

**TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT, SOUTH CAROLINA
RECREATION COMMITTEE
Monday, February 5, 2018**

**Municipal Complex, Committee Meeting Room, 3rd
Floor 100 Ann Edwards Lane, Mount Pleasant, SC 9464**

Minutes

Members Present: Gary Santos, Chair; Tom O'Rourke, G. M. Whitley

Staff Present: Eric DeMoura, Steve Gergick

Mr. Santos called the meeting to order at 9:18 a.m.

1. Approval of Minutes from the January 2, 2018 meeting

Mr. O'Rourke made a motion to approve the January 2, 2018 minutes. Ms. Whitley seconded the motion. All were in favor.

2. Public Comments

Ms. Kathy Landing, 2114 Sewee Indian Court, Mount Pleasant was recognized. She said she had a constituent who rides and runs at Laurel Hill Park contact her and they were concerned that it had become rundown. She said she did not know if this was the correct forum to bring it up but thought it was the right Committee to consider the concern if there is ongoing maintenance.

Mr. O'Rourke said that property was not the Town's. He said he did know who to contact and he will talk to that person.

Mr. Santos said it does get a lot of use which is a good thing.

3. Employee years of service recognition

Mr. Gergick recognized Ms. Sherrie Pompeii for five years of service. He said she previously worked with the Palms of Mount Pleasant and had 35 years of experience in recreation. He said she began as a Recreation Specialist and when Mr. Gary Jaster left in 2016, Ms. Pompeii was promoted to Coordinator at the Senior Center. He said she does an

excellent job of deescalating situations when people might be upset or need special attention. He said the Department was happy to have Ms. Pompeii.

4. Discuss Culture Arts and Pride Committee (CAP) seeking accommodations tax funds for a public art project in Mount Pleasant for 2019

Ms. Whitley said there have been a lot of very successful public art projects across the country such as Chicago with Cows on Parade and Los Angeles displayed Angels. She said they are fiberglass statues that prominent local artists are invited to use as their canvas in any way they want to. She said the pieces of art are then placed around town and it is a tourism draw and an opportunity for public art. She said she had been working with Ms. Amy Livingston on this and sending her information on some of the companies that complete this fiberglass work. She said the concept they were working with was Palmetto's on Parade and to have fiberglass palmetto trees and invite prominent local Mount Pleasant artists to take on a tree on behalf of the Town. She said the question is funding but because there is tourism connection with having a display like this, there was discussion of seeking an application for Accommodations Tax funds for this public art project to potentially roll out in 2019. She said they could start small with approximately ten for Mount Pleasant. She said there was a project similar to this years ago called Crabs on Coleman, but it was just for Coleman and did not work out the way they had hoped. She said that working with companies that are established to do the public art installations could be a positive thing for the Town.

Mr. Gergick said they could work with any of those projects as described. He said they did go head and put in an application on Friday to make sure they did not miss an application date before the Committee decides on how they would like to move forward. He said it was an application very general in nature to request the funding.

Mr. Santos asked the size of the palmetto trees.

Ms. Whitley said they were fiberglass and five feet tall. She said some artist choose to put tile work on them, some have painting and they are coated with a resin, so they are weather proof. She said they could be mobile and they would be all over the entire Town at various places where the Town has land where it could be publicly displayed. She said it would be like an Art Walk throughout Town.

Mr. O'Rourke asked if there was a specific amount of funding that was being requested.

Ms. Whitley said she was not aware that the deadline was on Friday. She said she spoke with one company that was estimating \$2,000 per fiberglass statue. She said the other component would be to get local businesses to provide grants to local artist towards the cost of their time and materials to complete the art. She said they would be recognized on a plaque at the base of the piece.

Mr. O'Rourke asked if the actual grant would go to the Culture, Arts and Pride (CAP) Committee and they would administer it.

Ms. Whitley answered in the affirmative. She said they were recently made aware that CAP is under Recreation.

Mr. O'Rourke asked if the funding would fall under Recreation also.

