town events and the Town will charge a fee for certain events and it will be decided by the Committee of that event. Ms. Harrison will document a policy stating how much sponsorship dollars are accepted and who will be accepted at any event the Town runs. Staff can put in advertising that sponsorships are welcome and direct questions regarding sponsorship to whoever is in charge of that event. Ms. Harrison seconded the motion, with votes recorded as follows:

AYES:	Sanders, Gilmartin, Lee and Harrison
NAYS:	None

**Item No. 10. Adjournment.** Mr. Gilmartin moved to adjourn the June 6, 2011 Special Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting. Mr. Lee seconded the motion, with votes recorded as follows:

AYES:	Sanders, Gilmartin, Lee and Harrison
NAYS:	None

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

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Stephanie Belcher, Chairman

Attest:

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Amy S. McCollum, Town Clerk

Minutes were transcribed by Tonya Goodson.