

**FREDERICKSBURG  
RECREATION COMMISSION  
Minutes of April 21, 2016**

The April meeting of the Fredericksburg Recreation Commission was held on Thursday, April 21, 2016 at Maury Commons. The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:31 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Mrs. Susan Tyler, Mrs. Sharon Null, Mr. James Bailey, Dr. Timothy Duffy, Dr. George Foster (arrived late), Dr. John Gordon, III, Mr. Ken Kroko, Mr. Brandon McVade and Dr. Marcus Tepaske. Also in attendance: Director Jane Shelhorse and Mrs. Patricia Sparks.

- I. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of March 17, 2016 were unanimously approved.
  
- II. **Public Comment:** A presentation was made by the Chairman of the Clean and Green Commission, Mr. Robert Courtnage and Green Committee Member, Mrs. Anne Little. Mr. Courtnage gave a brief background of the Clean and Green Commission. Formerly known as the Beautification Commission, in 2007 it was reinstated as the Clean and Green Commission. With the rebirth of the Commission, their mission changed and expanded. The Clean and Green Commission consists of three committees. The *Green Committee* is primarily responsible for the planting of trees and works closely with Tree Fredericksburg. The *Clean Committee* works on litter reduction efforts and will be looking at litter control and how to reduce litter in the City including the parks. The *Sustainability Committee* works on energy conservation issues. In the near future, the Sustainability Committee and City staff will be developing a compost program. These individual committees report to the Commission at large. The Clean and Green Commission members consist of eight City residents, one City Council member, one Parks and Recreation representative, one Public Works representative, one Planning Commission Member and one R Board member. Having these members on the Clean and Green Commission has created a more efficient collaboration effort. Ten years ago the trees in the parks were declining and dangerous. There were no funds budgeted for the removal of dangerous trees, and Public Works did not trim any trees in City Parks. Once the collaboration began between the City, Tree Fredericksburg and the Clean and Green Commission, there was a dramatic change in the health of the trees throughout the City streets and in the parks. In addition to tree planting, the Green Committee, Parks Department and volunteers do ivy removal, mulching, removal of invasive species and clean ups. The Clean and Green Commission would like to propose a partnership with the Recreation Commission and establish a proposal

whereby both park and street proposed plantings will be presented to City Council. Mr. Courtnage stated the Clean and Green Commission would like to have a strong relationship with the Recreation Commission, and make the tree planting process more transparent. He would like to see the Green Committee notify the Clean and Green Commission and The Recreation Commission on plans for planting trees, and each Commission would include the plan in their minutes, and that would be transmitted to City Council for approval as part of its consent agenda. This would add the transparency, but empower the professionals to manage the process.

Mrs. Anne Little gave a powerpoint presentation on the landscaping and tree planting process. Park staff identifies issues such as funding, park use, lack of shade, standing water, mowing concerns, sightlines, fencing, invasive plants and current vegetation. Park staff then presents the issues to the Green Committee for further review. City staff and the Green Committee consult on details such as funding, park use/activities, design, plant selection and an implementation plan. City staff finalizes the plan evaluating design, coordination with other City departments, review plant selection and budget impact. City Staff coordinates installation with the park schedule, prepares area for installation and then works together with Tree Fredericksburg to formulate a long-term care plan. Tree Fredericksburg coordinates the volunteers for the tree planting, and cares for the trees for the first five years, then hands the trees to City staff for long-term maintenance. The process of tree planting is comprehensive and it is a joint effort involving City Departments, Commissions and volunteers. Mrs. Little's presentation showed the gradual transformation of Maury playground and the improvements made using this process over a five-year period. Improvements included the removal of poison ivy, adding shade trees for playground users, and reducing mowing/maintenance issues in the park. She added that the trees that have been planted in the parks have all been planted to replace dead or diseased trees or to address specific concerns of staff and park users such as standing water or lack of shade.

