

TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT, SOUTH CAROLINA
RECREATION COMMITTEE
Tuesday, September 4, 2018
Municipal Complex, Committee Meeting Room, 3rd Floor
100 Ann Edwards Lane, Mount Pleasant, SC 29464

Minutes

Members Present: Gary Santos, Chair; G. M. Whitley

Members Absent: Tom O'Rourke

Staff Present: Eric DeMoura, Steve Gergick

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

1. Approval of Minutes from the August 6, 2018 meeting

Ms. Whitley made a motion to approve the August 6, 2018 minutes. Mr. Santos seconded the motion. All were in favor.

2. Public Comments

Mr. Greer Hanlon with the Charleston Elite Lacrosse Club said they are a new club in the Town. He said they just had their first tryout at Park West with 140 boys and girls which was a huge turnout. He said they are trying to do some amazing things with lacrosse in the community. He said they want to change how the children look at sports in the community and bringing that together with the element of community service. Mr. Hanlon said he had been fortunate to work with Mr. Millar and Mr. Andy Weis in trying to obtain fields for their practices. He said it was a challenge and the Town has a lot to cater to within the Department. He said that what he identified in starting this club was that lacrosse is strongest in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina in the whole state. He said he was on the United States Lacrosse Board for the state of South Carolina and their participation is the greatest in this town, not Charleston, but Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. He said he wants to keep his club within the town and use the town's fields. He said that 90 percent of their players and parents come from the town. He said he looked forward to working with Recreation in the future and said he has some things he is working on

personally in bringing a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I men's lacrosse game to the area. He said it would be two top five programs within the NCAA. He said that Mount Pleasant is one of the locations they are looking at and said they cannot go to Daniel Island due to a conflict of dates. He said he looked forward to the Department's support as they grow and getting a lot of interest in the sport in the Town. He said that people move to Mount Pleasant every day from the northeast and want to play lacrosse. He said they have to be open to lacrosse growing here not only from the inside but the outside as well. He said he comes from the outside being from Denver, Colorado. He said he played collegiately and professionally. He said that lacrosse was massive in Colorado. He said it was one of the western movement states and he was a part of that and would like to be a part of that here. He thanked for allowing him to be there and thanked Mr. Millar and Mr. Weis for their help.

Mr. Santos said he appreciated that and thanked Mr. Hanlon. He said it was growing fast and asked Mr. Gergick if Recreation still had a lacrosse program and asked why it was not on the report.

Mr. Gergick said it was a spring sport.

Mr. Santos said as he did not see it listed on the report he just wondered how many children were playing. He said the Town is growing and more and more people are wanting to use the fields as well. He said it was a great opportunity for Recreation.

3. Presentation of Mount Pleasant Recreation Department's Therapeutic Recreation program

Ms. Shelli Davis was recognized. Mr. Santos said he promised Ms. Davis when they were in Denver that they would try to do something for this program because it was a tremendous program and one they hear about the least. He said they hear about football, baseball, basketball, and lacrosse but do not hear about this program. He said he told her that they

would have her come before them and tell about all the great things that they are doing with the special needs children.

Ms. Davis said Therapeutic Recreation (TR) is also known as Unified Sports and also referred to as Special Olympics. She said it was year-round programming for youth and adult with and without disabilities, so they come together and play on a team as one. She said they offer swimming, basketball, soccer, golf, softball, and kickball. She said they had a program called Beyond Basics that was a partnership with another organization and it was for adults who had graduated from high school as after high school they have nothing to do. She said it was a daytime adult program where they come and learn about life skills such as money handling, proper hygiene, and socialization. She said Therapeutic Recreation is for meaningful training and competition opportunities. Ms. Davis said they partner with Special Olympics, so they have something to go towards. She said they have their swim season from January through May. She said they have a maximum participation cap because they have so many athletes who want to come in and swim. She said that Mount Pleasant Recreation hosts the local tournament, so all the swim teams come. She said that they also go to State tournament and go to National games along with International games. She said that after Denver they went to Seattle for United States of America (USA) games. She said they took swimmers and she went as a swim coach. She said for the past four years they have attended USA Summer Games. She said they have taken swimmers, golfers, basketball, and soccer players. She said that was out of Mount Pleasant, but they are representing the state of South Carolina and it was because of the therapeutic programs. Ms. Davis said they do a lot of partnerships with the local high schools, middle schools, and even the colleges. She said the College of Charleston and Citadel Soccer Teams work with the Therapeutic Recreation Soccer Team, instructing and running practices for them. She said that some of their other accomplishments the past four years is that they have gone to USA games. She said that the golf team that went to Seattle this year was asked to go to World Games in 2019 in Abu Dhabi. She said this was the golf team from the Mount

