AGENDA

As a Courtesy to Others Please Turn Off All Cell Phones and Pagers during the Meeting

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
3. Freedom of Information Act Compliance
   Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and mailed in compliance with
   the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.
4. Approval of Minutes
   a. Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting of September 8, 2016
5. Appearance by Citizens on Items Unrelated to Today’s Agenda
6. Reports
   a. Island Recreation Association Update – Mr. Frank Soule
   b. Bike Advisory Committee
7. Unfinished Business
   a. Update on Coligny Park Project
8. New Business
   a. Beaufort County Parks & Recreation Response
   b. Recreation Task Force Recommendation – moving forward
   c. Visioning Process Update
   d. Approval of 2017 Parks & Recreation Proposed meeting schedule
9. Park Updates
10. Park Commissioner Comments
    a. 2017 Southeast Biking Symposium
11. Adjournment

Please note that a quorum of Town Council may result if four (4) or more Town Council members
attend this meeting.
The Town of Hilton Head Island  
Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting  
Thursday, September 8, 2016  
3:30 p.m.

Members Present: Paul Boes, Mario Caballero, Peter Keber, Fred Lowery, Mike Ray, Jerry Okarma, Heather Rath

Members Absent: none

Town Staff: Marcy Benson, Eileen Wilson

Other: Frank Soule, Executive Director for Island Recreation Association

1. **Call to Order**  
   Chairman Rath called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**

3. **Freedom of Information Compliance**  
   Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

4. **Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman**  
   Commissioner Ray made a motion to nominate Ms. Rath as Chairman. Commissioner Lowery seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Ray made a motion to nominate Mr. Keber as Vice Chairman. Commissioner Lowery seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Rath and Mr. Keber will serve a one year term.

5. **Approval of Minutes**  
   The minutes of the Parks & Recreation Commission meeting of July 14, 2016 were approved as presented.

6. **Appearance by Citizens on Items Unrelated to Today’s Agenda**  
   Mr. John Witherspoon, resident of Hilton Head Island, has requested a kayak launch dock at the Rowing and Sailing Center. Currently the Rowing and Sailing Center does not have a kayak launch system to provide safe and easy entry and launching of kayaks. Kayak launch docks require only a modest amount of dock space; such a system should not interfere with the launching of other types of watercraft from the floating dock.

   Ms. Judy Bastion, resident of Hilton Head Island and pickleball advocate, was before this Commission six months ago requesting more pickleball courts and is inquiring about the status. She referred to other locations in Georgia that have pickleball facilities that have benefited economically from tournaments. Ms. Bastion stated Hilton Head Island should have dedicated pickleball courts.
Ms. Genia Edelman, resident of Hilton Head Island, founder of Hilton Head Beach Volleyball Academy is requesting additional volleyball courts and would like facilities to expand to bring in people from outside our community. Ms. Edelman referred to other cities that used municipal owned property and will provide that information to the Parks & Recreation Commission.

7. **Reports**  
   **a. Island Recreation Association Update.** Mr. Frank Soule stated his support for a kayak launch at the Rowing and Sailing Center and then for a storage facility. Mr. Soule stated in regard to volleyball/pickleball – a lot of parks are created through public/private cooperation.

Mr. Soule reported on the success of various programs from the summer and upcoming fall programs such as cheerleading sessions, boys’ and girls’ lacrosse, roller hockey, soccer, gator football, swim lessons. Adult/Senior day trips are well attended; expanding the senior fitness programs.

Upcoming community events:
- Jeep Island 2016 on Saturday, September 17 at Shelter Cove Community Park
- Friday night Dive In Movie – movies in the pool – September 23 – Jaws
- Burgers & Brew, Pumpkin Patch, Oyster Festival, Turkey Trot, WinterFest

Chairman Rath inquired about the County funding to the Island Recreation Association. Mr. Soule replied the County funding remains the same at $140,000. Chairman Rath stated she would like an analysis of what we are paying into the County and what we are paying into the Town and what we are getting back on a percentage basis.

8. **Unfinished Business**  
   **a. Yacht Cove Park Request** - Ms. Benson stated based on Town staff’s review of the Recreation Element, the CIP timeline, the intended use at time of purchase, and in consideration of the request presented by the Yacht Cove Property Owners Association letter dated May 9, 2016, staff recommends a *special use park* that accommodates the needs of the entire community, not just the immediate neighborhood, as the most appropriate type of park to be considered for future development of the Town-owned Yacht Cove property. Any park development on this location should only be considered after the Town’s two current large-scale park projects have been completed, this potential park is evaluated against all other park needs, and there is still support for a park in this area by Yacht Cove residents.

Ms. Benson gave a brief history of this property - in May 1999 the Town purchased a 9.5 acre parcel fronting Broad Creek in the Yacht Cove area. In April 2000 the Town acquired a 4.76 acre parcel in the Yacht Cove area adjacent to the 9.5 acre parcel. This resulted in 14.26 acres of Town-owned property purchased with the intended use as a future park. In 2003 the Town was approached by a representative of local rotary clubs to consider forming a public-private partnership to develop a park project on the Yacht Cove Town-owned property. In 2004 – 2005 the Town held a charrette with the Yacht Cove POA to receive public input regarding elements of this proposed park. At that time, the Parks & Recreation Commission recommended exploring this proposal and noted this was a preliminary step not a final plan. Due to other Town Council priorities and Yacht Cove area residents desire to
not have a park located adjacent to the neighborhood, the park project was removed from the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

In the Recreation Element a special use park is defined, in part, as offering the opportunity to highlight unique local historical, educational, cultural, and natural resources. Examples may include performing arts parks, special events parks, arboretums, ornamental gardens, amphitheaters, boat landings or other water-oriented facilities and beach parks. Special use facilities should be viewed as strategically located community-wide facilities rather than as serving a specific neighborhood or area. Parking should be provided as appropriate for the specific park, some parks require a significant amount of parking (e.g. beach park) while others do not. Park use and space requirements are the primary factors in determining the size of the park site.