**III. Communications from Staff:** The Commissioners reviewed the following reports:

**Financial Report** - March 2016

**Sports/Parks Report** – April 2016

**Leisure/Special Events Report** – April 2016

**Staff Contact List**

**Email from Janice Olsen** – The Commissioners received a string of emails and a handout addressed to Director Shelhorse from Mrs. Janice Olsen expressing her concerns on the planting of trees in City parks. Director Shelhorse stated she met with Mrs. Olsen to discuss her

concerns on planting trees in City parks especially in open playing fields. Director Shelhorse stated Mrs. Olsen feels strongly the Recreation Commission should have a bigger role in the planning process of planting trees in the City parks. Director Shelhorse had invited Mrs. Olsen to make a presentation to the Recreation Commission on April 19<sup>th</sup>; however, she declined the invitation. Commissioner Kroko stated that some of her concerns were addressed earlier by Robert Courtnage. Commissioner Foster stated that the open play areas are not required to be full regulation size for pickup games. Currently, Parks and Recreation does not allow pickup games on the fields at Dixon and it is important to have open space. Commissioner Null stated that there is plenty of open space to run and play at Memorial Park. Commissioner Gordon stated that the presentation by the Clean and Green Commission explained why particular trees are planted in an open space in a park, and having that information can eliminate some conflict issues. Commissioner Kroko reminded everyone it costs the City nothing to plant the trees. Director Shelhorse stated that the City Manager asked the Recreation Commission to make a decision on how involved it would like to be in the tree planting process. The Commissioners agreed they would like to be informed of future tree plantings accompanied with an explanation, if needed, for the planting of a particular tree in a particular park area, but would leave the final approval of the plan to the staff and professionals. Commissioner Tepaske recommended placing future tree plantings on the main City web page.

**IV. Noteworthy Dates:** The Commissioners reviewed upcoming programs and trips.

**V. Old Business:**

**A. Riverfront Park –** Director Shelhorse stated the architects, Rhodeside and Harwell met with City staff and stakeholder groups FOR, the Arts Commission and Tree Fredericksburg, to further refine and simplify the design. The architects will be reporting to the Riverfront Task Force in the next few weeks. The architects conducted soil-boring tests on the property. The architects have been working on the riparian zone along the embankment; making that area into a more of a meadow which will require less maintenance, keep the bank stabilized, and simplify the overall design. Funding has been requested in the FY17 CIP budget for more design development and FY18 for construction.

**B. Park Signs and Logo –** Commissioner Tepaske reported that he had received some suggestions from the Commissioners. He asked the

Commissioners continue to send their suggestions to him through the end of April. Director Shelhorse stated the upcoming brochure asks for comments from the community of “What does Parks and Recreation means to you?” Based on our last meeting, Director Shelhorse met with Higaschi Glaser Design. They are excited to work on the project and already have some ideas on logos. They would like to take the ideas gathered from the Staff, the Commission and the Community and proceed from there. Their initial proposal of approximately \$5,000 included three logo design concepts to be chosen for refinement, then final logo design, master digital artwork, letterhead, business card design and envelopes. For an additional fee they would work on how we could incorporate the logo into the other things we do like our program brochure. Higaschi and Glaser want to connect to the community and suggested they could tie the Parks and Recreation logo into the Main Street logo.

**C. Commission Retreat** – Director Shelhorse stated she reserved the building at Sunshine Park June 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, for the Commission Retreat.

**D. Eagle Scout Project** – The Commissioners received pictures of the 2016 Eagle Scout Amphitheater Project at Old Mill Park. Director Shelhorse referenced three dying, hazardous trees next to the amphitheater that will be removed and replaced as part of the project.

**E. Face the River** – Director Shelhorse reported that the Face the River Group, a group of volunteers from the Main Street organization, is looking to clean up the scenic view along the Rappahannock River to spur economic development. The Face The River Group has been working on getting some donations to help fund the clean up and is working with City staff to clear out some of the vegetation at the parking lot behind the Happy Clam and the George Street parking lot. The City has removed 7 hazardous trees and volunteers have cut vines hanging from the trees.

**VI. New Business: None**

**VII. Commission Concerns and Topics:**

**Commissioner McVade** stated he is working with the Idlewild Homeowners Association in regard to a proposed City park in the Idlewild Community. There is some opposition to the idea of having a public park in the neighborhood. Director Shelhorse stated that staff has some concerns that the site is part of a larger piece of property that is now being considered as a school site as early as 2020. The FY17 budget does not include funding for new park development.

**Commissioner Duffy** stated there is a lot support from City Council for the City Manager’s recommended FY17 budget.

**Commissioner Gordon** announced that the City Schools were assisting with Earth Day, by providing a shuttle for people from James Monroe High School parking area to Old Mill Park.

**Commissioner Null** stated she had received a compliment from a Mother who had a daughter attending a drama class offered by Parks and Recreation. Director Shelhorse will let Leisure Supervisor JoAnne Jones know.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

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**Jane C. Shelhorse**  
**Director**

**Date**

**Next Regular Meeting May 19, 2016 6:30 p.m.  
at Maury Commons, Suite 111.**