



**GREENSBORO PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Wednesday, August 10, 2022 at 5:00 pm**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT**

Chair Emily Linden, Vice Chair Susan Henshall, Jeff Smith, Anthony Izzard, Marsha Glazman, Cheskesha Cunningham-Dockery, Blake Odum, Scott Neeley

**STAFF PRESENT**

Nasha McCray, Kobe Riley, Charles Jackson, Shawna Tillery, Haley Wilson, Tony Royal, Matt Hicks, Chelsea Phipps

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Sharon Hightower, City Council District 1 Representative; Goldie Wells, City Council District 2 Representative. Speakers from the Floor: Crystal Black, Lisa McMillan, and Byron Gladden

**WELCOME**

The regular meeting of the Greensboro Parks and Recreation Commission was held virtually on Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm. Commission Vice Chair Sue Henshall called the meeting to order at 5:06 pm.

Nasha McCray, Director, welcomed the Commission and attendees.

**CONSENT ITEMS**

Approval of Minutes from the May 2022 and June 2022 Commission Meetings- Commissioner Neely made a motion to approve the May 2022 and June 2022 Commission meeting minutes and Commissioner Cunningham-Dockery seconded. Motion unanimously approved.

Commission Vice Chair Henshall proposed moving New Business items ahead of the Staff Reports due to the topic and number speakers from the floor present to speak on the Aquatics Master Plan. Commission Chair Linden made a motion to approve and Dockery seconded. All voted in favor.

**RECOGNITIONS**

New Hire Recognition- Matt Hicks, Gardens Superintendent, introduced Chelsea Phipps, who started with the Department on June 16, 2022, as our new Greenways & Gardens Program Coordinator. In this role, she will be the primary point of contact for the Downtown Greenway's programming and communications, and has already been busy learning about the transition from Action Greensboro, connecting with local partners, and building out future programs. Chelsea brings more than 16 years of experience in campus recreation, having worked at a number of higher education institutions over the years. Most recently, Chelsea was at UNC Greensboro, managing operations for the Leonard J. Kaplan Center for Wellness. Chelsea's past work

experience is rather broad, including oversight of special events, marketing, facility operations, member services, risk management, aquatics, sports leagues, and youth programming. She earned a Master's degree in Parks & Recreation Administration from East Carolina University, and a Bachelor's degree in Sports Management from the University of Alberta.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Fisher Park Master Plan Approval- Shawna Tillery, Planning and Project Development Division Manager, requested approval from the Greensboro Parks and Recreation Commission of the proposed Fisher Park Master Plan. Once approved by Commission, the Master Plan will be submitted to City Council for consideration at a future meeting. Located at 700 N. Elm St., Fisher Park has historic significance as one of Greensboro's first public parks. The Master Plan is funded through the City of Greensboro's Participatory Budgeting process and is one of 4 projects funded in District 3 during the Greensboro Participatory Budgeting (PB) Cycle 3, which ended in 2019. Commissioner Glazman made a motion to approve to the Fisher Park Master Plan and Commissioner Odum seconded. All voted in favor.
  
- B. Proposed Changes to the 2022 Greensboro Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Schedule- Haley Wilson, Executive Assistant, proposed changes to the 2022 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Schedule. The Parks and Recreation Commission reviews and adopts its annual meeting schedule for the upcoming calendar year each winter. Staff proposed two changes to the upcoming remainder of the 2022 meeting dates: to change the September 2022 meeting from a virtual meeting to an in person meeting at Leonard Recreation Center, and to change the October 2022 Facilities Tour from a 5 pm start time to a 3 pm start time. Commission Chair Linden made a motion approve to the meeting schedule and Commissioner Izzard seconded. All voted in favor.
  
- C. Haley Wilson, Executive Assistant, requested the Commission to appoint two new members to the Parks and Recreation Commission's Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will convene prior to the September 2022 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to discuss Commissioners interested in serving as a Commission Chair and Vice-Chair. The Committee will provide recommendations for nominations at the September meeting for acceptance, consideration, and approval by the Commission. Appointments will be effective at the conclusion of the meeting and will serve for one (1) year. Commissioner Izzard made a motion for Henshall and Dockery to be the nominating committee and all voted in favor. Commissioner Cunningham-Dockery and Commissioner Henshall were appointed.

