

## **BOTETOURT COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**

The regular meeting of the Botetourt County Parks & Recreation Commission was held on **Monday May 2, 2022**, in Room 212 at the Botetourt County Administration Center.

**Members Present:** Mr. Tim Snyder (Chairman), Mr. Danny Agee, Mr. John Mays, Mr. Alan Bayse, Mr. Steve Clinton, Mr. Matthew East, Mr. Robert Campbell, Mr. Dean Hackett

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Mandy Adkins, Recreation Director  
Shontae' Wade, Recreation Manager  
Tara Williamson, Administrative Assistant  
Ricky Dowdy, Maintenance Director  
Wayne Carter, Turf Manager  
Jon McCoy, Planner  
Jennifer Taylor, Cloverdale Booster Club  
David Hamblin, Cloverdale Booster Club  
Justin Beckner, Cloverdale Booster Club  
Nicole Pendleton, Greenfield Booster Club

**Mr. Snyder called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.**

Mr. Agee made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mr. Bayse seconded; motion carried-- minutes approved.

### **Old Business:**

Botetourt Rec Club:

At the last meeting, the nominees were approved by the Commission. Now, legal logistics are being worked out with the County Attorney so that the concept may be presented to the Board of Supervisors. No further updates on the Botetourt Rec Club.

### **New Business:**

Ricky Dowdy, Director of Maintenance, as well as Wayne Carter, Turf Manager, presented the field maintenance plan. As far as full-time employees, besides Mr. Carter, there are five others. One is stationed at the maintenance building; however, the remaining four are fully dedicated to the upkeep of athletic fields. Regarding mowing maintenance at the Sports Complex, most labor relies upon part-time help. Volunteers are not allowed on County equipment due to insurance issues. Mr. Bayse expressed his disappointment in the upkeep of the mowing of the disc golf course and presented his potential source of additional labor from the Sherriff's office. Mr. Dowdy stated that a couple holes on the course have been closed due to the potential threat of falling trees.

Mr. Snyder asked if Mr. Dowdy feels that his department has been budgeted adequately. Mr. Dowdy expressed that he believes his budget is adequate, and that the Administration listens to his concerns.

Ms. Jennifer Taylor stated that the booster clubs have had to field concerns and comments over the condition of the school athletic facilities.

Mr. Wayne Carter stated that the field conditions are not indicative of how he plans to continue the field maintenance plan. Buchanan, Troutville, and Breckinridge softball fields are in poor condition, requiring a “complete redo”. The Maintenance Department is looking to procure and secure contracts for this work. He will begin looking at simplifying the agronomic program, keeping fertility and maintenance at a manageable level.

Mr. Agee inquired as to the minimum age necessary for workers. Mr. Dowdy responded that the minimum age is 18. Mr. Agee suggested that this information be presented on the “Botetourt Moms” Facebook page, ideally leading to the labor recruitment.

Mr. Agee asked if the disc golf course could be contracted out. Mr. Carter proposed the employment of goats, citing the success of Ballyhacks’ goat mowing program.

Mr. Snyder asked if Mr. Carter feels appropriately funded. Mr. Carter responded that his needs have been met adequately.

Mr. Hackett stated that Botetourt is not alone in their field conditions; other localities have suffered the same issues, resulting in similar poorer field conditions than normal. His teams have played on some of the worst grass fields in the past year at other high schools, so this is not an isolated concern for Botetourt County.

Mr. Snyder thanked the Maintenance Department for attending tonight. Aside from limited budget and labor, this year has witnessed a record number of sports participants.

Ms. Adkins stated that one visiting coach did express that the field he played on was the best he had seen that season.

Mr. Hackett emphasized that the hiring out of jobs may be the solution, as it has proved exceedingly difficult to recruit employees to execute the work necessary. It may prove more sustainable to address solutions outside the box.

Mr. Snyder suggested inviting Shelby Bryant, the Sports Complex Manager, to the next meeting to address additional logistical maintenance questions.

Mr. Clinton believes that we have good-intentioned, well-meaning people on both sides. He stated that the intensity he is hearing from the Commission requires a stronger dialogue channel with the Board of Supervisors. Perhaps what this Commission is expecting is more than what the Board is currently funding. The Board may have to consider upgrading its expectations and support of Parks & Recreation and Maintenance. Regarding the labor issue, it is a matter of raising pay or lowering expectations. Opportunities need to be explored surrounding what can be done physically versus fiscally.

#### **Botetourt County Comprehensive Plan Update:**

Jonathan McCoy presented the Botetourt County Comprehensive Plan Update.

Within the next week, a virtual kick-off will commence to allow public involvement. The “2017 Parks, Recreation, Greens and Blueway Chapter” established multiple key takeaways, including the following:

- Recreation inventory and analysis
- Greenfield Recreation Park, greenways & trails

- Recreation & Transportation Coordination
- School Resources,
- Collaboration
- Communication & Marketing.

The goal established from this chapter is outlined as the following:

“Maintain and seek to expand a system of high-quality parks, greenways and trails, recreation facilities and program throughout the County”.

Mr. Mays suggested that “blueways’ be added to the goal statement.

Objectives to meet goals:

1. Continue to engage in long-term, strategic planning for County recreational resources.
2. Enhance communication with Botetourt residents and visitors about recreation projects, services, and issues.
3. Continue to improve and promote access to parks and recreation opportunities.
4. Continue to upgrade, maintain, and expand trails, greenways, and blueways throughout the County.
5. Development a greenway system that serves as the backbone for a network of trails and amenities throughout the County.
6. Continue to seek funding for recreation improvements .

Mr. Hackett inquired as to why maintenance of facilities that we already own does not rank higher on the list. We shouldn’t go on and build new facilities if we can’t afford to maintain what we currently possess.

Upcoming Outreach:

A survey will be disseminated to the public in order to acquire additional feedback. As soon as the survey is ready, Mr. McCoy will share it with the Commission members.

Mr. Snyder suggested adding a multi-use facility à la the Brambleton Center to the list of amenity goals.

### **Recreation Department Report**

Ms. Adkins presented the Recreation Department Report.

It is officially two weeks into the Baseball/Softball season, with 71 teams playing. The goal is to have more games at the Sports Complex.

Upcoming Events:

May 21<sup>st</sup> - Summer kickoff “Movie in the Park” at Troutville Elementary. This is the first of a series of movie events, with additional viewings in each district.

June 4<sup>th</sup>- BOCO WILD at Buchanan Town Park. This is a reimagined event that builds on the traditional Fishing Carnival offered in the past.

June 5<sup>th</sup>- IRONMAN 70.3 Virginia’s Blue Ridge

June 29<sup>th</sup> – July 1<sup>st</sup> - USA Cycling Amateur Road Race National Championship. About 700 participants are anticipated. Three of the four days will occur in Botetourt County.

Other news:

This evening marks Tara Williamson's last Commission meeting as Secretary as she has accepted a position with the State.

No new business.

Mr. Agee made a motion to adjourn; Mr. Bayse seconded. Motion passed; meeting adjourned at 8:14pm.

**The next meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission will be June 6, 2022 at 6:30 pm.**