

GSCAC Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2021

Garner Senior Center

Tony DeRico, Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 9:05am. Minutes were approved with edits.

GSCAC Committee Report: Tina Johnson reported for the GSCAC meeting that was held on May 17. The committee met at GRC for the first time and toured the facility. There was an election of officers for the upcoming year. Ernestine Durham was elected Chair and Chris O'Connor will serve as Vice Chair. After a short meeting, the committee travelled to the Yeargan property that is currently being planned for park development. The committee will not meet during the summer and will resume in September.

John Hodges, Assistant Town Manager reported that our new Parks and Recreation Director, Maria Muñoz-Blanco will start work on May 24. Her office will be at Town Hall. He referenced the announcement that was sent out with full detail about the new director.

Mr. Hodges gave a several Town updates. There is a \$71 million bond referendum being considered for vote this November. The dollars would support: street and sidewalk enhancements; making Jones Sausage Road 4 lanes, realigning the crossover to Hwy 70 over railroad tracks; new fire station in the McCullers community; \$10 million is set aside for greenways; \$22 million recommended to start development of the Yeargan and Meadowbrook Parks (total project will cost \$50 million). There is a Council work session to discuss the referendum will be held Monday at 5pm to talk only about this proposal. If this bond referendum is approved, staff will not be able to campaign to promote this to the public. Support of advisory councils will be important to encourage community support.

Committee questions: Sharon Verity inquired if there were plans or any talk about widening Hwy 50 with the proposed VA clinic and the already excessive traffic. Mr. Hodges responded that the Town has very little to do with the road, but would be covered under NC DOT CAMPO (regional transportation) projects. There is hope that the 540 project will lessen traffic in the area. Other questions were if there are plans for wider walking paths seniors. Some segments of new development will be paved for accessibility. Mr. Hodges asked for committee support.

Recreation Center Update: Mr. Hodges offered that the initial architect approval has been granted to open GRC. This is allowing for the Town to use the building and begin moving offices, furniture and equipment into the new center. Information will be coming about the center opening. The initial opening of may be a "soft opening" to allow citizens to use the facility as soon as possible.

Mr. Hodges reported that the federal pandemic relief money through the CARES act is allowing funding for upgrading IT infrastructure. Good news for GSC is that we will be receiving a gently used high quality projector to replace the one that we have had for over 10 years.

GSC Update: Torrey Blackmar reviewed programming at the senior center and initial attempts to reopen with COVID protocol. All is going well, hope is that July will have a full schedule without restrictions for those who have been vaccinated.

Garner Independence Day celebration has been planned as a full in-person event with concessions, symphony, band, shuttles, we will require masks to ride on the shuttles. Gates will open at 5pm.

Committee Concerns/Announcements:

Sharon Verity is advocating for new blinds in the game room. Torrey explained that the NC grant money that was intended for that project (2018) had to be used for emergency repairs on AV equipment. This project should be funded by the same grant this coming year.

Tony DeRico asked if it would be appropriate to offer businesses an opportunity to 'Adopt a room' at the senior center as part of business involvement. Committee talked about recognition. The idea will be revisited by staff.

Committee Announcement: Nancy Cope reported that our volunteer group "On the Mend" will be having a sale, first week in November.

A big thank you to Nancy Cope for her two terms on the GSCAC committee.

Meeting adjourned at 10:20am.

Respectfully submitted,

Torrey Blackmar, GPRCR Recreation Programs Manager