

Town Hall Meeting Minutes
Recreation
Saturday, February 5, 2022
9 a.m.

Mayor Kim Learnard thanked everyone for attending. She thanked Recreation and Special Events Director Quinn Bledsoe, City Manager Jon Rorie, City Clerk Yasmin Julio, and IT Specialist Stephen Shelton for coming in on a Saturday morning. Council members Frank Destadio, Mike King, and Phil Prebor were also present.

The Mayor recalled that during her eight years as a Council member, they disbanded the Recreation Commission, which she felt was the right thing to do, but now seemed to be a good time to assess the current situation in recreation. The parks and recreational amenities were what made Peachtree City a standout. They wouldn't solve anything today, Learnard continued, but Council needed to be good listeners, and this input from citizens would help them decide what steps to take going forward. Council had control over the annual budget, and there was a committee meeting now that would propose projects to be funded through the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST). In November, potentially, voters would see the countywide SPLOST on the ballot. If the majority of Peachtree City voters approved it, it would probably pass, and they would have that sales tax money to spend on local projects.

Learnard said she looked forward to hearing what the citizens had to say and hoped this meeting would be constructive and positive.

BMX Track Director Shayne Robinson said she served on the Peachtree City Recreation Board for 10 years, and had also served on the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) Board, and the Fayette County Transportation Board for five years. BMX was where her heart was, though, she said. They started racing at the track six weeks ago, and numbers were up. They averaged 100 to 110 riders every weekend, with about 500 people at the track. Two big events were coming up this year. Regional Qualifiers were March 25-26, and they were working with a hotel on that. State Qualifiers would also be here. She said she worked closely with Bledsoe and her staff and thanked them.

Lights were a concern for some people there, but Robinson said the lights were the best thing that had ever happened for BMX. Because it was pay as you go, a lot of local parents who did not get off work early could bring their kids at night. The lights were 42 years old, so the price was just \$2 an hour, she remarked. It also meant less vandalism. They had had nothing but positive feedback. There were times when they worked through the night to slurry the track. If she needed lights, she reached out to the City for extra time, Robinson related. They had invested in their own security cameras and had five. This contributed to the decrease in vandalism and also could monitor the dog park.

Robert Sanford said he was president of both AFC Soccer and Lazer Soccer. They were bouncing back from the pandemic, and he expected about 3,500 players from youth, travel, and adult for spring and fall and a smaller group for summer. He explained that they shared organization with Fayette County for the travel side of youth soccer.

He said he had been doing this for about 15 years. The fields were in great shape, and the facilities looked the best they had ever looked, but there were still drainage problems at the Peachtree City Athletic Complex (PAC) and Glenloch. After heavy rains, those fields could take weeks to dry. Their dream was to one day get some kind of turf option in Peachtree City to bring them in line with nearby communities.

There were a few ongoing issues with the lights, but the City had been good about working to solve them, Sanford commented. They had no problem with paying for the lights, but it was somewhat inconvenient to have to go and swipe cards and turn things on and off. They needed to get all the kinks worked out so the lights did not cut off in the middle of an activity.

Destadio said he had heard a lot about problems with the lights, but said Sanford seemed to be okay with the situation, saying staff was working with them. Destadio mentioned that the Mayor had plans to look into it.

They were okay with paying their share for the lights, Sanford replied, but he did not know if the credit card method was the way they should continue. He said he had probably had about 25 or 30 communications about light problems this season. They had been solved, and the lights seemed to be working well now, but his preference would be for them to pay the City directly for the lights, and not have to worry about a credit card.

Destadio told Bledsoe that the main problem he had heard about was a weak connection between the internet box and the cell tower. There had been programming issues, Bledsoe stated.

Sanford said they still had some things to overcome. There was a button on the card reader, and anyone could just walk by and press it, and the lights would go out. They were working on an additional switch. Dealing with the light card was just one more thing for them to remember, Sanford remarked, and it would be easier to just pay the City directly.

Prebor asked if turf had been improved so there were fewer injuries? There was a lot of talk about that in professional sports for many years, Sanford remarked, but he had not heard much about it recently. His players played on turf in other places, and there had not been an uptick in injuries. Most of the clubs they played had access to some sort of turf fields. He wanted to see a mix, saying he would never support that all fields be turf. The ball rolled really fast on turf. He said he would like turf for the adult league and the little kids. Little kids liked to dig holes with their cleats in grass, plus the turf would allow usability after it rained.