Mr. DeMoura answered in the affirmative. He said they did not want to be presumptuous, but the application was put in for \$24,000. He said CAP is appointed by Council. He said that Recreation Department staffs it through a liaison, personnel, and staff support. He said staff does not run the CAP as it is an appointed body of Council. He said they are prepared to move forward. He said if the Accommodations Tax Committee recommends it, the Committee gets to decide if it gets funded and then CAP would oversee if with staff support from the Recreation Department.

Mr. Gergick asked Ms. Nicole Harvey if the \$24,000 applied for would be used to support the Palmetto's on Parade as well as the mural initiative.

Ms. Harvey said Ms. Rebecca Gosnell was present and was the former

co-chair of the CAP Commission. She said the application she put it was at Ms. Gosnell and the Chairman's direction and thought there was another application in for the Palmetto project.

Ms. Rebecca Gosnell, 1223 Long Point Road, Mount Pleasant was recognized. She said she is Vice Chairman of the CAP Commission and member of the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee (ATAC). She said the Palmetto Tree Project is something that was news to the CAP Commission members. She said they had asked staff to submit, at their direction, an application for public art. She said they have several projects that the Commission intends for that application to cover and it did not cover the Palmetto Trees. She said they have the Traffic Box Program and want to complete an Art Everywhere Program. She said the entire budget for CAP up to this year has been \$10,000 which is why the crab project did not launch in the way they had hoped. She said the Palmetto Tree project is a \$20,000 project coming through an organization whose entire budget for multiple projects has been \$10,000. She said there is difference between expectation and budgets. She said that CAP is actively working on several visual art projects and excited that the Palmetto Tree is an idea that someone is interested in as more visual arts the better. She said the funds they applied for are for things that CAP has been working on the last two years.

Mr. DeMoura said if this was an item that the Committee is interested in then they at the staff level will support it through the process of funding.

Ms. Whitley said it is something that is potentially long term and not expected to be rolled out tomorrow. She said timing needs to be considered and the thought was to not use the CAP budget of \$10,000 that they use for their projects but to apply for ATAC funds and try to get tourism dollars for that.

Ms. Whitley made a motion to direct staff to pursue Accommodations Tax funds for a potential 2019 public art project in Mount Pleasant. Mr. Santos seconded the motion.

Mr. O'Rourke asked what it meant to pursue funds because they have to

go through the budget for this and it has to be approved through that process. He asked if they vote yes today that does not mean there is guaranteed funds for this.

Mr. DeMoura answered in the negative and said that it means the Committee is supporting this project.

All were in favor.

5. Report on discussion with Snowden Community regarding use of fields

Mr. Santos said Mr. Robert Coaxum approached him about working with the Snowden community to increase recreation and partnering together as they have fields and the Recreation Department has programs.

Mr. Robert Coaxum, Vice President and Athletic Director of the Snowden community, 435 Gurley Street, Mount Pleasant was recognized. He said he is annexed into the Town. He said the field is not being utilized and they are looking to partner with the Town in helping them get the field together and helping them with the equipment such as the basketball goal not being used. He said they want to get the children to utilize the field.

Mr. Santos said the idea is the Town would work on the field to get it fixed and they would maintain the field.

Mr. Gergick said that being able to use neighborhoods is a big benefit for the community. He said people in the Snowden community could put together a flag football team, t-ball team, specifically in Fundamental age groups. He said for them to be able to gather and practice in their neighborhood. He said it would be in the neighborhood and one could walk or ride a bike over to the area or a short drive. He said the Recreation Department would love to have teams practice in neighborhoods. He said at the FUNDamental age group they generally organize teams by neighborhoods whereas in the older age groups there are drafts for players that are scattered throughout the Town.

Mr. Santos said there is a program called neighborhood sports. He said there were fields in each neighborhood and children could access them and play with neighbors. He said with Park West and Patriots Point and

some of the larger recreation complexes people started going out of their neighborhoods to practice and play. He said it took the community out of the community because with large subdivisions such as Brickyard if a child does not play on the same team or go to church together they may not get to know other children in their own neighborhood. He said by going down to a ball field and picking teams inside a neighborhood they are able to meet others. Mr. Santos thanked Ms. Sully Witte for a great article in the paper. He said he thought that the Snowden area would fit well into the type of program with practices at the neighborhood sports complexes and the games would be played on the Town's fields. He said they wanted to bring it up for discussion on how they are trying to work with the Snowden community. He said they would need to have Mr. Jody Peele, Public Services, look at the field.

