

**Meeting Summary – Parks and Recreation Council  
May 3, 2023**

Bonnie B. Davis Environment and Agricultural Center, Hillsborough NC\*

**Members Present:** Gina Reyman (Chair), Mikki Fleming (Vice-Chair), Natalie Ziemba, Andrea Zimmerman (via Zoom), Greg Hughes, Sophia Fratta, Becca Truluck, Xilong Zhao

**Members Absent:** Rod Jones, Jessie Birckhead; Chris Colvin

**Staff:** David Stancil, Dan Derby, Kalani Allen

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Chair Gina Reyman called the meeting to order at 6:47pm. She asked members to introduce themselves.

**Review of Meeting Summary/Additions to Agenda:**

- a. No changes or additions.

**Report of the Chair:**

- a. **Cookout/Dinner-** the Council cookout was relocated from Fairview Park and took place in the Davis Center Board Room.

**New Business:**

- a. **Parks Division Update (Dan Derby, Supt. of Parks):** Dan Derby presented his yearly overview of parks. Derby started his presentation off with a history review of the Parks division since he joined the department. He explained that the County now has over 1,660 acres of park land and 12 parks and preserves, along with future park sites. He spoke on the future expansion of Soccer.com and the grand reopening scheduled for Blackwood Farm Park, slated for Friday, May 19, 2023. Derby emphasized that his main concerns were the need and investment for more parks as Orange County continues its upward growth. He talked about the Mountains to Sea Trail and Seven Mile Creek. Reyman asked about the status of the future park site at Millhouse Road. Derby answered that it is still a future park site with plans for soccer fields and a connecting trail to Blackwood Farm Park. David Stancil explained that this future site is in the Capital Investment Plan. Derby also spoke to staff and hiring within the division. He spoke to the challenge of obtaining seasonal staff positions post-COVID. Reyman asked Derby how Orange County compares to other municipalities. He gave a comparison of Mecklenburg County, which he said is a larger county with a large park area; however, Orange has maintained the parks within the county. He also said there is always room for improvement and knows the county will continue to add more parks. Xilong Zhao asked if there were any special events that occurred in parks. Derby answered that the hope is to host music festivals, movies in the park, and stage events with the new amphitheater at Blackwood Farm Park.

**Old Business:**

- a. **P&R Master Plan 2030 Mid-Plan Report/Findings:** Stancil led a brief discussion on the next stages of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan mid-plan review. He stated that items added, changed, or enforced by the Council would be included in the proposed review. He requested that additional items not discussed at the April meeting be brought forward and discussed to the next meeting. Kalani Allen displayed a word cloud with significant words members gave from the previous meeting. These words would go along with recommendations for the mid plan review.

**Report of the Director:**

- a. **Project/Program Updates (Perry Hills, Blackwood, etc.):** Stancil provided an update on the reopening of Blackwood Farm Park, which had a soft opening on April 25. He provided members with an update on the program schedule for the reopening celebration. He mentioned the last Perry Hills Park meeting, and he added that a meeting to review draft park designs would be held in June, and that a master plan would be developed and presented to county commissioners in September after PRC review.

**Council and Committee Reports:**

- a. **Intergovernmental Parks Work Group** (April 12 mtg) – Greg Hughes attended the IPWG meeting. He stated that he was interested in learning how to get the events out to the community as there are numerous activities throughout the jurisdictions.
- b. **Items from the Council /Sharing of Volunteer Opportunities-** none

**Adjournment:** Reyman adjourned meeting at 8:00pm.

**Next Meeting:** June 7, 6:30pm, Davis Center, Hillsborough

\* - The meeting was relocated from Fairview Park picnic shelter due to expected weather.