Erin McDowell, the volunteer president of Peachtree City Girls Softball, said they had just started practices for their spring season, and it was the largest group ever. Their players were ages 4 to 18. She echoed everyone's comments praising City staff.

She said she met with Rorie three years ago about being charged for lights. They raised registration costs, and that was not an issue. However, the lights had made her job harder. The light pole was in the middle of the quadrangle of fields. Children were constantly turning them off, regardless of the measures they had taken to prevent this. When the lights were turned off, they had to wait 20 minutes to turn them back on. The City did not owe them top-notch facilities, but it did owe them a safe place to play ball. She recalled being the pitcher in one game when the lights went off because they lost the cell signal. They hoped that problem had been corrected, McDowell stated, but there were constant issues. She said she was not aware of any other city or county that had these problems. She had been told that the City could tell how much they were pulling from each light and proposed they be billed every month for that amount.

Destadio clarified with McDowell that it took 20 minutes for the lights to come back on once they were turned off. She again said she did not blame staff, but there were constant issues. Last year, at an end-

of-season tournament, they had problems every night. It was embarrassing; people had come to play in Peachtree City, known for its recreation amenities, and they could not keep the lights on.

Destadio asked Bledsoe if they could put a box, like a thermostat cover, around the light switch? Bledsoe said what they could try was a fixture that denied access while the lights were in use. She believed that would be the way to go. Another possible fix was to give the person paying a single-use access code.

Bledsoe went on to say one positive was that the public had been able to use the fields and the lights. If there was a locked box around the switch, it would lock out the public. Destadio acknowledged that was a good point.

Peachtree City Pickleball Club President Sharon Conrad and Vice-President Phil Castagna spoke next. Conrad said the club started five years ago with about 20 members and had grown to 520; 420 were Peachtree City residents. She thanked Bledsoe and Rorie for working with them, noting that four pickleball courts had been set up in the Kedron Fieldhouse in place of some basketball courts. This was a great option during the winter. She also thanked them and Council, for creating six outdoor pickleball courts at Braelinn. They were popular; if you went at 1 in the afternoon, all six courts would be in use, and people would be waiting.

In the future, they would like to see the City adapt other underutilized tennis courts for pickleball. Also, many players had asked for lights at Braelinn, Conrad continued. There were lights at Glenloch, but some people objected to having to pay for them.

Castagna also thanked Rorie and Bledsoe for working with them on the Braelinn courts. He said he would forgo the lights if the City would give them the same amount of money for new courts. He recalled that 25 years ago, his kids played soccer at Drake Field. The City saw how soccer was growing and built facilities to accommodate it. Pickleball was the growing sport now. Council must be the visionaries, Castagna remarked. Last year the club gained more than 375 members.

Learnard said she was sure they had their eyes on some prime locations for more courts; where would that be? Castagna said there was a lot of recreational land in Peachtree City. He played softball and umpired for a combined 25 years. There were some unused softball fields at Meade, and Castagna said he did not know if that land had been earmarked for something else, but that was the primary spot he thought of.

Conrad said they would probably have to do a study to determine which courts were underutilized. She also wondered about the Tennis Center. Pickleball tournaments were a big, big thing, she said, drawing players from all over. Peachtree City would be an ideal area. With more than six courts, they could run a ladder or a round robin.

Learnard said it was her understanding that the United States Tennis Association (USTA) would not allow tennis tournaments on courts that were striped for pickleball. Conrad said that was being reviewed with USA Pickleball. Learnard asked if the new 15-court pickleball facility in Newnan had lights, and Conrad said it had LED lights, the same as the facility in Griffin.

The impact of lights on the neighbors would be an issue at Braelinn, Prebor noted.

Did the 500 Pickleball Club members pay dues? Destadio inquired. Castagna said they did, and Destadio pointed out that associations for other sports had to pay for the lights at their facilities. Would the pickleball association be willing to contribute, too?

Castagna said they absolutely would. He noted that when the Braelinn courts first opened, they needed court number signs and the City had already purchased them. However, the City said it would not pay for windscreens, so the Club said it would purchase them and have them installed. Later, though, Rorie said the money might be available from the City. So, Castagna replied, they were willing to put club money into the facilities. They had been willing five years ago to get a loan from USA Pickleball to help fund the creating of courts. Club dues were \$25 a year, and there were 500 members. Several thousand others that used the courts were not members.

