

MURFREESBORO PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2021

12:00 NOON

MPRC Members Present: Mr. D. Edwin Jernigan, Jr., Chair
Dr. Charlie Apigian, Dr. Gloria Bonner, Mr. Rick LaLance,
Mr. Ronnie Martin, Mr. Eddie Miller, Mr. Ralph Ringstaff,
Mr. Ricky Turner, and Mr. Don Turner (ex officio)

MPRC Member Absent: Mr. Tim Roediger

MPRD Staff Present: Mr. Nate Williams, Director
Ms. Rachel Singer, Asst. Director
Ms. Brittany Garrett, Ms. Mitzi Hughes, & Mr. Cody Saffel

Others Present: Mayor Shane McFarland (for presentation)
Ms. Angela Jackson, Exec. Director of Community Services
Ms. Katie Driver, Staff Attorney

After the meeting was called to order, Mr. Ricky Turner led everyone in a prayer and in the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Dee Jernigan then presented the September 2, 2020, Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Commission (MPRC) minutes for consideration. Mr. Eddie Miller made a motion to approve the minutes as read. Dr. Gloria Bonner seconded, and motion passed by unanimous vote.

Mayor Shane McFarland next thanked Mr. Jernigan for his many contributions to the MPRC over the 27 years that he has served on the commission, with 24 years as the Chair. The Mayor mentioned Parks and Recreation projects completed under Dee's leadership: construction of Star*Plex, 15 miles of the Stones River Greenway, Barfield Crescent Park, Patterson Park Community Center Renovation, Sports Com Renovation and Boro Beach, and also construction of Richard Siegel Soccer Complex, Gateway Island, Adams Tennis Complex, and the Miracle Field. The Mayor added that Dee served under four MPRD Directors and has always had the best interest of the City in mind when making decisions and giving input on the commission. Due to Dee's tremendous service to the City, Mayor McFarland declared January 6th as "Dee Jernigan Day" in Murfreesboro. The Mayor additionally said that while Dee has served on the MPRC and volunteered in various ways with the department, MPRD has been deemed the best parks and recreation department in the state through the Tennessee Recreation and Parks Association over 20 times.

Mr. Jernigan said that he very much appreciates the honor and that it has been a privilege for him to serve one of the best parks and recreation departments in the state and Southeast, and he believes in the country as well. He gave credit to the commission, Council, staff, and volunteers for all they do for the department. He added that he also appreciates that former Mayor Joe B. Jackson asked him to serve on the MPRC many years ago.

Ms. Rachel Singer announced that MPRD was awarded the Healthy Place grant through Blue Cross Blue Shield last month (December) and that MPRD would be receiving a new, family inclusive playground (for all ages and abilities) for Barfield Crescent Park, which will have four main sections: features for kids ages 2 – 5 and also for 5 – 12, a fitness

area for older kids and adults to use, and a swing area. She added that this project is in line with the City's 2035 plan to provide accessible and innovative recreation facilities, and it fits in with the City's overall objective to improve physical and mental health, and the well-being of its community members. Ms. Singer mentioned that work on the playground installation will begin soon, and the playground could possibly be ready for public use by early summer, depending on the weather. Mr. Nate Williams informed the commission that the playground was a donation worth \$750,000, with no matching funds required. He also said that Ms. Karen Lampert, the City's Grant Coordinator, did a tremendous job helping to acquire the playground donation. Mr. Williams is looking forward to this great amenity for Barfield Crescent Park.

Mr. Williams next introduced the Recreation Facility Coordinator for Richard Siegel Park (RSP) Soccer Complex, Mr. Cody Saffel, who has worked with MPRD since 2012 and is an MTSU graduate. Mr. Williams believes he will be a good asset to the soccer complex.