Pleasant program. She said they are not going because it was an extended amount of time and do not know if the golfer can be out of his routine for that, but the fact was that they were chosen. Ms. Davis said they do a lot of fund raising under the Special Olympics umbrella. She said they try to send golfers to national invitationals. She said they had been to Arizona, Florida, New Jersey, Seattle, and Hilton Head. She said they took a golfer to China a couple of years ago for a Special Olympic competition. She said they are doing big things. She said they had been in numerous media publications, had been on tv, they had been in magazines and newspapers. She said they were also featured on the golf channel for Professional Golf Association (PGA) Year in Review. She said they can talk about all the accomplishments and everything that they are gaining from the Special Olympics competitions, but she said it comes down to being an invaluable program. She said that the most important thing they focus on in life is building relationships. She said this was an opportunity for the athletes to find a friend, build a relationship, build their self-esteem, and build their life skills. She said they make life long friends.

Ms. Davis invited Ms. Kylie MacFarland to join her at the podium. She said in going through records she thought Unified Sports was started in Mount Pleasant over 20 years ago. She said that Ms. MacFarland had been there the entire time.

Ms. MacFarland said she had been participating for 20 years. She plays tennis, bowling, kick ball. She said she had gained confidence and liked socializing.

Ms. Davis said Ms. MacFarland represented the Town of Mount Pleasant in Greece a few years ago. She said that the former Mayor Billy Swails presented her with something.

Ms. MacFarland said she was given the key to the Town. She said the most important thing about going to kickball was having lifelong friends and said thank you.

Volunteer coach Phil Coffey said several years ago he started coaching the golf program after an unbelievable experience with the bocce tournament. He said for some people to be able to socialize it comes easy for others it does not. He said that this program allows this group of people to make lifelong friends which makes it an invaluable program for those that are involved. He said that personally it had been an incredible experience to get to meet some of the strongest people one would ever meet with the most amazing lives and the smiles that never end. He said it was something that he cannot explain. He said it had been an unreal experience for him. He said that the ability to grow the program and to facilitate the individuals to allow them to grow and enjoy who they are, and it is very important.

Ms. Gene Poulnot Carpenter said she was the mother of Elizabeth Carpenter who is 18 years old. She said they had been participating in Therapeutic Recreation since she can remember. She said they have come a long way because in 2005 she said that the recreation brochure said that anyone with special needs would be considered for activities on a case by case basis. She said they have really moved in the right direction and thanked everyone. She said her daughter participates in swimming and basketball. She said that swimming is her life. She said for some reason at the age of three she learned to swim on Sullivan's Island. She said they really cultivated it. She said that Special Olympics Piranha's, which she has been with since the beginning, gave her the confidence to let her know that she could succeed. She said that she did summer league but after doing Piranha's for a couple of years she now swims varsity for Bishop England High School in her third year. She said that she has gone to nationals in Princeton. She shared a picture of her daughter getting her medal from Ms. Dara Torres, the number one female swimmer in America. She said it gave her the opportunity to know that she could be successful. She said she swims summer league for Hobcaw, but Piranha's is really a special place in her heart that gave her the ability to really shine. She goes to State every year and said Ms. Davis had been instrumental in this program and thanked everyone.

Ms. Santos said that when they were in Denver one of his highlights was him going to the practice and watching them dance. He said when the song they danced to is played now it make him think of them. He told Ms. Davis that they do a great job which is why he wanted them to come today and tell everyone what they do.

