



RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL
SERVICES COMMISSION
MEETING OF NOVEMBER 10, 2020

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I. CALL TO ORDER

- Commission Chair Dennis Mitchell called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm

II. ROLL CALL

- Commission members present: Sandy Barth, Shuntel Beach, Dana Davis, Scott Doll, Kevin Johnson, Dennis Mitchell, Cheryl Rand, Jit Saha
- Commission members absent:
- City staff present: Department Director, Morgan Rodgers; Wills Park Manager, Matt Casey; Project Manager, Kurt Kirby; Community Services Manager, Amanda Musilli; Cultural Services Manager, Kim Zane; Administrative Office Coordinator, Valerie Jackson
- City Council:

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- Led by Cub Scout Pack 1429

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF October 13, 2020

- Motion by Cheryl Rand to approve minutes after removing sentence that indicated ceramics classes at Adult Activity Center were being conducted outside; 2nd by Shuntel Beach
- **All in favor. Motion carried**

V. OLD BUSINESS - none

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- Recognition of Pop Up Skatepark Committee Members – Rachel MacDonald, Ethan Palmer, Adam Warmouth, Thea Genet and Richard Genet. Rachel, Thea

and Richard were presented with commemorative skateboard. Ethan and Adam were unable to attend but will also receive a skateboard

- Johns Creek Memorandum of Understanding for recreational baseball, softball, and lacrosse presented by Commission Chair Mitchell. Will leave everything the same in memorandum except for term, will make it a two year term, not a one year term. No discussion. Motion by Cheryl Rand to accept memorandum as written; second by Jit Saha. Motion was approved unanimously

VII. PARTNER ASSOCIATION REPORTS

- John McLaughlin with North Metro Miracle League came forward to discuss their COVID response which began March 15th. It was particularly critical for Miracle League families because 80% are single moms with very little to fall back on as far as resources. Special needs families are the most vulnerable demographic right now. Within 24 hours the Miracle League did a pivot and became a QRF, a quick reaction force. The first thing done was to gather together everything in the way of water, paper towels, napkins, everything we had in our various facilities and coalesced it into one place. Sanitizing aerosol products were hard to find so we bought 114 handheld electric steam sanitizers and they were non-contact delivered very quickly to the families. Also bought 6 oxygen concentrators. There was such a crush of online shopping that it could take up to 10 days to get an order and these families could not go that long without those items. We started shopping and delivering and are still doing that. Can't do online shopping with food stamps or SNAP cards so Miracle League does the shopping and delivering for them. Did updates and emergency room protocols, alternative medical services, rules and regs for sheltering in place and coordinating virtual home visits with area first responders. Alpharetta Police and Fire are terrific and all work well together, particularly regarding these critical cases. Have law firms, psychologists and therapists all offering pro bono services. Fulton County has given them \$150,000 to help special needs families who are in financial crisis. If you're aware of a family that needs help, please let them know

VIII. REPORTS

A. Divisions:

1. Community Services – Amanda Musilli

- Marketing
 - Emily Shively has done a fantastic job for department in terms of earned media. Earned media is the kind you don't pay for – it's the kind that you earn thru sending out press releases and just doing great things. Got great earned media about the Alpharetta Elementary School playground opening, lots of articles that included our Walktober and free fitness programs, and lots of great media regarding rec programs. The AJC ran an article regarding 5 ways to celebrate fall and it covered our

scarecrows, the free fitness, and Walktober so there was a lot of great coverage that we got thanks to Emily

- Alpharetta Events Update
 - Still planning “Snowy Fridays”. Planning to make it snow in downtown Alpharetta the first three Fridays in December from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.
 - Launching Holiday Food Drive for third year. It will run from the 4th thru the 18th. We have seven confirmed donation locations, from City facilities to local faith-based organization facilities around town. 100% of donations go to NFCC. Wooden trees will be out like last year and we’ll be posting a map indicating where we have those locations around town
 - Will start to light up downtown the week of Thanksgiving. Will start with roadways and trees and will build up to big tree turning on December 4th. We will not have a countdown and an event like we usually do this year because of COVID
- Agriculture
 - This is where most of activity is happening in division because of COVID. Went online with volunteer program at the beginning of summer. Has been using SignUpGenius, which helps to organize when volunteers are coming. Between March 13th and October 20th, there were almost 2700 hours of volunteer time spent at the farm. It’s been a place where people can come and it’s very easy to stay more than 6 feet apart and be outside
 - 2021 membership drive was launched on November 1st. We currently have two plots available as two members accidentally bought two and we haven’t even promoted it yet. That was just letting current members know that they could sign back up so tomorrow it will be posted. There are also a lot of home memberships that will be coming back
 - Word has spread within educational groups and a lot of schools are signing up and sending their high school clubs. Milton High School, Alpharetta High School and, of course, we’re continuing our partnership with Cambridge High School. Just on Friday we had a high school group from Fulton Science Academy, one of our local private schools, come out
 - We will soon begin building our interactive chicken coop. Just met with a local builder last week and he’s got the plans so I’m hoping that by the spring when it’s time to bring baby chicks to the farm, we’ll be ready. It has two different sides, so we’ll have our older chickens on one side and our young baby pullets on the other side. Really excited to be bringing that level of education because it’s the first step in our composting education out at the farm. In response to inquiry from Commissioner Rand regarding where chickens are currently, Mayfield or Rucker, most are still at Mayfield and three are at Rucker in a very small coop and we

