

PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Tuesday, September 2, 2025 | Glencairn Garden Learning Center
12:00 PM

MINUTES

PRESENT: Bev Carroll, John Coleman, Rodger Culbreath, Larry Erwin, Toy Rhea and Matt Watson
ABSENT: Rene Brannan, Lawrence Brown, Jr., Jacqueline Jones
STAFF: Becky Adams, Rebekah Ardis, Andrea Barnette, Jesse Holliman, Haley Gibson, Garnet McKeown, Jeff Pollina and Katie Waszak

CITIZENS' COMMENTS: None

STAFF

HIGHLIGHT: Jeff Polina has worked as a Building & Grounds Maintenance Tech I at the Rock Hill Sports & Event Center since April 2025. Jeff assists with daily maintenance at the facility and with tournament operations on the weekends. Jeff previously worked in the film and television industry, where he traveled frequently. Originally from New Jersey, Jeff has resided in South Carolina since he was 12 years old.

MINUTES: The August 5, 2025, meeting minutes were approved. Commissioner Coleman motioned to approve, with Commissioner Rhea seconding. All were in favor.

OLD

BUSINESS: Strategic Plan Update

- Jesse Holliman, Parks Division Superintendent, provided a capital projects update. An updated design is currently in the works for the Southside Regional Park. The Bleachery Fieldhouse project is continuing to progress, and floors are expected to start being installed within the next week. Armory Park renovations continue. The synthetic field and challenge course have been installed. The grand opening will be held on Sunday, September 21. The gym floors at Emmett Scott Recreation Center are being replaced thanks to funding from the Parks Foundation. This project is currently underway. The former Victory Garden area has been removed, and paving will begin next week for the basketball and pickleball courts.
- Commissioner Watson asked about the details for the updated Southside Regional Park design. Jesse noted that everything has been condensed to fit within the budget. The updated design for Phase One will include four baseball fields, which can be converted into eight softball fields, or youth football, soccer, or rugby fields, depending on the needs. The Park will also feature a stadium-style baseball and football field. Commission Chair Carroll asked if the retail space was still in the plans for the site. Jesse explained that space will still be available for retail development near the stadium.

NEW

BUSINESS: Parks Spotlight

- Jesse presented the Armory Park upgrades as the Parks Spotlight. The synthetic field and challenge course have been installed. The shelter, swings, and playground are currently being installed. The basketball court is currently being graded and paved.

Recreation Spotlight

- Andrea Barnette, Recreation Division Superintendent, presented the Recreation Spotlight. She highlighted the SCRPA Central District Workshop, which was held at McGirt Auditorium, and PRT who staff presented at the meeting. She then highlighted QC Life News Media coverage on Camp Arc and the overnight campers at Bethelwoods. Lifelong Learning hosted its Spotlight Presentation Kickoff with a keynote speaker at McGirt Auditorium. Cardio Drumming Class is one of the eighty-four courses offered for the fall semester. Movies in the Park was held in the Championship Arena at the Rock Hill Sports & Event Center in August due to the weather. Andrea shared an end-of-registration comparison for fall outdoor athletics. Participation increased with nearly 20 additional participants, even with the fee structure changes. Adult softball did not have enough participants sign up to have a fall season.
- Haley Gibson, Tourism Sales Coordinator III, shared an end-of-registration comparison for indoor athletic numbers. Youth volleyball and little hoopers (basketball) were both down slightly compared to the fall of

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2024. After a structure change for adult programs from team registration to individual, 18 participants registered. They will be able to have a season, but are evaluating how this will work with the low number of participants.

Tourism Spotlight

- Haley explained that on multiple occasions in August, each PRT tourism facility operated events at the same time. Cherry Park and Manchester Meadows hosted multiple showcase events for high-caliber athletes who are currently being recruited. Haley noted upcoming events for September and October. She explained that the fall months for the Sports & Event Center are slower, as most kids are participating in school sports during this time, and tournament play is not as frequent. They will be hosting a hot tub expo in the Arena at the Sports & Event Center in September, as well as the Pan American Table Tennis Championships in October. Additional tourism includes stage plays and a seminar that will be held at McGirt Auditorium. Haley shared that the number of events was up compared to last August; however, this year's events had fewer attendees, creating fewer room nights and direct economic impact.

Director's Report

- Andrea presented updated Tennis rates that were approved by City Council. These new rates are now consistent with the other non-resident rates in place, as they are now double rather than triple. Haley mentioned the rates that were approved for the Bleachery Fieldhouse pickleball programs. These rates include memberships, open gym and leagues.

Community Partnership

- The local chapter of the Youth Men's Service League (YMSL) volunteered at Miracle Park for multiple programs and events over the course of the summer.

Community Outreach

- The Rock Hill Tennis Center hosted an After-School Play Day for local kids to try tennis for free for a day. Over 30 youth were able to participate in the event.

**ADDITIONAL
COMMENTS:**

Andrea notified the Commission that Garnet McKeown, Division Lead – Recreation, will be retiring at the end of September after 39 years of service. Her dedication and contributions to recreation, including therapeutics, Rec in a Box and many other areas of service, have not gone unnoticed. A retirement celebration will be held at City Hall in Room 373 on Wednesday, September 24, at 2 PM. The Commission is invited to attend the celebration.

**EXECUTIVE
SESSION:**

N/A

NEXT MEETING(S): October 7, 2025, at Glencairn Garden Learning Center

ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Katie Waszak