### **STAFF REPORTS**

Aquatics Facilities Master Planning Process- Shawna Tillery, Planning and Project Development Division Manager, provided a staff report with an update on the Parks and Recreation Department's Aquatics Facilities Master Planning Process. The presentation outlined existing aquatic infrastructure conditions and needs and provided an in depth overview of the master planning process, next steps, and details about community engagement and input opportunities. On December 21, 2021, City Council approved a contract with CPL Architects and Engineers to

complete a comprehensive master plan to address aquatics needs and transform the community vision for interactive water play from Plan2Play into a tangible plan. The master planning process included an equity and inclusion assessment to ensure the aquatics facilities will provide a safe and welcoming experience for visitors.

Facilities assessments were completed in March 2022 for the all seven aquatic sites-Lindley Pool, Warnersville Pool, Windsor Pool, Peeler Pool, Smith Active Adult Center, Barber Park Sprayground and Keeley Park Sprayground. During phase one of the engagement from March-April 2022, over 1,000 residents provided input that was collected in both in-person and online surveys. 84% of participants ranked spraygrounds as good-excellent condition, while 35% ranked pools ranked our pools as good-excellent condition. The preference was for combined facilities based upon 65% preferring either a pool, sprayground or wading pool versus a single use. Respondents wanted pools, but rarely visit what Greensboro P&R has to offer. Respondents were 8 times more likely to visit a sprayground.

The information gathered in the first phase was based on concepts of activities and aquatic features. The 2nd phase of engagement is to provide visual options to the community to be able to provide feedback. The master plan itself will include several other phases including an operation analysis and probable cost for each site and phased approach for making future funding determinations. The report will also include an equity and inclusion assessment to evaluate the City's current degree of equitable access to aquatic facilities, the project team will evaluate park access, social vulnerability, inclusion and investment.

A master plan does not include construction drawings or construction but provides a basis for future decision making on site development and budgeting based upon community input for amenities, costs, and maintenance and site feasibility.

The upcoming second phase of community engagement will provide residents an opportunity to offer input on preliminary findings and conceptual rendering examples for reimagining three (3) of Parks and Recreation's outdoor aquatic facilities (Warnersville, Peeler, and Lindley Pools). Engagement will take place August through September 2022 and will be a combination of pop up in-person events, stationary boards at facilities, and online activities. This second engagement phase builds on the feedback and ideas generated from residents in Spring 2022. The engagement schedule was shared and staff indicated that other community events and opportunities could be added.

Commissioner Izzard asked why East Greensboro was not included in the first phase of engagement.

Tillery stated that Keeley Park and Barber Park were sites for in person engagement at the playgrounds and Smith Active Adult Center, and engagement was done through the Greensboro Housing Authority.

Commissioner Izzard stated that he felt that demographics were missed in East Greensboro. He asked how long Peeler's pool had been closed for.

Kobe Riley, Deputy Director, stated that Peeler pool had been closed since 2019, due to the pandemic, construction and renovations around and the recreation center, and equipment and mechanical issues at the pool.

Izzard stated the he felt that the aquatics assessment were skewed regarding Peeler's pool.

Riley stated that the assessment was for the building infrastructure and maintenance of the pool, not the attendance.

Vice Chair Henshall stated that she remembered when the Aquatics survey was publicized and that it was shared with the Commission back in March.

Commissioner Odum asked what is the Department's current Aquatics operational budget and what the repair cost is for Peeler pool.

Tillery stated that the current aquatics operating budget is \$400,000 over a four year period. The full repair cost for Peeler pool could be close to one million dollars; however, estimates would be needed.

Odum stated that is has alarmed a lot of people at the potential loss of Peeler pool and children of color losing a place to learn to swim. More aquatics programming needs to be had to teach black and brown children how to swim. More money in the City's budget needs to go towards pool repairs.

Councilmember Hightower stated that there was no money in the City's budget to help repair pools until she made sure that there would be to help the pools open this summer. There needed to be more dialogue with the community before the Aquatics Master Plan process was underway. The Recreation Centers are also in bad shape and need proper funding. A lot of investment needs to be made. We need to have more responsibility (moral, ethical, and financial) related to our Parks and Recreation facilities. We need more input from the communities affected before decisions should be made.