Mr. O'Rourke said Mr. Coaxum said his property was annexed into the Town and asked him about the percentage of kids that would play that are annexed into the Town.

Mr. Coaxum said there over 100 children in the community and probably 30 percent would be participating.

Mr. O'Rourke asked what sports would be utilized on the field.

Mr. Coaxum said he would like to have flag football, baseball, and coach pitch.

Mr. O'Rourke asked if it would be issues if the Town fixed up the field and when the Snowden community is not using it if there could be use by some other Town programs.

Mr. Coaxum said he did not see where there would be a problem.

Mr. Santos said the only set back would be there are no lights. He said they will have to do it in the daytime but in the summer and day light savings time it stays light later, and practices could be held.

Mr. O'Rourke asked about when the other 70 percent that do not live in the Town sign up at the Jones Center for a program if they pay an additional fee.

Mr. Gergick answered in the affirmative. He said the regular fee is \$50 for residents and \$100 for non-residents as is the case with almost all of the Recreation programs. He said it is double for non-residents.

Mr. Santos said they need to look at the fields and see what can be done and get this program going.

Mr. Gergick said that would be the right approach. He said if the Committee would like them to they can direct staff to evaluate the fields, see what would need to happen to get it in condition to be utilized, and come back with a cost estimate so they would have an idea of what they would be approving.

Mr. DeMoura said he thought it would be important as they complete the analysis to determine at what level do they want the fields to be. He asked if they wanted them to be Park West level, Woods- Flowers level, or somewhere in between because there is a big difference in cost.

Mr. Santos said this would be for younger children and they need something that will be safe but nothing real fancy. He does not believe the fields are in terrible shape and just need a little work.

Mr. Gergick said they should be maintained at an appropriate level for a practice facility and games would be played at the other facilities.

Mr. DeMoura said they can bring it back next month to the Recreation Committee. He asked if similar to the performing arts center discussion a use agreement should be drafted to accompany the analysis of cost.

Ms. Santos answered in the affirmative.

Mr. DeMoura asked if Mr. Coaxum would be the person to speak to at the right time about putting in a form and an agreement for field use.

Mr. Coaxum answered in the affirmative along with the president of the community, Mr. Jenkins.

Mr. Santos said it is great to team up with communities and for a long time they have been looking to things with Snowden and this is a perfect opportunity. He said he has asked around and Chief Ritchie thinks it is a great opportunity. Mr. Santos said this would be minimal amount of cost,

but the benefits would be tremendous. He said people in Snowden will see the Town working closely with them and it may entice more of them to annex into the Town.

Mr. DeMoura said that next month they will bring back some general cost and a framework for use agreement.

6. Discussion of Mount Pleasant Art Walk

Mr. Santos said he, Ms. Whitley, and members from the cultural arts had a meeting and they talked about some things they would like to do. He said out of the meeting they talked about getting the arts going in Alhambra Hall. He suggested that artist could set up, paint and there could be an artist walk and people could buy the art from them.

Ms. Whitley said the concept would be to invite the local artist to put together a display, have a vendor there selling wine and beer, and people could walk around and view the artist. He said the two artists groups are Mount Pleasant Artist Guild and the Charleston Artist Collective which has a new gallery on Whilden Street. She said it would be a great way to incubate the arts in Mount Pleasant and have the walks up to four times a year. She said they could try one to see how well it is received by the public and the artists. She said the Old Village Pitt Street has had some art walks on Thursday nights that has been very well received by people in the Old Village. She said that having something larger at Alhambra Hall could be very well received by the public.

Mr. Gergick said they can make things happen but will have to make sure Alhambra is available. He assumes it would be an evening or weekend type of event.

Mr. Santos said they will have to pick a date to benefit everyone. He said he knows Alhambra Hall is very popular for weddings and they do not want to hurt that. He said they will have to do some research.

