

BEAUFORT COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Buckwalter Recreation Center
Thursday, January 9, 2025
2:30 PM

Board Members Present

Bruce Yeager, *Chair, Southern Beaufort County*
Phil Kiser, *Southern Beaufort County*
Alan Arseneau, *Southern Beaufort County*
Carlos Cave, *School District Administration ex-officio*
Jonne Hayes Sr., *Northern Beaufort County*
Elizabeth "Buffy" Computaro, *Northern Beaufort County (via Phone)*

Board Members Absent:

Ron Campbell, *Northern Beaufort County*
Mark Rennix, *Northern Beaufort County*

Staff Members Present:

Antionette Binette, *Aquatics Manager, Parks and Recreation*
Eric Brown, *Director, Parks and Recreation*
Evan Christian, *Athletic Manager, Parks and Recreation*
Heather Clint, *Administrative Manager, Parks and Recreation*
Natasha Dortch, *Fiscal Tech, Parks and Recreation*
Lindsey Epling, *Assistant Senior Program Manager, Parks and Recreation*
Jack Fripp, *Grounds Maintenance Superintendent, Parks and Recreation*
Alexander Hunt, *Athletics Manager, Parks and Recreation*
Gavin Jones, *Facilities Maintenance Technician, Parks and Recreation*
Darrell Ketola, *Athletics Supervisor, Parks and Recreation*
Faranica Reynolds, *Recreation Coordinator, Parks and Recreation*
Robert Rozek, *Athletic Supervisor, Parks and Recreation*
Scott Schnee, *Athletic Supervisor, Parks and Recreation*
Shane Stager, *Deputy Director, Parks and Recreation*
Brock Vaughn, *Athletic Supervisor, Parks and Recreation*
Jeremy Way, *Marketing Coordinator, Parks and Recreation*

Brandon Whitener, *Assistant Athletic Manager, Parks and Recreation*

Dale Butts, *Assistant County Administrator, Beaufort County*

Audra Antonacci-Ogden, *Assistant County Administrator, Beaufort County*

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by **Bruce Yeager**.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were completed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Bruce Yeager asked for a motion to approve the agenda. A motion was made and seconded. **Motion passed.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Brian Fenlon with Low Country Pickleball Leagues came before the board to give a recap from the tournament that they held at the pickleball courts at Burton Wells Recreation Center. The tournament was held on the 16th and 17th of November 2024. The charities that benefitted from this event was Family Promise and Second Helpings. The two-day tournament raised 1,000 pounds of food for Second Helpings. They also presented a check to **Tamika Blake**, the Director of Family Promise, for \$12,687.00.

Brian Fenlon gave a financial breakdown: registration fees: \$12800.00, donations: \$908.00, raffles: \$970.00 and league expenses: \$1900.00. **Brian** stated that they loved the facility and would love to have another event there in the spring. This time it will be a three-day event as opposed to the two-day event. The charity for the next event will be Second Helpings. **Bruce Yeager** asked if anyone wanted to make a motion to allow Low Country Pickleball to hold another event at Burton Wells. A motion was made to approve the second or third weekend in March for a tournament, based on availability. The motion was seconded. **Motion passed.** **Brian Fenlon** said that he will come back after the event to give another update.

Mary Anne Becker, representing Beaufort Seniors, who participate with USTA, requested a waiver for some of the fees associated with court usage. She provided details regarding the number of courts they would need. **Bruce Yeager** inquired if she was from the same group that had previously appeared before the Board in July 2024, to which she confirmed. **Bruce Yeager** reminded her that a 50% discount on the fees had been granted at that time as a one-time waiver. He then asked the Board if they had any questions or comments. **Jonne Hayes** asked whether admission was charged for the games, and **Mary Anne Becker** responded that no admission fee was charged. **Jonne Hayes** also asked if there was a fee to join the travel team, and **Mary Anne Becker** confirmed there was. **Bruce Yeager** inquired whether they pay the USTA fees, which **Mary Anne Becker** affirmed. After discussion, the Board decided to deny the waiver request.

Robert Mondavi, representing Holy Trinity School tennis, expressed gratitude to the Board for the 25% discount on court fees granted last year and requested that the same consideration be applied for this year. **Bruce Yeager** inquired if there were any issues or concerns with the previous year's arrangement. **Robert Mondavi** confirmed that everything went smoothly. **Bruce Yeager** explained that the fee structure includes a provision for schools to access facilities at a 50% discount, subject to availability. A motion was made to continue the relationship, but under the guidelines of a 50% school discount. The motion was seconded. **Motion passed.**

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MINUTES

Bruce Yeager asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the November minutes. A motion was made and seconded. **Motion passed.**

FEE WAIVER / REDUCTION REQUESTS

Mary Anne Becker with USTA Ladies Tennis and Robert Mondavi with Holy Trinity Tennis presented during public comment.

