

MINUTES

Parks and Recreation Commission of the Augusta County Parks and Recreation Commission

Wednesday, June 16, 2021, 7:00 PM

PRESENT: Kirk Barley, Vice Chair
Steve Morelli, Member
Sally Williams, Member
Leon Bartley, Member
Ronnie Ritchie, Member

ABSENT: Ernie Landes, Member
Samantha Bosserman, Member
Larry Curry, Chair

June 16, 2021 meeting was held at Stuarts Draft Park shelter.

1. Call to Order

Mr. Barley called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

2. Comments by the Public

Adam Basham -Augusta County Parks and Recreation intern- was present at the meeting and Mr. Wells introduced him.

Aaron Hill and Christy Simmons of Weyers Cave, Virginia were present and asked to address the Commission. They are frequent campers at Natural Chimneys Park.

Mr. Hill asked if the rules and regulations at Natural Chimneys Park will change regarding marijuana use after it is legalized beginning July 1. He stated he does not want his children around it. Mr. Wells stated there will be no changes as consumption/ smoking marijuana will still be illegal in public places.

Ms. Simmons stated there is a group of campers that would like to get together to discuss what they like and dislike about the campground at Natural Chimneys Park. This group would like to be able to make some of the decisions at the campground and feel as though they are being heard. She also stated they would like to see more children activities offered at the campground.

Ms. Simmons further stated she had relayed concerns in the past about suspicious people coming into the campground to take showers after hours only to then leave the campground. She feels this is a safety concern and worries items left outside in her campsite may be taken if people are coming into the campground after hours. She stated Natural Chimneys Park staff did not take the situation as serious as she thought they should.

Mr. Barley asked Ms. Simmons who she is referencing when she talks about other

campers wanting to be involved in input on campground decisions. Ms. Simmons stated she and Mr. Hill would be interested as well as several other campers they have close contact with.

Mr. Hill stated the group would be a way to get input from campers. He said he understands that ultimately the decisions would be the County's to make. The group would just be the liaison between the campers and the County.

Mrs. Williams asked if there is currently a suggestion box at the Natural Chimneys Campground. Mr. Wells stated he is not sure there is.

Mr. Barley asked Ms. Simmons if there is a time frame on when the group would meet, such as monthly or just during camping season? Ms. Simmons asked if the Commission meets monthly. The Commission stated they do meet monthly. Ms. Simmons responded that it wouldn't have to be only during the camping season. They may have ideas that come up in the off season that they would like to see implemented in the upcoming camping season. The group would most likely meet year round and if something comes up they can bring it to the Commission at the monthly meetings.

Mr. Hill stated they had also thought about creating a Facebook page so the public would be able to see what is being discussed and add their own input.

Mr. Ritchie informed Mr. Hill and Ms. Simmons that some things they would like to see implemented may not be possible because of legal issues. Mr. Morelli added they could look at forming a formal, non-profit group like "Friends of Natural Chimneys".

Mr. Hill stated they understand not everything can be implemented. Ms. Simmons stated if the County can do it great and if they cannot then it can't be done.

Mr. Barley asked Ms. Simmons and Mr. Hill if they are trying to get their input to the Board of Supervisors, the Commission, the Director, or the Coordinator. Ms. Simmons stated she would like to have it at Board level. Mr. Barley asked what she would like to see the Commission do. He stated she is free to come to any meeting as it is a public meeting. Ms. Simmons stated she would like the Commission's blessing to move forward with the camper group bringing forth ideas. Mr. Barley informed Mr. Hill and Ms. Simmons that this Commission is not a decision making board, they are advisors only.

Ms. Simmons asked if there is a way Parks and Recreation could help spread the word to campers to get their input. Mr. Barley stated organizations must persist before we should advertise for them.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Mr. Barley asked if there were any changes to make to the May 2021 minutes. May 2021 minutes were approved.

- a May 2021 minutes for approval

[May minutes edited.pdf](#)

Ronnie Ritchie moved to approve .

Sally Williams seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

4. Treasurer's Report

No questions or comments on the Treasurer's report.

- a June Treasurer's Report

[2021 JUNE Treasurers report.pdf](#)

Sally Williams moved to approve .

Ronnie Ritchie seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

5. Director's Report

No questions or comments on the Director's report.

- a June Director's Report

[June 2021 dir's report.pdf](#)

6. Matters to be presented by the Commission

Mrs. Williams asked Mr. Wells about the number of tickets being sold at Red Wing Roots Music Festival. Mr. Wells stated the number of tickets will be reduced this year. There will be a vaccine clinic at the festival in partnership with the Virginia Department of Health and Augusta Health.

- a Discussion about Parks and Recreation use of school facilities and amenities for programming

Mr. Barley stated he did not feel the Commission could discuss and make any collective decisions regarding the use of school facilities and amenities for programming without more Commissioners in attendance.

Sally Williams moved to table the agenda item.

Ronnie Ritchie seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

7. Matters to be presented by Staff

Mr. Wells stated the Commission would be visiting Schneider Park and the Diamondback Club directly following tonight's Commission meeting.

a Viewing/ visit of Stuarts Draft Park

b Viewing / visit of Diamond Club and Schneider Park

8. Old Business

No old business to discuss.

9. New Business

No new business to discuss.

10. Announcement of Next Meeting and Adjournment

Mr. Barley adjourned the meeting at 7:31pm.

Ronnie Ritchie moved to adjourn .

Sally Williams seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.