Mr. Saffel presented the agenda item regarding "Field Rental Fees" for the soccer complex. He said the complex has been a popular soccer destination in Middle Tennessee since opening in 2005. He added that when all renovations are complete, there will be eight synthetic turf fields, along with an indoor soccer facility and office space. The complex is expected to become a popular regional destination when renovations are finished. Mr. Saffel said that setting "an hourly/daily rate now during the turf installation is necessary" to allow field rentals after the turf has been added. He also explained that "a more comprehensive fee structure will be presented to the commission at a later date that will include multiple options acknowledging local users and contracted partnerships." The current proposed fees were developed after staff's review of industry norms and through careful consideration of local and state partnerships. The fees are as follows: Standard rates for full day (\$720), Hourly (\$120); TN State Soccer Association discounted rate for full day (\$612); Hourly (\$102); and Rec League Provider (Murfreesboro Soccer Assoc.) discounted rate for full day (\$648); Hourly (\$108). Mr. Miller made a motion to approve the soccer fees as proposed. Dr. Charlie Apigian seconded. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Mr. Williams explained that soccer complex renovations were supposed to begin right before the pandemic hit, but due to the uncertainties early last year, staff started renovations on a smaller scale, just adding turf to four fields at first. Fields 1 and 2 will be substantially complete tomorrow, January 7th, and Fields 3 and 4 are under construction. The next phase of renovations should start in the coming weeks, after Council approval. The work will include adding turf to the other four fields, an indoor facility, office space, and installation of lighting on the Jordan Farm practice fields. Mr. LaLance asked where the indoor structure would be. Mr. Williams said that it would be at Field 5 and would consist of 90,000 square feet. Mr. Williams further mentioned that this renovation project originated through a partnership with Tennessee State Soccer Association (TSSA) who was interested in moving their headquarters from Nashville to Murfreesboro. The City and TSSA would like to make Murfreesboro a destination for soccer development. Mr. Williams said that groups are already calling the department to try to set up tournaments here.

Ms. Angela Jackson informed the MPRC that a conservation easement was donated to the department and accepted by the Planning Department and City Council. She explained that the property was along the Stones River behind the future Costco property. The easement is 440 linear feet and involves properties that could potentially allow for a good greenway connection at the Mark Pirtle Blueway Park at Farmer Lake. She added that there were maps in today's commission information regarding the easement and that she would be happy to answer any questions on the matter today or later.

Ms. Rachel Singer pointed out upcoming MPRD events and programs. She said that the deadline to purchase the annual BOGO monthly and yearly passes at Sports Com and Patterson Community Center will be January 9th, with the 19th annual Polar Bear Plunge on that same day at Sports Com's Boro Beach at 10:00 a.m. There will only be the jump this time, no festivities due to the pandemic. Ms. Singer said that Patterson's Sort-a-thon for the City's "Pack the Packs" was scheduled for January 18th from 9:00-11:00 a.m. for anyone who wanted to help sort the donated items. Dr. Bonner asked what type items should be donated, and Ms. Singer said food items were needed. She added that the packs full of food would be distributed to City Schools' families in need. Later in the month, on January 18th, there will be the Martin Luther King (MLK) Day of Service, which will be considered a "day on (of service), not a day off." Additionally, there will be a virtual student art show inspired by the teachings of MLK, Jr., prior to MLK Day on January 16th at Bradley Academy Museum. Ms. Singer mentioned that Outdoor Murfreesboro has a variety of guided hikes coming up this winter, some in Murfreesboro and some in surrounding areas. Further, the Spring Adult Racquetball League is starting up at Patterson Community Center. Interested participants may get information at Patterson or by contacting MPRD's Athletics Division. The last program mentioned by Ms. Singer was the Guardians of the Greenway, in which the public is invited to help clean along the greenway at specific trailheads on Thursdays in January and February, with the trailhead sites and dates listed on the City's website. Gloves, trash bags, and pickers will be provided to the volunteers during the cleanups. Ms. Singer stated that additional information regarding MPRD programming can be found on the Parks and Recreation website: www.Murfreesboroparks.com, which includes an interactive and updated calendar with department programs listed, and information is available on MPRD Facebook pages.

Mr. Williams said that he verified with Ms. Katie Driver, City Staff Attorney, that a new Chair for the MPRC needs to be determined at the next MPRC meeting. Mr. Williams also welcomed Mr. Ronnie Martin (City Council member) to the commission. Today's MPRC meeting is the first one held since Mr. Martin was appointed to the commission by Mayor McFarland. Mr. Jernigan said that he wished the best to everyone and that he'd be around, if needed. Being no more business, Mr. Jernigan adjourned the meeting.

Meeting Adjourned: 12:29 p.m.

Minutes Approved:

Eddie Miller, MPRC Chair

Nate Williams, MPRD Director