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DEPARTMENT REPORT

- **Operations**
 - **Year over Year Review – Operations**
 - Buckwalter Recreation Center Check-Ins
 - 2022: 27,546
 - 2023: 40,503
 - 2024: 45,406
 - TOTAL: 113,455
 - Burton Wells Recreation Center Check-Ins
 - 2022: 3,484
 - 2023: 4,449
 - 2024: 5,521
 - TOTAL: 13,454
 - Charles Lind Brown Recreation Center Check-Ins
 - 2022: 4,752
 - 2023: 7,036
 - 2024: 3,244
 - TOTAL: 15,032
 - Grand Total: 141,941
 - **Year over Year Review – Sports**
 - There is consistent growth overall in sports and camps.

Shane Stager explained the total recreation check-ins by location. These locations are Buckwalter, Burton Wells and Lind Brown. **Bruce Yeager** asked why the numbers for the Lind Brown Center went down so much from 2024. **Shane Stager** stated that the number of check-ins for Lind Brown in 2023 included the Alvin Settles pool check-ins as well. These are regular check-ins for the facility. They do not contain programs, classes or sport events.

Evan Christian reports that soccer All-Stars went well. 10U boys, and 8U, 10U, 12U, girls, were all state champions, and 15U runner-up. All the teams did very well.

- **Athletics**
 - **Registration Numbers:**
 - **Bluffton – Current Leagues**
 - **Winter – Youth Sports**
 - Basketball: 932 (-14) registration closed
 - **Winter – Adult Sports**
 - Adult Kickball: 105 (-62) 11/1 – 1/1/25. Late registration ends 1/10/2025

Evan Christian states that kickball registration is per individual, not per team.

- **Bluffton – Upcoming Leagues**
 - **Spring – Youth**
 - Soccer: 210 registration 1/1/2025-2/7/2025. Late registration ends 2/14
 - Baseball: 154 registration 1/1/2025 -2/1/2025. Late registration ends 2/7
 - Softball: 45 registration 1/1/2025 – 1/31/2025. Late registration ends 2/7
 - Flag Football: 76 registration 1/1/2025 – 2/7/2025. Late registration ends 2/14
 - Lacrosse: 21 registration 1/1/2025 – 1/31/2025. Late registration ends 2/7
 - **Spring - Adult Sports**

- Volleyball: 1 registration 1/1/2025 – 2/16/2025. Late registration ends 2/23

- **Beaufort – Current Leagues**
 - **Winter – Adult Sports**
 - Kickball: 1(TBD) Registration 11/01 – 12/8
 - Basketball: 33 (-) Closed
 - **Winter – Youth Sports**
 - Basketball: 255(-24) registration closed

Alex Hunt explains that kickball is allocated one field, one night per week.

- **Beaufort – Fall Sports Recap**
 - **Fall – Youth**
 - Soccer: 494 (+24) registration closed
 - Baseball: 228 (+32) registration closed
 - Softball: 87 (+27) registration closed
 - Flag Football: 110 (+10) registration closed
 - Cheer: 37 (-7) registration closed
 - **Fall - Adult**
 - Baseball: 68(+2) registration closed

- **Beaufort – Upcoming Leagues**
 - **Spring – Youth**
 - Soccer: 81 registration 1/1/2025-2/14/2025. Late registration ends 2/21
 - Baseball: 58 registration 1/1/2025 -2/1/2025. Late registration ends 2/7
 - Softball: 23 registration 1/1/2025 – 1/31/2025. Late registration ends 2/7
 - Flag Football: 21 registration 1/1/2025 – 2/14/2025. Late registration ends 2/21
 - Lacrosse: 2 registration 1/1/2025 – 1/31/2025. Late registration ends 2/7

- **New Programming (Sports)**
 - MLB Pitch Hit & Run
 - Bluffton: Oscar Frazier Park
 - Free Lacrosse Clinic (Bluffton)
 - January 26th at Bluffton Center
 - Spring Youth Lacrosse (Beaufort)
 - Adult Basketball (Beaufort)
 - Adult Soccer (Beaufort)

- **Senior Program Update**
 - Centers:
 - Bluffton Center
 - Booker T Washington
 - Burton Wells Center
 - Dale Center
 - Lind Brown Center
 - Port Royal Center
 - Scott Center
 - St. Helena Center

Lindsey Epling showed an Overview Year in Review graph of the Senior Program in terms of meals served. The group dining numbers have grown from 2023 to 2024 whereas the home delivered meals (HDM) have decreased. The reason for the decrease is due to the age of our participants. We are adding clients every day. We have chosen the Port Royal Senior Center to highlight. They do a lot of community outreach by making pillows for nursing homes. They had a gingerbread contest within the center in December. They sponsored a family for Christmas. They all came together and bought gifts for the family. There are

about 50 people on the wait list to join the center. The only centers not on a wait list are Dale and Lind Brown. Meals delivered for November / December: HDM 3,445 Group 2,699

- **Aquatics**

Anny Binette showed a slide depicting an aquatic overview of member check in for the years 2022-2024. **Bruce Yeager** asked if these numbers included Fins. **Anny Binette** stated that they did. **Anny** also explained the fluctuation of the numbers. For 2022, we were using the Max Galaxy system and Rec Desk. There were also times that a pool may have been closed for maintenance issues.