Representing the Yacht Cove POA is Mr. Bruce Pitkin, Director and Mr. Rich LaLiberty, President. Each expressed frustration with this project being on and off the Town’s CIP schedule for many years. We would just like direction where the Town could give us some idea of when this park will be taken up again; there is always going to be another project.

Chairman Rath read the following statement from a Town report: “Due to other Town Council priorities and Yacht Cove area residents desire to not have a park located adjacent to the neighborhood, the park project was removed from the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).” Mr. Pitkin did not agree with the statement that residents did not desire to have a park.

The Yacht Cove concern is this park getting delayed for another 17 years. It should be a nature park that has access from the creek. From day one it was to be a passive park, a place to enjoy the views. Yacht Cove cannot handle the volume of special events. Both Mr. Pitkin and Mr. LaLiberty urged the Commissioners to just do the right thing for the community as a whole.

Ms. Benson stated that in the original purchase of this property, the documents she reviewed had this property listed as a community park but the Yacht Cove Town-owned property does not meet the size needed for a community park. The Yacht Cove Town-owned property also does not meet the size of a neighborhood park and so the determination of a special use park was a compromise between a community park and a neighborhood park. If this project gets put back on the CNAP and CIP schedule, there will be the opportunity for public input and the size of the property and natural features will be taken into consideration.

Commissioner Lowery made a motion to accept the staff’s recommendation for a special use park that accommodates the needs of the entire community, not just the immediate neighborhood, as the most appropriate type of park to be considered for future development of the Town-owned Yacht Cove property. Any park development on this location should only be considered after the Town’s two current large-scale park projects have been completed, this potential park is evaluated against all other park needs, and there is still support for a park in this area by Yacht Cove residents. Commissioner Okarma seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
9. New Business

Chairman Rath stated in 2013 a park survey was conducted and received 400 responses. In 2016 the Parks & Recreation Commission conducted an in-park user survey and completed 200 surveys. Chairman Rath and the Commissioners discussed how this Commission should move forward.

After much discussion, the Commissioners agreed that over the years they are presented with many ideas and requests from citizens such as new parks, amenities, pickleball, beach volleyball, kayak launch just to name a few. Frustration was expressed about just “spinning our wheels.”

Commissioners stated there has been explosive growth of the recreation center and other sports; need to look at overall recreation for kids, seniors and visitors – tourism impact. This Commission stated they do not know how to weigh in or prioritize the many requests they receive until Town Council identifies what their priority is for parks and recreation on Hilton Head Island.

Chairman Rath read an e-mail by Jennifer White from Washington DC

“My parents are timeshare owners and have been coming to Hilton Head for several years. This is the first week my family joined them. We had a delightful week here in spite of Hurricane Hermine. We appreciate the non-commercial feel of the island and the peaceful beaches and the miles of bike paths. Even though Hilton Head is quite a drive from our home in D.C. we hope it will be the first of many visits for us. However we did want to express our deep disappointment at what appears to be a large portion of the island’s bike paths being located on private land where access to them is restricted to various degrees severely limiting visitor’s full use and enjoyment of this tremendous aspect of the Hilton Head experience. We were biking with our two small children and found ourselves at Hilton Head Plantation where we were turned back by security guards making our journey to Port Royal much longer than anticipated. After doing some additional research we learned that well over half of Hilton Head bike paths are on private land and all of the plantations vigorously restrict access to guests not staying in the resort. While we can understand that some owners in exclusive resorts may desire to restrict access to their property, it greatly diminishes the value of Hilton Head bike paths when large portions of the pathways are disconnected, disjointed by the fact that there are not through passages in plantation properties. In fact when you only account for the public bike paths there are very few stretches of bike path that do not run along a busy road. When we told our friends in D.C. we were going to spend a week on Hilton Head we immediately heard about the wonderful bike path network but upon experiencing it we felt the restrictive nature of these paths made them far less attractive than what we had expected. We would respectively ask you to consider establishing a city ordinance or some other regulation that requires the plantation owners to provide some through passage for bikes. We are aware some plantations charge daily car access and then charge per bike brought in by car but this is hardly the solution for people like us who opted not to bring bikes to Hilton Head but rather rent upon arrival. Hilton Head is a beautiful place and feel that making the bike paths available to all the island’s guests would go a long way in making it the kind of place that reflects the best of America and the best of South Carolina. Thank you for your consideration.”
Commission Keber suggested recommending that Town Council create a task force to study the direction of parks and recreation in our community. All the Commissioners agreed and Mr. Soule also supported this suggestion. Chairman Rath stated she will bring this recommendation to Town Council on Tuesday, September 20 when she delivers a six month update to Town Council.

Vice Chairman Keber made a motion the Parks & Recreation make a recommendation to Town Council to form a task force to study the direction of parks and recreation on Hilton Head Island. Commissioner Ray seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Park Updates - none

11. Park Commissioner Comments – none

12. Adjournment
   There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

   Respectfully submitted by Eileen Wilson

   Approved by: ____________________________
   ____________________
   Heather Rath, Chairman
Town of Hilton Head Island

2017 Parks and Recreation PROPOSED Meeting Dates

Meetings are at 3:30 pm
Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers
One Town Center Court
Hilton Head Island, SC 29928

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