let them out during the day. Will be nice to have them all in one place so that we can put them to work and make them earn their feed

- Will also be installing beehive within footprint of the farm, which we're really excited to do. Have been waiting to get observation beehive installed and the same builder who is building chicken coop will be able to also build this piece. This is a beehive that you can actually open the door on and there's a plexiglass window there so that you can see the bees at work
- Educational programming is growing. Currently have an average class participation of about 26 people, which is great. Currently conducting classes on Zoom and will evaluate what we'll do in new year based on where we are as a community
- In response to Chairman Mitchell's inquiry regarding what an interactive chicken coop is, it's two coops under one roof but they're separated. Will have an adult side and a baby side and you'll be able to walk into it. Because both are under one roof, you'll get the feeling that you're in the middle of a chicken coop, but you won't actually be walking in the chicken coop

2. Wills Park – Matt Casey

- Wills Park
 - We almost get caught up and then last week we had Hurricane Zeta and it downed some massive trees at Wills Park. Not only that, there was just a tremendous amount of debris. Staff has been working very hard to clean it up and had the trail passable the morning after. No major structural damage although we did have a tree fall perfectly and miss the barn. We got very lucky because no horses were on the grounds at the time. The following day, we did have a horseshow coming in, but we were able to have the fallen tree removed
 - Speaking of horse shows, the GHJA Finals starts tomorrow. We'll have about 230 horses there to compete and it will go thru Sunday. It's the local governing hunter/jumper association state championship. We've also got a large, nationally rated horseshow that moves in next Wednesday, so we've got a quick turnaround. This will be our last large horse event of the year
 - Finally, the Rec Center bridge is complete! Detour signs are still up because we are now in transition to the secondary bridge that was compromised. We found a cavity which made 2nd bridge structurally unsafe. We're using same contractor and we've been told that it's not going to take as long. It will be a lot wider, a lot safer and it will really help with accessibility to that playground and thru that area. In response to Commissioner Doll's inquiry regarding if cavity issue had been abated properly to avoid future issues with erosion, the hope is that the clear span with the helical piers, which will really make it stable, will allow

debris and water to flow as it should. In response to Commissioner Rand's inquiry regarding whether it conforms to stormwater retention plan in that area, confirmed that it does

3. **Recreation Services – Christine Young (Presented by Amanda Musilli)**

- Adult Activity Center
 - Outdoor fitness will continue until weather turns cold, with plans for smaller groups to come inside depending on COVID numbers in community
 - Veterans Cookout was a great success, with about 70 people attending
- Alpharetta Community Center
 - Halloween Craft & Treat event was a success with 56 participants total over the two time slots
 - Gymnastics and dance winter break camps are planned
- Wills Park Rec Center
 - Badminton and pickleball are coming indoors with COVID safety procedures in place
 - Fall softball and youth soccer are both wrapping up
- Health & Wellness
 - Continuing outdoor free classes until the weather turns
 - Continuing to work on plans for rental space

4. **Cultural Services – Kim Zane**

- Upcoming Cultural Happenings
 - *A Song Can Change Your Life* Podcast – we do one a month. So, please, if you haven't listened, please hop on and take a listen. They're going really well. We have another podcast that we're trying to launch next year and will have more about that coming up
 - The show in the Arts Center Gallery is currently *Mix It Up* which will be there thru December 4th
 - We also have a solo show – *Norm Wagner* – which will start December 9th so please come by and see both shows
 - *Art Studio on the GoGo* – look for that. I put down times and locations but it's not like we're setting up shop. We try to give people a general vicinity but if it rains, we'll just go with it. You have to look for it on Facebook to see where it's going. It's meant to be fun and we're having a really good response to it
 - *It's a Wonderful Life* – Act I, our local acting group, is doing a live radio play. They're doing a virtual recording in radio style so they can still do their Christmas play
 - *Music Match* – there are 7 more shows to finish out the year so if you haven't been able to attend one, please do. There's a live music schedule online

