

**TOWN OF HOPE MILLS
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL JOINT MEETING WITH PARKS &
RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2018, 6:00 P.M.
WILLIAM F. "BILL" LUTHER, JR. & DORIS LUTHER MEETING ROOM
TOWN HALL**

GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Jackie Warner, Mayor Pro Tem Mike Mitchell, Commissioners Jessie Bellflowers, Meg Larson and Jerry Legge.

STAFF PRESENT

Town Manager Melissa Adams, Interim Town Clerk Deborah Holland, Finance Director Drew Holland and Parks & Recreation Director Kenny Bullock. Also present were Parks & Recreation Secretary Paulette Hobbs, Athletic Supervisor Maxey Dove and Carrie Wood, Michael Seals, Winnie Golden, Linda Sumners and Tiffany Horne of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee.

1. CALL TO ORDER.

Mayor Warner called the special joint meeting of the Hope Mills Board of Commissioners and Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee to order on Monday, February 26, 2018 at 6:09 p.m.

Mayor Jackie Warner commented Commissioner Pat Edwards would not be attending as she had a prior engagement with Kiwanis Club.

2. INVOCATION.

The invocation was led by Town Manager Melissa Adams.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Jackie Warner.

Mayor Jackie Warner requested a moment of silence in recognition of the late Reverend Billy Graham.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Larson and carried unanimously, to approve the agenda as presented.

5. PRESENTATIONS:

- a. Rachel Cotter, Principal Landscape Architect, Planning and Design of McAdams, presentation on the Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Recreation Plan.

Rachel Cotter, Principal Landscape Architect of McAdams Civil Engineering firm commented per best practice in the Parks & Recreation Industry, it is recommended for the future vision of Hope Mills Parks & Recreation to include a Comprehensive Master Plan of all projects.

Ms. Cotter discussed the following topics:

1. The frame work needed to make programming or financial decisions and to address community needs and recreational needs/trends.
2. Integrating all projects to minimize redundancies and maximize the use of taxpayer dollars.
3. A Comprehensive Master Plan is required for state funding such as a PARTF Grant.
4. A Comprehensive Master Plan establishes metrics-based goals and priorities for a ten year plan to measure success which ties into short, mid, and long term priorities. These priorities are based on community needs, finances, funding and availability of land.
5. During the Master Planning Process, McAdams conducts an upfront assessment of the existing facilities, programming, demographics, community engagement and a statistically valid survey.
6. Visioning is the second step in the Master Planning Process in which McAdams reviews all the information, feedback, and data received to date as well as looking to the community, council and Parks & Recreation staff to inquire what their vision is for Parks & Recreation in the next ten years.
7. Visioning segues into a set of recommendations or the four key focus areas which are parklands, facilities, programming and financials. The last step of the Master Planning Process is the Action Plan which is the abovementioned metric-based piece of the plan.
8. To receive further data and input, McAdams will participate in two public open houses, two staff meetings, a visioning session with staff and two meetings with the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee. The final step is to present to the Board of Commissioners.
9. During the Data & Input phase, McAdams conducts a survey based on the (PIR) Priorities Investment Rating which gathers the top priorities for investment facilities.

6. QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION OF PRESENTATION.

Mayor Warner opened the floor for questions from the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Legge commented this project is taking much longer than he had anticipated as Parks & Recreation is not self-sufficient. Commissioner Legge remarked his vision for Parks & Recreation would be to host travel ball tournaments which would draw a great deal of revenue for the Parks & Recreation Department. Commissioner Legge commented he would like to put money back into the Parks & Recreation program to keep taxes down for residents.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell added to Commissioner Legge's abovementioned comments that the fees travel ball tournaments bring in would aid in cost recovery for debt services.

Mayor Warner inquired what the fee paid to McAdams covered. Town Manager Adams responded the contract with McAdams in the amount of \$49,000 was for the Golf Course Master Plan.

Finance Director Drew Holland commented McAdams determined a Comprehensive Master Plan was required after they had already begun drafting the Golf Course Master Plan which halted the project. Finance Director Holland commented the remaining funds not spent on the Golf Course Master Plan will go toward the Comprehensive Plan.

Mayor Warner inquired the amount of time required to complete this plan and if the Town will encounter any additional costs for designs that need to be redone. Ms. Cotter responded there are no items that will require additional costs as none need to be redone. Ms. Cotter commented additional meetings will need to be held to acquire a different, Town-wide perspective versus just the Golf Course Property. The Comprehensive Plan will take approximately four to six months.

Mayor Warner inquired how a survey for the Comprehensive Master Plan will differ from the previous survey that addressed the Golf Course property. Ms. Cotter responded the difference is a third-party agency will administer the survey which will provide different results and outcomes versus a public option survey. McAdams is aiming for completion of the Comprehensive Master Plan in May 2019.