The presentation shows the breakdown of check-ins by pool for the months of November and December 2024. The Bluffton pool is not listed as it has been closed for repairs.

Bruce Yeager stated that the slide gives a lot of good information.

- **Battery Creek:**

- Pool Hours:
 - Monday – Friday: 8am – 1pm / 2pm – 7pm
 - Saturday: 8am – 1pm (Lap Swim)
 - First Saturday of the month: Inflatables 11am-4:30pm
- Youth School Swim Lessons:
 - Monday – Thursday: 9am – 1pm
- Programs:
 - FINS: Monday – Friday: 4pm – 7pm
 - Deep Water Aerobics: Cate Taylor
Tuesday & Thursday: 11:30am – 12:30pm
- Patron Check In:
 - November: Public (876) / Fins (470) = total 1346
 - December: Public (617) / Fins (434) = total 1051

Bruce Yeager asked if there was any conflict between the public and Fins. **Anny Binette** stated that there are not.

- **Beaufort Pool:**

- Pool Hours:
 - Monday – Friday: 8am – 1pm / 2pm – 7pm
 - Saturday: 8am – 1pm (lap swim)
 - First Saturday of the month: Inflatables 11am - 4:30pm
- Youth School Swim Lessons:
 - Monday – Thursday: 9am – 1pm
- Programs:
 - Scuba: Ken McCracken – call to make appointment
 - Water Aerobics: Belinda Flohr
Wednesday & Friday: 10am – 11:15am
- Patron Check In:
 - November: 661
 - December: 727

- **Bluffton Pool:**

- Pool is closed for construction.

- **Alvin Settles Pool:**

- Pool is closed for the season. Will reopen May 2025

- **Classes offered at all pools:**

- Group and Private Swim (Children and Adults): year round

- Stroke Improvement: year round
- CPR: by appointment
- Lifeguard Classes:
 - Pre course: call for appointment
 - Class: January 25 – 31, 2025 (BFT Pool)

***NEW* Can now register and pay online.**

- **Recreation Update**
 - **Programs:**
 - Spring break camp
 - **Classes:**
 - Pickleball (Future)
 - Dance & Martial Arts (Future)
 - Karate
 - Zumba
 - Urban Line Dance
 - Salsa
 - Bachata
 - Gentle / Chair Yoga
 - Country Line Dance
 - Jungle Body
 - **Events:**
 - Beaufort Police and a School Break Movie – Charles Lind Brown Center
 - Plans for additional events in 2025
 - Vision Board (Future) – Charles Lind Brown Center
 - Repack the Backpack – Partnered with Select Health of SC and Department of Public Health.

ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATE:

Eric Brown discussed the importance of "telling our story" and emphasized the need to improve communication about the programs offered. He mentioned that each week, a new story would be highlighted to showcase activities in Recreation. Regarding the Bluffton pool, he noted that the contractor faced delays due to material backorders, causing the project to miss its deadline. However, the benefit is that the contractor is fined for each day the deadline is not met.

In updates on other projects, **Eric Brown** shared that both the Wesley Felix and Agnes Major complexes would be receiving new facilities, with contractors already in place and working on permits. However, there is no set start date for these projects. Several Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) are also in the works. Lind Brown will receive a new gym floor, bleachers, and restrooms, while the Bluffton Center will undergo a makeover, including new fields, baseball fields, and a volleyball pit.

Bruce Yeager asked about the decision for artificial turf or sod on the back fields at Bluffton Center. **Eric Brown** confirmed that artificial turf would be used, and he also shared that we are 60% in with artificial turf at Buckwalter. Carlos Cave inquired about the type of fill being used, and **Eric Brown** mentioned that he was seeking an alternative to rubber fill, as it tends to get too hot in the summer.

On the topic of the Bluffton pool, **Bruce Yeager** clarified that the delays were simply due to supply chain issues, which **Eric Brown** confirmed. **Jonne Hayes** then asked about any future plans for Basil Green, to which **Eric Brown** replied that there are no current plans for it.

Phil Kiser asked about the progress of the Master Plan, and **Eric Brown** stated that it is a "living document" and is moving forward. Finally, **Bruce Yeager** asked how **Eric Brown** was adjusting since joining nine months ago. **Eric Brown** expressed that he is doing well and is happy with how things are progressing.

Partnership and Facility Updates:

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- **Partnerships:**
 - **Adapted Soccer:** (BCSD, SOAR)
 - **Special Olympics:** (SOAR)
 - **Movie Event (Beaufort PD)**
 - **May River Basketball:** (BCSD)
 - **Thumbs Up**
- **Construction:**
 - **Bluffton Pool** – Working with contractor to identify new completion date due to longer lead challenges.
 - **Wesley Felix / Agnes Major** - Moving forward with phased approach to new buildings / programs.
 - **Multiple Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)** – Submissions for Beaufort and Bluffton.
 - **Additional information in BACKUP.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bruce Yeager stated that the next meeting is March 6th, 2025, at 2:30 in Bluffton, Buckwalter Recreation Center.

ADJOURN

There is a motion to adjourn. The motion is seconded. The meeting is adjourned.