Conrad said they used the \$25 fee to help provide balls at the courts. The club offered new members four weeks of free beginner classes with certified coaches. That created camaraderie. Conrad noted they were a 501c3 and also held charity events.

Did adult softball not move to Coweta County? Learnard asked. Bledsoe said it did. Were those fields what Castagna was talking about? Bledsoe said there was space there.

King asked what the membership was at the Tennis Center and was told \$35 a month. He said he was trying to figure out a way the Tennis Center could help out. The Tennis Center had both indoor and outdoor courts, Destadio noted. King pointed out that with more than 400 Peachtree City residents in the Pickleball Club, the number was close to the what the Tennis Center's was. It was City property. That fault line they could probably expand on, he remarked.

Pam Kemp, chair of the committee that would be recommending SPLOST projects, noted they currently had six courts. How many did they need to run a round robin and a ladder? It depended on how many people they had, but Conrad said they had to limit round robins to 24 players. What was their vision? Kemp continued, and Conrad responded that they would love more 12 courts. They did not have to be all in one location.

How many players belonged to Flat Creek, where there were pickleball courts? Destadio asked.

If they wanted to be visionary, the Mayor stated, they could look at a 12-court facility at the former adult softball fields at Meade. Prebor said it would be better to have them all in one place. Was there an area at Braelinn they could carve out?

How much land would 12 courts take up? Learnard asked. Bledsoe said the six courts at Braelinn were 108 feet by 120 feet, so it would be that times two. There were three unused softball fields at Meade, so there was more than adequate space there.

Conrad wanted to add that four or five churches had turned gym areas into pickleball courts. Some offered it only to their members, but others were open to the community.

The Pickleball Club had paid for windscreens at Flat Creek, Castagna noted, even though it was a private corporation. That was where they currently held their clinics. Someone could visit Flat Creek six times a year and pay \$5 to play, but after that, they had to join. Since the Braelinn/Log House courts had been built he knew of 50 or 60 people who had resigned their memberships at Flat Creek.

Tom Johnson spoke next, saying he knew nothing about pickleball, but this situation interested him. He asked Council and Staff what was the single biggest eyesore they could think of around Peachtree City? He said he believed it was the tennis court area behind the Hilton Conference Center on SR 54. The Mayor agreed. Johnson said it looked like it had not been touched in a hundred years. Twenty or 30 years ago, he recalled, that was a vibrant place. People would stop by for cocktails and to hang

out. Perhaps the City could talk to Hilton about a partnership. They could re-do the courts as pickleball courts and host tournaments there. The City would get visitors and pickleball; the hotel and restaurants would get revenue. Everyone would win.

Prebor said that was a great idea.

However, Conrad said they had approached Hilton about that, and they said they were looking at turning it into a wedding venue. But that was several years ago, and nothing had happened. Rorie and Bledsoe said they had approached them, too.

Destadio stated that the overall decline in facilities bothered him. When you came to Peachtree City 20 years ago, there was a variety of activities you could do. Now they seemed to dwindle away. Prebor said Council several years ago took out loans for maintenance of these facilities, which were built many years ago using builder grade materials. Great strides had been made over the past eight years. He said money had not been budgeted for maintenance in the past, so they were in bad shape.

Pickleball was a family game, Conrad added. You could go out to Braelinn or Glenloch and see young kids, parents, and grandparents all playing pickleball. It was being taught in the middle schools now, a member of the audience commented.

Castagna concluded by saying both he and Conrad were certified pickleball coaches, so if anyone on Council wanted to learn more, they were willing to show them some basics. Maybe a Council/Staff match? Learnard proposed.

Learnard read some comments from people who were watching the livestream. Don Myers said thanks for holding this meeting and making recreation a priority. Jean Darcy thanked Conrad for bringing up the interests of the Pickleball Club. Paul Bureau pointed out that it was a safety issue if the lights at the softball field went out while the ball was in play.

Long-time Peachtree City Running Club volunteer George Martin echoed the comments of others in saying what a fine job Rorie and Bledsoe did. He said his job was similar to Rorie's in that he oversaw about 500 acres, around 100 buildings, and recreational amenities. He certainly understood that it was a difficult thing to plan for over the long term. You needed a capital needs assessment for every facility you had, whether it was sewers, roads, paths, etc. It was one thing to establish a plan and another to have funding to carry it out.