- *Take Out Art* by Arts Alpharetta – 130 free art kits are being delivered to underserved students at two different elementary schools in Alpharetta. They offered it to everyone but two responded. The kits will be sized to fit into backpacks
- Art Center & Public Art
 - Not a lot to report on yet but they are looking at possibility of Art Center memberships. More to come on this next year
 - Alpha Loop Connection Mural – presented to Design and Review Board and they gave us some requests. Some members of the public came forward and spoke about the mural and we took that back to the artist. Presenting again on November 20th
 - Crosswalk Mural in Windward Community Park – will start painting on November 21. Our Alpharetta High School apprenticeship program will work with an artist and will be out there painting the mural
 - City Galleries –at the Alpharetta Arts Center gallery, we have too many show requests. We can only really have about 7 or 8 shows a year. We identified the Community Room at City Hall and we’re trying to turn it into a gallery. It will not interfere with any meeting space. We’re partnering with Arts Alpharetta on the project. We’ve also identified a third gallery at the Alpharetta Arts Center. We’re going to turn our hallways in the back area into a studio gallery. So, we will have three galleries – an advanced, an intermediate, and a beginner level. That way we’ve identified different levels and maybe one of our high school groups can show at the studio gallery at the Arts Center and bring their families in
- Historic Preservation
 - Has a planning meeting scheduled with the Alpharetta Historical Society regarding how to partner and utilize the log cabin

5. **Park Services – Eric Milley (presented by Kurt Kirby)**

- General Projects
 - Clean up continuing from recent hurricane. Webb Bridge Park, Fitness Park on Westside, and the Webb Zone at Webb Bridge Park were all impacted. The greenway had at least 10 trees down that impacted the trail directly. Staff cleared it and now we’re working with contractors to get the finishing touches completed. Most of the work this week has been on that
 - Boy Scout Troop 1818 recently completed a conservation project along the Greenway. They picked up 6 bags of trash that had been left along the banks during recent flooding. We commend them for their efforts
 - Bushes were removed in several areas at Cogburn Park
 - Alpharetta Fire Department, along with agencies from Cobb, Fulton, Forsyth and Sandy Springs, recently completed Aerial Rescue Training at Webb Bridge Park

6. Project Management – Kurt Kirby

- Park Development
 - Biggest movement has been at Mid-Broadwell Park – we have the land disturbance permit to do Phase 1 and that is to install the restroom. Receiving quotes so we'll be working to get that part of the park done and then move forward to get some of the rest of the design done. And then try to get funding to finish the park. In response to inquiry from Chairman Mitchell, it will be a single restroom
 - Innovation Academy – we're still working with Fulton County, trying to get approvals for a demo plan
- Veterans Day
 - In honor of Veterans Day, would like to give a shout out to all veterans. We have 7 current staff members who are veterans: Eric Hand, Air Force; Paul Tasal, Army; Eric Milley, Army; Nate Hand, Air Force; Curtis Bystedt, Navy; myself, Army; Eric Bowen, Navy

B. Director Update – Morgan Rodgers

- Would first like to say to Kurt and the other veterans, thank you for your service, we appreciate it. That does represent about 12% of our full time staff that were veterans so that's a good mark
- The exercise equipment that we're putting at Webb Bridge was donated by a fellow Alpharetta resident. He used to own a company that sold the equipment and then sold the company. This equipment was left in the warehouse and we went out to take a look at it. It was brand new equipment, still wrapped up. Nate and his crew physically lifted all this stuff up and moved it. The footers were poured today and hopefully by this time next week, we'll have 8 stations right there in the middle of Webb Bridge as an exercise unit. It's only going to cost us a couple of thousand dollars and it's probably about \$40,000 worth of equipment. We're really excited about it
- The other thing I'd like to mention is that today we did cut the ribbon at Preston Ridge Community Center, so it was an exciting day for us. Now we have programmable space on the east side of 400. We have three rooms that we're going to be able to program on a regular basis for programs being offered by the city. If you haven't been out there yet and you'd like to see it, call us and we'll take you out there to show it. It really is a very nice community center. We're still working on some of the policies that will come to this group and we're hoping that early 2021 will be when we're moving in there with our programs

C. City Council – none

IX. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

- None

X. ADJOURNMENT

- Motion to adjourn by Cheryl Rand. Second by Scott Doll.
- **All in favor. Motion carried**
- Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm
- Next Commission meeting: January 12 at 6:30 pm