Mayor Warner commented if McAdams applied for a PARTF Grant in May of 2019, the funds would not be available until fall of 2019 and work would not begin until 2020. Mayor Warner inquired how the Comprehensive Master Plan will affect the current projects the Town has on hold such as Heritage Park. Ms. Cotter responded so long as the Town already has master plans for the projects, they can be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

Mayor Warner opened the floor for comments from the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee. There were no comments.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell commented the Town has been working with WithersRavenel to complete the Lake Park and inquired if we are ineligible to apply for a PARTF Grant without a Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Cotter responded the Town may apply for a PARTF

Grant but will likely not have much success without a Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Cotter commented if the Town was to apply for a PARTF Grant at this time without a comprehensive plan they would likely need to reapply next year thus remaining on schedule with McAdams timeline. Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell inquired how to account for county citizens outside of Hope Mills utilizing our facilities when reviewing the demographics of the surveys. Ms. Cotter responded they could run a demographic report for the county line versus the Town line which ties back into the fee structure when the Town determines the fee schedule.

Commissioner Bellflowers inquired if WithersRavenel intended to apply for a PARTF Grant for Phase II of the Lake Park in May as we now have a Master Plan for the Lake Park. Town Manager Adams responded she did not know but would look into it.

Commissioner Bellflowers inquired whether McAdams would take the strengths and weaknesses of our current parks into account when developing the master plan. Ms. Cotter responded that will be addressed in the first staff meeting and the second “vision” meeting will be to discuss their findings then, develop a recommendation thereafter.

Commissioner Bellflowers inquired as to who constructs the survey instrument to craft the questions. Ms. Cotter responded it is a combination of McAdams, the Parks & Recreation team and the Survey Institute. Commissioner Bellflowers inquired the delivery method of the surveys. Ms. Cotter responded the survey will be delivered by mail with a reply online or return by mail option which features the zip code to gather proper demographics. Ms. Cotter added in the case the Survey Institute does not receive the percent level of confidence they are seeking, they make reminder phone calls.

Commissioner Larson commented the Town already has a Lake Park Master Plan so it should not need to be addressed by McAdams. Ms. Cotter responded it will be part of the inventory in the Comprehensive Plan and the Town will not incur any fee associated with the Lake Park.

Commissioner Larson inquired why McAdams didn’t advise the Town at the start a Comprehensive Master Plan rather was needed rather than spending the \$49,000 for the Golf Course Property Master Plan. Ms. Cotter responded McAdams was unaware the Town did not have a Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan.

Finance Director Holland commented the Board requested a Master Plan for the Golf Course Property at the 2017 Budget Retreat. Once McAdams began drafting the Golf Course Master Plan they discovered the Town did not have a Comprehensive Plan for Parks & Recreation.

Commissioner Larson inquired how much the new contract amount is as the Town ended the first contract for \$49,000. Finance Director Holland responded the new contract is \$49,500.

Mayor Warner and Commissioner Larson inquired how much was spent of the initial \$49,000. Finance Director Holland responded approximately half of the cost was spent. Mayor Warner inquired of any additional costs. Finance Director Holland remarked an additional \$12,000 will cover the cost of the survey added to the \$25,000 spent on the initial contract for a total of \$85,500 for the Comprehensive Master Plan.

Commissioner Legge inquired the current cost to maintain the Golf Course Property. Town Manager Adams responded we spend approximately \$1,800 a month in maintenance for the Golf Course Property. Commissioner Legge commented the longer the Town waits to move forward with the project, the more costs we will incur.

Commissioner Bellflowers commented regardless if Hope Mills does not qualify for a PARTF Grant this year, having a Comprehensive Plan for Parks & Recreation projects will move the Town forward for many years to come.

Mayor Warner opened the floor once again for comments from Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee members.

Michael Seals commented a Comprehensive Master Plan is necessary for future planning as it is in essence a box that needs to be checked. Mr. Seals cautioned the Town not to proceed unless we are fully prepared to seek funding through tax increases or bonds as grants are not guaranteed.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell requested McAdams cover the scope and cost of the new engagement at a later date.

Mayor Warner inquired if the Town needs to look into putting this project out for bids due to the increased cost. Town Manager Adams responded the \$49,000 is under the threshold and we are not required to put it up for bids as it is professional services. Mayor Warner commented she would like complete transparency with the citizens of Hope Mills by informing them of the actual cost of this project as the numbers may mislead them.

Discussion pursued regarding the timeline for the Master Comprehensive Plan which is as follows once approved by the Board:

1. Approve plan contract.
2. Approve for 2018-2019 Fiscal Year Budget at Budget Retreat.
3. Plan should be finalized and ready by year end.
4. The Town will be on track for the May 2019 PARTF Grant application deadline.

Mayor Warner commented this item needs to be on the agenda for the March 3, 2018 Budget Retreat.

Parks & Recreation Director Kenny Bullock commented his vision for Parks & Recreation is to bring it up to date and the only way to move forward is to set goals for the future with the Master Comprehensive Plan.

7. ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made by Commissioner Bellflowers, seconded by Commissioner Legge and carried unanimously, to adjourn the meeting.

Mayor Warner adjourned the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Jackie Warner, Mayor

ATTEST:

Deborah Holland, NCCMC
Interim Town Clerk