Martin wanted to talk about the Riley Field Complex, the track, in particular. It had deteriorated greatly. It was resurfaced about 15 years ago, he stated, but the useful life of a track was about eight to 12 years. The Riley Field track was no longer safe. The Running Club had had to move several events. Martin's main concern was small potholes on the track, and he showed photos of them and of cracks that had developed due to ground water seeping up through the deteriorated material. Essentially, he stated, they had a very nice facility that had lost the ability to be used for its intended purpose. He was encouraged to hear about the SPLOST and the possibility of remedying this situation.

Corey Thompson, head coach of the Peachtree City Flash, a youth running program, said they used this track as soon as daylight savings time ended. It was a safety issue. They ran in groups, often at very fast speeds, and, if one person went down, they all went down.

Peachtree City Flash had been around more than 20 years, Thompson reported, and they had about 100 youth athletes getting ready to start their spring season. They would be at Riley some, but they also used Braelinn.

He also wanted to talk about the lights, saying they had had very few issues. The switch was in an out-of-the-way position so no one turned them off, and the cell signal was consistent.

Martin stated they would like to have the resurfacing done as soon as possible, and, hopefully, funds would be available, maybe from the SPLOST. He knew it was expensive. The track at an elementary school was done about two years ago, and it cost about \$150,000. Martin said he was sure it would be higher now. Rorie said their quote was about \$300,000.

Running Club President Shelly Collins said they had an event that morning at Starr's Mill High. It was difficult to get access to a school track because they were always busy. The Running Club had paid to use the Starr's Mill facility for time trials because Riley was not suitable. They had to hurry with the event because there was a lacrosse game that would overlap with the time they had scheduled. They needed a safer place to call their own.

Destadio asked Rorie about that estimate. Rorie said they would not know the true cost without a request for proposal (RFP). Martin added that it depended on if they took it all the way down. Rorie said they would go first class, but the trick was to know when to do it.

Annie Hale and JoBeth Braddy introduced themselves as the directors and co-founders of the Georgia Singers Theater Company, a 501(c)3 musical theater organization for the youth of Fayette County. Their goal was to give young people a chance to take on major roles in full-length and one-act productions, as well as provide ensemble opportunities. They had integrated an intern program to allow students to take on the more technical roles, such as assistant directing, choreography, and stage crew. Since their founding in 2014, they had put on 19 musicals and one comedy.

People had stereotypical ideas about "theater kids," Hale remarked, but they should look beyond that. Theater gave these students public speaking skills, increased self-confidence, and afforded them acceptance and the ability to escape problems at home or school. They united with a purpose—to create a great show for their audience.

There had been some setbacks. A 2020 production was canceled a week before they were supposed to perform because Sams Auditorium in Fayetteville was not available during lockdown. They had been rehearsing for three months, Hale stated. They had to cancel their summer camp during COVID, as well as the fall show. Pre-COVID, they had the ability to offer at least one scholarship to a student each year, which allowed them to perform with the company for free. Now they did not have the funds to do that. There were able to do two productions in 2021, but the cast numbers stayed below 25 for both shows. It had been a difficult two years.

Their biggest challenge, Hale went on, was finding a venue to rehearse and perform. They had a relationship with the school system in the past, but COVID had complicated things. Summer camp was usually at a school but could not be held due to cleaning requirements. Wadsworth Auditorium in Coweta County was the only place they could find or afford.

Hale explained that she and Braddy were not paid for this work. They would like to partner with the City to support young people outside of athletics. They needed to discuss creating a county, or more specifically, a city performing arts center. They wanted to work with the local high school arts programs

to help create community theater. By speaking here today, Hale stated, they hoped to make their presence known and start a dialogue.

Braddy read some testimonials from previous Company members about the benefits of the program. One of the students, now a Georgia Tech graduate, said doing "The Little Mermaid" was one of the best memories of his life. Another said he wanted to come back this summer when he was home from college. A former student said she made friends for a lifetime and received love and support during her three years with Georgia Singers.

Melissa Flores said her daughter was a beach and court volleyball player. There was a beach court on Bluesmoke that was in immediate need of repair. It needed to be cut out to the right measurements, along with a new net and sand. Right now they just needed a place to practice. The bigger ask, she continued, was for four courts. Peachtree City would be a great place to hold tournaments. There was a big facility in Cartersville, and it was really a fun atmosphere. She suggested the courts could go into the big green space beside Kedron Fieldhouse. Maybe they could piggyback off a new pickleball venue. The courts were 30 by 60, she said. Right now, though, her purpose was to get the Bluesmoke court repaired.