Ms. Davis said they need to remember it is a Mount Pleasant program and it is not just her.

Ms. Natalie Baker said she was the mother of a 15-year-old boy with Downs Syndrome. She said they had been actively involved in TR since he was five, six, seven, eight or early as they could. She said Ms. Davis is their angel that keeps them in line. She said whatever the Committee can do to help Ms. Davis out would be great as she has their children's best interest at heart one hundred percent of the time. She said she was there on weekends, at events, and takes them to China and where ever else. She said that they as parents could not operate and do as well without having this Mount Pleasant program. She said Mount Pleasant is known all throughout the area of the low country and the state as the best place for children with disabilities. She said it is a wonderful thing and they are so proud of everyone who helps at the Recreation Department. She said they have children that maybe other children do not want to socialize with. She said that these programs on the weekends are so important to their families to keep them active. She said they have to do a little bit more sometime to get them to get out and exercise. She said it was a great thing and that as people have said about the town growing in population so are the disabled community. She said she had been the treasurer of the Lowcountry Down Syndrome Association for six years and just in that little realm of disabled people they have so many more children coming through the ranks. She said they had about 15 babies that were under the age of three at last year's holiday party. She said that it is going to continue to grow and asked for the Committee to help them and Ms. Davis and thanked them for their continued support.

Mr. Santos said that he forgot the lady's name that went to Denver with her.

Ms. Davis said it was Ms. Angie Cirnigliaro.

Mr. Santos said that they did a great job and had them where they needed to be when they needed to be there, and he was so proud of them.

4. Report from Culture, Arts & Pride Commission

Ms. Bren Monteiro, Vice Chair of the Culture, Arts & Pride Commission (CAP) thanked the Commission for all the support that they had received. She said they had an increased budget for the upcoming year that has helped plan some larger and better initiatives. She said that the purpose of the CAP Commission is to artify Mount Pleasant. She said they are doing their best to work with local artist as well as local businesses to see what they can do to build partnerships. She said they are doing everything from helping beautification to a mural program that is starting and some ongoing programs and new things in the works. She said one initiative was oyster sculptures that are made out of fiberglass and they will have business sponsors that they match with artists on the first round. She said they are hoping to do five or six in that first round and it is still in progress. She said they are in the beginning of the details on how they are going to reach out to those artists. She said that Paint the Town is their mural project which is a new. She said they are going to request artist work and will be doing them on public property. Ms. Monteiro said one area is under the bridge on Bowman and are awaiting South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) approval. She said also plan for an area by Shem Creek. She said they have a list of businesses around town that they are reaching out to and seeing who would be a good match and willing to help sponsor an artist. She said CAP's role would be to connect the artist and facilitate that relationship. She said that Town Hall Art is what previously was called the Mayor's Office Art Program and it has sort of evolved. She said that Town Hall has a lot of wall space on the second and third floors, so CAP is looking to ask local artists for art work. She said that they will still put something in the Mayor's Office and thought he may like to pick

which one. She said they will have submissions open throughout the year. She said that particular program will be for high school seniors and above. She said they decided that by senior year at Wando some of the students are exceptional and would love to have them included. She said they had talked about future evolution of this program to include some of the recreation centers and maybe have that be more student art. She said they would like to see where they could spread it throughout the town. She said that It's Raining Art is a program the Commission started this year. She said there is special spray bottle of paint that only shows up when it is wet. She said they paired with local poets who submitted poetry about Mount Pleasant. She said the Commission did an initial installation at the Mount Pleasant Towne Center and also at the Farmers Market which they did right before summer. She said that since there was a lot of rain hopefully people saw it. She said they are going to evolve into silhouetted graphic art. She said if they could image for instance something similar to the Town logo. She said they will be accepting artwork for that. She said it had been very successful and the Town partnered with Towne Center and they are extremely excited, and they keep wanting more and more because they have so much space to walk on and it has been a good match. She said that the Traffic Box Art has 16 traffic boxes that have been wrapped to date all along Highway 17. She said that in Phase II they are expanding to Coleman Boulevard. She said there are five more budgeted for 2018-19 and one is a private business funded one as they approached the Commission and said they wanted to wrap the traffic box next to their business. She said that sculptures were something done in conjunction with the College of Charleston's Art Department specifically the Sculpture Department. She said that two sculptures are selected annually. She said they are currently being displayed at the pocket park on Coleman right next to Moultrie Middle School. She said they have a donated sculpture that is installed at the Park West Recreation Center. Ms. Monteiro said that had one that is to be installed at the Jones Center. She said they also have another one that they have not chosen a location for yet. She said they are always looking to see where they might be able to put a sculpture as it is an ongoing program. She said that Beautification is the Tree Bank