Director McCray stated that she appreciates the dialogue tonight and how the department can better serve our community. This is the first ever master plan to address long term plans for our aquatics facilities. We can no longer put a band aid on our aquatics facilities. The history of black and brown portions of our community is important when it comes to the decisions made for the aquatics master plan. She stated that where we are in the process is not a point of developing a draft of a master plan yet and that the department is just exploring concepts to share for this second phase of engagement to make sure that needs are met by the community impacted. The engagement events planned in the coming weeks will be an opportunity for those on the call to share in the public input process so that their voices can be heard. Once a draft plan has been developed, it will be available to the public to view as well. McCray also stated that short term decisions need to be made in order to fund pools for next summer. She stated that she hopes that those on the call will advocate the funding needs for aquatics to City Council.

Commissioner Cunningham-Dockery stated that she wanted to make sure we are giving people the right information and that the department is engaging our communities in the right way.

Director McCray reiterated that the department is not proposing to get rid of any aquatics facilities and that there are multiple varieties of aquatics features represented in the concept photos.

Commissioner Odum stated that a lot of this boils down to what we do with funding. This is an issue that is going to need additional funding and strategy where we are all on the same page.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None

### **SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR**

Crystal Black: Speaking on disparities in Parks and Recreation. Black communities in Greensboro have been deprived of amenities that other communities in Greensboro have. We lack aquatics amenities and validations to these communities that deserve answers. She did not hear any validation tonight.

Lisa McMillan: Information that she received said that Peeler pool is off the table. Why is the department coming to the community with an option of no pool? Why isn't Parks and Recreation getting grant funding for Peeler pool? Someone needs to put time and energy into getting funding for Peeler pool. I taught myself to swim at pool and it is still the one major recreation activity that I can do. There needs to be more intention to reach out to people who don't have the internet and people who are specifically effected by the decision made in District 2. We need public answers.

Byron Gladden: There is a lot of passion and energy regarding the Peeler pool situation. There has not been a consistent priority with City Council when it comes to funding Warnersville, Peeler, or Windsor pool. The pools were failing in 2015 when the Hayes-Taylor YMCA was funded and there was a push to use that pool but that became an affordability issue with people in the community not being able to afford the YMCA membership fees. We need to be clear who is accountable for the lack of funding in pools by City Council priorities.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director McCray thanked everyone who attended tonight's meeting and for being engaged in the Aquatics Master Plan process. She relayed the importance of feedback throughout the process and the department wants to receive more feedback. She thanked the Commission for their advocacy and outreach regarding the passing of the Parks and Recreation Bond in the most recent election. She also shared that at the most recent Guilford County Board of Commissioners meeting, the American Rescue Plan funding request from the City for the Windsor Chavis Nocho Community Complex project was unanimously approved for an additional \$15 million dollars. Additional ARP funding from the City requested by the Department for the Windsor Chavis project is scheduled to be considered by City Council at an upcoming meeting. McCray also gave an update on the new Parks and Recreation Director hiring process with interviews set to take place in September.

### **CITY COUNCILMEMMBER COMMENTS**

Councilmember Hightower: Thanked everyone for joining the Commission meeting tonight. This is a cause that needs to make sure comes to fruition for access to pools and aquatics in Districts 1 and 2. Recreation Centers also need to be assessed for proper funding needs. There are many facilities in east Greensboro that need to be prioritized and invested in like Gillespie Golf Course as well. Appreciates the Parks and Recreation staff for listening to what the community says and will do what needs to be done.

Councilmember Wells: Thanks to all who came out tonight. Stay engaged and put some action behind the voices. Thanked Commissioners and staff for their time.

### **COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS**

Odum: Thanked everyone for getting involved in the Aquatics Master Plan process. Hopeful that we can call get on the same page for the future of pools in Greensboro.

Cunningham-Dockery: Thanked everyone for attending and for people caring about what is going on in the community. Hopes people stay engaged with the aquatics master plan process going forward.

Izzard: Hopes that there is more transparency going forward. Is pro pools and will do whatever needs to be done to get the word out.

Neeley: Is listening to everything that was said tonight and the passion behind everyone's words. Proves that Parks and Recreation is a driving force for equity and community development and is so important.

Linden: Thanked Vice Chair Henshall for leading the meeting tonight and thanked all who shared their voices tonight and being willing to engage.

Henshall: It has been awesome to see the engagement from the community tonight and is looking forward to seeing how the Aquatics Master Plan pans out.

With no further business, Commission Vice Chair Henshall adjourned the meeting at 7:01 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Haley Wilson, Executive Assistant  
Greensboro Parks and Recreation Department