How many girls were playing now? Destadio wanted to know. It was growing so fast, Flores remarked. McIntosh had won the State volleyball championship six times in the last 10 years. There was not a competition facility for beach volleyball. There were about 30 girls that went to Senoia to practice. The Heritage School in Newnan had a beach facility and would start hosting tournaments.

Learnard wanted to know more about Heritage's courts. They had two, Flores stated. The woman who ran the program in Senoia built four courts on her own property, Flores explained. Again, Flores said, there would be a lot of opportunity here for all types of tournaments, if they had a venue.

How complicated could it be? Destadio mused. It was just nets and sand. Flores agreed. It involved some excavation for the cutout, laying some pipe for drainage, then about a foot of gravel, topped off by a foot of sand. They would need poles and a net that could be adjusted for height.

An online commenter thanked the City for the upgrades at All Children's Playground, saying it was one of the few recreation options for children with disabilities.

Stephanie Wagner, chairman of the board of Southern Conservation Trust, wanted to talk about the public nature areas that brought thousands of visitors to Peachtree City. She said she did not realize until she came on the board that the Land Trust had been managing these areas for 25 years but had not gotten any City funding. This had become unsustainable. The Southern Conservation Trust was growing. They had a new education center in Fayetteville and were working in seven states. It had come to a point where it was not sustainable for them to manage the preserves here without compensation. Staff had been working with City administration on a proposal, and she requested that Council consider it.

Keith Larson said he was happy to hear all the diversity of ideas because that is what made a great community. He stated that green space and greenbelts were the cornerstone of the quality of life in Peachtree City, and their preservation was essential. Having this acreage would allow the City to install new recreation facilities and interests changed over the years. Over the last several years, he had heard rumblings about disposing of green space, including Riley Field for a school site; the disc golf course next to City Hall was included in the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI), and the softball fields off Rockaway Road could become a housing development. He asked the Mayor and Council for a

commitment that they would not sell off any greenbelt property in order to preserve future recreation spaces and provide flexibility for future recreation challenges.

Several residents had proposed a new boat launch and fishing area on Lake Peachtree. With the upcoming SPLOST, now was the time to support the aging population with an ADA-compliant dock at the Drake Field parking lot, Larson commented, saying congestion at Battery Way would make it difficult to put it there. This would help expand kayaking and paddleboarding, too.

Most residents would agree that the multi-use path system was the most popular amenity, Larson stated. On the last SPLOST project management list, for the first time, a life cycle management plan was created to handle repaving and bridge and tunnel repairs. SPLOST money allowed them to close gaps in the path network. SR 54 and SR 74 split the town. They needed a tunnel at the end of Robinson Road for the anticipated demands of the new middle school as well as a gateway bridge on the east.

Peachtree City was a recognized Run Friendly Community, Bike Friendly Community, and, hopefully, by next fall, a Walk Friendly Community. The fastest growing segment of the cycling population was senior citizens, Larson remarked, chiefly through the purchase of e-bikes. Larson pointed out that end of trip facilities were crucial for boosting bicycles as an active mode of transportation. They needed an ordinance requiring bicycle parking at businesses. This would also contribute to the reduction of car congestion.

He noted that the last two years had seen all-time record use of the path system, along with a rise in conflicts between users. The City formed an advisory group last year to make recommendations on path safety. It was a national standard to have a permanent advisory group, and there were lots of volunteers ready and willing to continue the work to monitor safety and improvement projects and propose new ones to address issues including motorized cart speeding. He urged Council to restart the advisory group so Peachtree City residents had a safe path system.

Ryan Akins wanted to talk about mountain biking, but first noted that he saw ebikes everywhere, and they were not just for senior citizens. He had ridden bikes most of his life and took up mountain biking about a year and a half ago. However, he had to drive about 30 minutes to an hour to get to good trails. He saw lots of people riding mountain bikes on the paths, but the bikes were made for dirt. He felt Peachtree City needed some mountain bike trails. Akins said he had been in communication with Brett Davidson, the executive director of Mountain Bike Atlanta, which built in this area.