Ms. Whitley said the logistics will need to be worked out. She said there may be too many artists applying or not enough. She said there is a feeling from arts community that they want a show of support from the Town. She said offering this art walk to support local artist would be a great way

to do that.

Mr. O'Rourke asked if it was part of CAP.

Ms. Whitley answered in the negative.

Mr. O'Rourke asked if it should be.

Mr. Santos said it could be.

Mr. O'Rourke said if there was an arts umbrella everything should live under that umbrella with guiding principles for art. He said they have experts. He said if the Recreation Department starts putting on an art thing and they have CAP on the side.

Ms. Whitley said the CAP falls under Recreation.

Mr. O'Rourke said it might not be a bad idea.

Mr. Santos said that CAP was at the meeting. He said they all agreed it was a great idea. He said they are not excluding them and they will be included. He said he wanted it on the agenda today to make sure everyone was OK with doing it. He said he was not saying they do it.

Mr. O'Rourke said he had not been on Council long but since then they have talked about a Performing arts center, \$20,000 allocation in addition to the budget of CAP, and they are getting in the art business. He said he loved that and glad they are but there should be a discussion about the management of the arts business in the Town and how it is going to fall and who is responsible for what. He says all these great things grow and it is going to get larger and there needs to be a discussion about the management of arts in the community, who is responsible for what, and where does it fall. He said it may be easier for everyone if they all understood their jurisdictions as it relates to arts.

Ms. Whitley said CAP is appointed by Council. She said they are serviced by staff who is part of Recreation. She asked if it was a fair statement that currently some of the art projects are falling to the Recreation Committee because of that.

Mr. DeMoura said his observation is that the items have been generated

from the Recreation Committee. He said he was not sure that they came from CAP but have started at Committee. He said they are trying to feel out how best to organize them under what the Town does in terms of the arts.

Mr. Santos said it did come from himself, the Chairman of the Recreation Committee. He said at the meeting they had the cultural arts people in the room agreeing on it. He said they want to partner together and not exclude them.

Mr. DeMoura said if it helps they are happy at the staff level to coordinate with CAP and produce a framework for what it may look like and bring it back to Committee hopefully next month.

Mr. O'Rourke said that staff and CAP need to have a discussion about how they are going to manage arts in the community and then the Committee will know how to manage things as they come in.

All members of the Committee agreed.

7. Program/projects update

Mr. Gergick said they had a good January except for a slow down at the beginning with the weather. He said the participation numbers are doing well with speed training and wrestling. He said swim lessons were an area they were slow in January primarily because of the snow and being closed along with some pool issues.

Mr. Gergick said some of the upcoming Special Events are Sock Hops, Family Fun Night at the swimming pool and they are opening summer camp registration on February 26.

Mr. Santos said he liked wrestling increasing.

Mr. Gergick shared the Special Events Office as well as the Communications Office won the SCFEA Excellence Awards for some promotional materials. He said they won Best T- Shirt for the Holiday Events for a budget of under \$50,000. He said they won Best T-shirt for Blessing of the Fleet for activities over \$50,000. He said they also won Best Digital Media for the Holiday Parade Commercial. He said this was a

video done in preparation for the Christmas Parade as it was a light-hearted spin in that they did have to change the route. He said Mr. Rob Fowler helped them out and had staff dressed as elves and Santa Claus and was a very nice presentation.

Mr. Santos shared a flyer he found on Track Meets. He said he would like to have more as people come in town to run to generate revenue. He said it encourages people to stay in the Town's hotels, shop, and promote a healthy sport which is running.

Mr. O'Rourke asked if the Town Hall Track was going to be resurfaced and if the runways were also going to be.

Mr. Gergick said the track area would be resurfaced but the long jump and others will not be. He said they may be working with the College of Charleston on some things as there is some additional things they would like to have added for their benefit because they train there. He said they have look at the additional cost of covering things above and beyond what is needed for program needs. He said there is a possibility that runways and jump pits could be added. He said it will be a rubberized surface with low level lighting and new fencing.

Mr. Santos said this was where the Track Program started for the Town. He said the program has really taken off.

8. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Bedenbaugh, 02/05/18