Grant which they match grants of \$500-\$1,000 for specifically civic groups and individuals for public spaces. She said that once a year they have the Civic Pride Award which is given to a business or organization that beautifies their property to beautify Mount Pleasant. She said they like to acknowledge that the local businesses are part of keeping Mount Pleasant beautiful. She said they have a refined Marketing Program moving forward including their newsletter. She said they add initiatives with social media and spend more time on newsletter. She said they are hoping to put an explanation of their different initiatives onto their website page. She said some of their completed Initiatives were: Writers Workshop, the Blessing of the Fleet and Seafood Festival Art Contest and Reception, a mural at the Miriam Brown Community Center, the Shem Dig in 2015, and the Coleman Crab Crawl. She said they appreciate the continued support especially on the budget increases that are allowing them to expand what they are able to do.

Mr. Santos said he loved love art. He said he found a certificate from Gibbs Art Gallery in 1977 where he took a course in drawing. He said he collects paintings and it has always been a part of his life and was sure a lot of other people felt the same way. He said he appreciated hearing this report and looks forward to working with the Commission.

5. Carolina Park Phase 3 cost analysis

Mr. Santos said that after speaking with Mr. Lee Gastley, the Administrator, and Ms. Whitley they decided since Mr. O'Rourke was not present to postpone this agenda item. He said Mr. O'Rourke was such an intrigal part of the Committee and been a part of sports and athletics for almost as long as himself. He said he knew Mr. O'Rourke would like to be a part of it since he is also the Finance Chairman and the numbers would be very important when it comes to the Finance Committee as well. He said they would invite Mr. Gastley back to the next meeting so he would only have to give the report one time.

6. Program/projects update

Mr. Gergick said that overall youth sports were up about 160 from last year. He said that some of the participation numbers are not entirely completed. He said they are holding steady in baseball and cross country. He said that football was down in numbers but said that youth soccer and volleyball are going strong. He said adult softball was down a little bit again along with the tennis membership being down from last year. He said that swim lessons are strong, the Senior Center membership is doing well along with the summer camps. He said that the summer camps were wonderful with the signups and participation and everything went very smoothly. He said they had some of the largest numbers ever. He said on the first day of registration by noon they had double what they had in previous years. He said it was over \$300,000 in registration by noon on the very first day. He said that some happenings in August were the Regatta on August 14 at Hobcaw Marina. He said it was full and all the boats were used. He said that the Farmers Market had taken place every Tuesday. He said that CAP had the Paint the Town. He said that is rolling out and they are looking to get some artists to provide some submissions for potential locations around town and put some murals in different areas. He said also there are sculptures and the It's Raining Art program is going very strong supported by Wando High School and Jennie Moore Elementary students. He said that Towne Center has bought into this and want to have more. He said the Summer Splash Bash at Park West was August 15 and was a kick off to the new school year. He said there was a large crowd and it worked out real well. He thanked Mr. Santos and Mr. Owens for being at the Football Jamboree on Saturday and throwing out the first football. He said it was a very successful event at the Charleston County School District (CCSD) Stadium. He said that Sock Hops are starting this month until May. He said it was a popular event and said they are looking forward to getting them at the Town Hall Gym in the fall of 2019.

7. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Bedenbaugh, 9/4/18