There was an old trail near the PAC that had been abandoned. It was littered with pine straw and fallen tree limbs. Davidson and his group would be happy to come down and do a trail refresh, Akins stated. That would be a short project, and the City would have to cover some of the cost, but Mountain Bike Atlanta would cover some as well.

Akins also mentioned SWAY, a youth mountain bike association in southwest Atlanta. Right now they were riding in Newnan, and they would be interested in Peachtree City. He remarked that he saw a lot of mountain bikes out on the paths, and Peachtree City could be a prime spot for mountain bike riding if there was a good trail. People could just hop on a path and take it to a trail. Newnan had a one-mile mountain bike trail right off the LINC.

Learnard asked if the trails behind the PAC were unusable? They were covered in pine straw, and trees had fallen, Akins explained. A refresh would involve laying down fresh dirt, widening the trail, and also allow a group like Mountain Bike Atlanta to maintain it.

Larson said he brought Davidson from Mountain Bike Atlanta in about five years ago to look at various green spaces in the area. Southside Cycle Club had a facility use agreement for the so-called "stinky trail." When they started to build kiosks and do maintenance, they decided to do a geo-spatial mapping of the volunteer network that was all through the Flat Creek Nature Area. They found that 95% of the acreage above the swamp line was on private property. The club and the City tore up that agreement because they could not accept the responsibility of trespass on private property.

A paved path for all recreation through the Nature Area was a part of the Path Master Plan, Larson commented, and was built last year as part of the SPLOST. What Akins referred to in Newnan was where they had enough green space along the main path to do a side path for mountain biking. Also, Larson remarked, there were some areas along the stinky trail that could be used and were still being ridden but needed to be managed.

He said he had assisted with several Eagle Scout projects on the PAC trails. He pointed out that the City had expanded the PAC parking lot and had taken a lot of the woods to do so. Also, COVID had stopped much volunteer work. But now, if the City was finished, the Cycling Club could refresh that area, which had about two miles of trail. There was an opportunity to loop around the sports fields that could add another mile.

The SWAY team had been using these trails, Larson said, and Mountain Bike Atlanta would help. He hoped to get something going in the spring if they got permission from the City.

The more a mountain bike trail was used, the less maintenance it should require, Prebor noted, so they had to encourage use. Akins felt people did not know about it. People did ride the stinky trail, but it was not legal. Akins said he would like to see a three-mile loop. Prebor said they could publicize it on the City website. Mountain biking was growing in Georgia, and it would be cool if Peachtree City was on the radar, Akins commented. Larson told Prebor it was on the website. It did not show up on any trail tracking apps, though, remarked Akins. They would never be a mountain bike destination because they did not have the land to establish a 20-mile system, Larson noted, but they could maintain a trail for short rides. This was a low-cost to the community recreation opportunity.

The Mayor read a note from Gary Swey saying downed trees on the nature trails were a problem. Katie Pace said trail maintenance was needed more frequently. Learnard noted they had 70 acres at Line Creek, 500 at Flat Creek, and 40 acres in the Somerby area. Council was facing some decisions about how to maintain these areas.

Another resident stated that he and his family had used many of the recreation facilities and wanted them to spend more money on recreation. He commended them for the new facilities they had built such as Drake Field and Spyglass Island. He would vote for a SPLOST, he said, if it would be used for recreation facilities and paths. He commended them for improving the paths. He went on to say he wanted to see dedicated pickleball and tennis courts, as well as a dedicated indoor basketball facility. The current courts were often in use for other sports, so maybe they should invest in a new indoor basketball facility. He also pointed out that when his kids visited from out of town, he could not take them to play basketball. There should be an out-of-county fee like other areas had. He said he enjoyed the BMX track and hoped it would remain open to the public. He asked about the cover, and Robinson told him it was covered in rainy weather. He concluded by saying people would vote for the SPLOST if they knew that some of it would be spent on recreation.

Learnard noted that the key to a successful SPLOST was a project list that had something to appeal to everyone. She could fill a list with recreation projects, but it would not pass. Seniors might not vote for it

because they did not use those facilities. They did a good job coming up with a project list last time, she noted, and had a great committee this time.

Lynn Lasher stated online that she feared the beach volleyball courts would be used as litter boxes by feral cats. They would need to be covered. Flores said she had not thought of that, but they could use tarps. Flores wanted to add this court would not just be for the Peachtree City high schools. Other schools in the area could compete there.

