



City of Clarksville Parks & Recreation Committee

April 8, 2025 at 4:30 PM
City Hall
4th Floor Conference Room

MINUTES

1. Public Comments

None

2. Call to Order

The Parks and Recreation Committee meeting was called to order by Councilman Zacharias at 4:30 p.m. on April 8, 2025.

3. Announce Members in Attendance

Councilman Brian Zacharias
Councilman Tim Chandler
Councilman Joe Shakeenab
Councilman Wanda Smith
Councilman Ambar Marquis arrived at 4:36 p.m.

4. Approval of Minutes

A. March 11, 2025

Councilman Smith made a motion to adopt the minutes as presented.
Councilman Chandler seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion to adopt the minutes passed without objection.

5. City Council Action

None

6. Committee Action

None

7. New Business

None

8. Old Business

None

9. Department Reports

A. Council Report

Jennifer Letourneau presented the May Council Report to the Committee.

B. Adaptive Programming

Jennifer Letourneau introduced the Parks and Recreation staff members in attendance, including Autumn Griffin, the new Therapeutic Recreation Programmer; Ereka Clark, Superintendent of Recreation; Kim Gilbert, Event Planning Supervisor; and Tina Boysa, Athletic Superintendent.

Kim Gilbert presented a slideshow to the Committee, detailing the adaptive roundtable discussions that began in August 2024. These discussions involved 10 organizations dedicated to serving individuals with special needs. The goal of the roundtables is to support these organizations and the individuals they serve through inclusive activities and events. Participating organizations include the Clarksville Association for Down Syndrome (CADS), Clarksville Adventures, NIA Association, PDI, and the Clarksville-Montgomery County School System. She noted milestones, such as the Sock Hop with 298 participants, and an Easter egg hunt with 400 individuals expected to attend. Upcoming events include the Special Olympics Games on April 24 and a 12-week wellness program starting on April 28th.

Ereka Clark continued the presentation by outlining the goals of the Therapeutic Recreation Program, which include offering a diverse range of activities, fostering personal growth, and promoting both physical and mental well-being. She emphasized the department's commitment to inclusivity, tailoring activities to participants' comfort levels. Ereka also introduced Autumn Griffin, the new Therapeutic Recreation Programmer, who holds a degree in Recreation Administration and brings experience in recreational behavior therapy. Ereka then highlighted the success of recent initiatives such as the No Limits program and Nerf Wars, both of which received positive feedback from participants.

Kim Gilbert emphasized the importance of water safety, particularly for children with autism, and highlighted the success of the department's adaptive swim lessons and swim days. These free programs are designed to teach water safety and help participants become more comfortable in the water in a supportive environment.

Jennifer Letourneau commended the staff's dedication to expanding their skill sets-learning activities such as Tai Chi, Pilates, and adaptive swim instruction to better serve the community. She noted that these efforts help fill a gap in Clarksville by providing essential programming and resources for individuals with special needs.

Councilman Shakeenab inquired about the department's outreach efforts and methods of reaching the community. Ereka Clark explained that the primary outreach is conducted through the adaptive roundtable meetings and word of mouth from caregivers. Kim Gilbert added that promotional magnets will also be used to spread awareness. Karla Ellis noted that the marketing team is working to clarify program descriptions in order to better explain what adaptive programming is and to make the information more accessible. Councilman Shakeenab recommended exploring partnerships with other city departments to increase community engagement.

Councilman Zacharias acknowledged that the community has faced difficult times recently and emphasized that once recovery is done, residents will be looking to this group. He noted that in times like these, the city needs their services the most and expressed gratitude.

C. Recreation Update

Karla Ellis informed the Committee that Fit Fest has been rescheduled to June 14th due to flooding on the original date. The new date falls on Father's Day weekend, which will also feature the Father's Day Car Show at the Downtown Market. She announced that the department's new activity guide will be released soon and offered to share a link so the committee members can stay informed about upcoming events and programs. Karla also reminded the Committee that the Rhythm and Reels series will kick off next month, beginning with performances by the CMCSS jazz bands at Dixon Park. Additionally, she noted that the Summer Youth Program is set to begin in June.

D. Operations Update

Randy Kelly provided an update on recent challenges faced by the department, including repeated flooding and ongoing maintenance projects.

E. Projects Update

i. Pedestrian Bridge

Jennifer Letourneau reported that the pedestrian bridge project has been delayed again, as the manufacturer originally selected is no longer producing the bridges.

ii. Spring Creek

Jennifer Letourneau shared updates on potential property acquisitions aimed at expanding park spaces and developing additional blueways.

iii. Current Road

iv. Swan Lake Renovations

Jennifer Letourneau reported that the Swan Lake Sports Complex renovations feature pickleball courts, a renovated infield, and an inclusive playground.

Councilman Smith thanked the Parks and Recreation staff for their presentation and the valuable information shared with the Committee.

10. Adjournment

Councilman Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Chandler seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:07 p.m.