Other residents wanted to know about the City's plans for the Kedron pool bubble? The Mayor noted that it was the only swim facility in the County and served all five high schools. Council and the SPLOST committee would have to look at what they wanted to do at Kedron. Prebor asked Bledsoe if she would like to comment, but Rorie stepped in with a quick "no."

King pointed out that it would cost about \$750,000 to re-do the bubble. Refurbishing all the courts at the Tennis Center would be around a million dollars. It was expensive, and citizens needed to have a say. There had been discussion about putting those two items on a referendum. Putting it on a SPLOST list would be the easiest way to pay because people from other areas would be contributing. SPLOST was the easiest way to get things done, King said, reflecting on the road and path resurfacing that had been paid for through SPLOST. The SPLOST committee would be coming up with a list that Council would prioritize.

Gary Sway said they needed to find a way to monetize these recreation facilities by working with hotels to attract competitions. Volunteer groups and Scout troops could be used for trail maintenance.

Justin Collins said he was a member of the Running Club and the Triathlon Club. Swimming was important to his family, but it was hard to use Kedron because it was so busy. Had they considered building another facility for swimming? The disc golf course needed signs to alert passersby that there were players. It was dangerous. Also, roots on the course were a problem. He thanked them for looking at Riley Field, which he often used with his clubs. He said he and his wife would definitely use a sand volleyball court. He did not support getting rid of facilities they had already spent a lot of money on.

Learnard asked him to expound on why he could not swim at Kedron with his kids. Collins said it was so busy that you often could not get a lane or had to share a lane, which was not good with young swimmers. He swam at the Piedmont Wellness Center, but it was crowded, too.

A citizen named Richard asked online if they had considered an operable cover at Kedron, similar to what was at sports stadiums? Learnard said they had. Lynn Lasher affirmed they did an amazing job with the previous SPLOST, and it was important to let people know what had been accomplished.

Jack Fannin, a resident for 40 years, commented on how dangerous it was to walk on the paths because of speeding golf carts. It was not all kids, either he noted. He predicted someone would be killed if action was not taken.

Tommy commented online that of the \$41 million 2021 City budget, 5%, or about \$2.5 million, went to Recreation/Special Events. There were about 12,000 households in Peachtree City, so for an additional \$14.23, they could double the budget for recreation. An additional \$7.23 would grow the budget by 50%. He noted that Alpharetta spent 8% of its budget on recreation; Fayetteville, 3.2%.

Online, Charles said providing lights at recreation facilities would reduce vandalism.

Gerald Gillette said he was a lap swimmer. He encouraged Council to support the Kedron Aquatics Center, noting there was an uptick in usage. He said he liked the electronic pass system.

Destadio said a citizen had approached him about problems with their cricket league, but he was not present. Interest in cricket was growing here, and they had no facility use agreement. He asked Bledsoe to explain how to get one if the cricket player came to her again.

Prebor thanked all the citizens for participating and said it reminded him what a great city they had with all the different interests. He thanked Staff for their work. King echoed those comments and reminded them that they needed to execute any new projects to the Peachtree City standard. The worst thing they could do, in his opinion, would be to set up a network of trails, for instance, and not maintain them.

Learned also thanked everyone for coming, saying this was an important conversation. Peachtree City was about quality of life, and their parks and recreation made them a standout. She said it was interesting to learn that, while the lights were a problem to some groups, others had no problems with them. BMX and Riley users thought the system was a good idea, but softball and soccer had issues.

People thought of Drake Field, Spyglass Island, and even the Skate Park as showpieces in the City, and Glenloch Park was so good looking these days, she continued. A performing arts center could be another showpiece, and it would be wonderful to partner with the County and other municipalities on a SPLOST item. Pickleball was growing, and they should think about where to find the money and real estate for more pickleball facilities.

They had a 30-year contract with Southern Conservation Trust that was not working any more, Learnard noted. Protecting green spaces was one of the concepts they embraced; it kept coming up in Comprehensive Plan updates, and it was clear this was something citizens valued. She said it was unimaginable that Peachtree City would not move ahead on a new agreement with the non-profit Southern Conservation Trust that managed these properties so well. She looked forward to positive, productive conversations on this.

They needed more technical information on two possible turf fields at the PAC. Two would be a minimum. Learnard said she hoped to further those conversations. With that, she ended the meeting at 11:02 a.m.



Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary



Kim Learnard, Mayor