

Recreation Advisory Group of Peachtree City
Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 3, 2025
5:00 PM

Call to Order

The Peachtree City Recreation Advisory Group (RAG) held its first meeting on Monday, March 3, 2025, in the Community Room at City Hall. City Manager Justin Strickland convened the meeting at 5 p.m. RAG members present were Michael Polacek, Tommy Johnson, Erin McDowell, Michael Pappas, Rohit Nanda, Derek White, and Stacey Clarke. Recreation Director Cathy Wilder and Assistant Recreation Director Harold Layton were also present.

Minutes

None

Discussion

Introductions

Strickland introduced City Clerk Yasmin Julio, who briefed the group on Open Meetings Laws. Next, he asked the group members to introduce themselves and state why they wanted to serve on the RAG.

Ordinance Review

Strickland then described the ordinance that created the RAG, beginning by outlining how the group was organized. It would consist of seven members, plus Wilder as a non-voting ex-officio member. Terms would be three years, with this first group staggered into one-, two-, and three-year terms. He wanted them to elect a chair and vice-chair soon, and they would thereafter elect officers in January. Strickland stated this was a standing group, serving at the pleasure of Council.

The ordinance listed duties to include soliciting comments from city residents and evaluating concerns and proposals to develop recommendations for staff and City Council. He reminded them this was an advisory group with no authority over the actions of Council and staff.

Recommendations could include measures to mitigate safety concerns, educational and promotional strategies, and potential upgrades to recreational facilities and equipment. The RAG would help staff with an annual prioritization of recreation projects and an annual review of progress on the Recreation Master Plan, along with a review of the progress on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan. The ex-officio member of RAG would present reports and recommendations to Council at least once a year.

The ordinance allowed the RAG to solicit and receive personal property or monetary gifts to be used for the purposes of recreation, but these had to be accepted by City Council.

Next Steps

Strickland asked the members to read the newly-adopted Recreation Master Plan before the next meeting. He told them to maintain awareness that this was a plan and conditions could change. What was in the plan did not mean those things would happen as written.

Next, they moved on to deciding when and how often the group would meet. Wilder said she thought once a month would be fine until they had something they were actually working on, but others said they thought twice a month would be best while they were getting started. Polacek suggested one morning meeting and another in the evening. After discussion, they decided to meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 5 p.m. and on the third Monday at 8 a.m. The next meetings would be Tuesday April 1 and Monday April 21, but they agreed they could be flexible in the scheduling.

Wilder said she would send out a link to the Master Plan. Layton offered some issues they could be thinking about before the next meeting. First, he said, he wanted ideas on some situations that had come up with the athletic fields. He wanted to know their thoughts on unorganized events on athletic fields when scheduled events were not going on. He gave the example of teams just showing up to play games. They might have jerseys and look official, but they were not cleared by the City. Strickland said it was a gray area because they wanted people to use the fields, but not to prevent others from using them.

The second issue was City facilities being used for unauthorized private lessons. Strickland mentioned that sometimes groups held big races on the paths that precluded others from using them. White said there should be a way for people to see if facilities were reserved. Clarke said she had run into problems at the Pebblepocket Tennis Courts. Strickland said this was good for the RAG to discuss because it was a citizens' group, not staff or Council, who would be suggesting solutions.

Next, they discussed how they could communicate outside of meetings, being mindful that all communications were subject to Open Records laws. Wilder said she liked GroupMe, and McDowell said she would set it up for them.

They moved on to electing officers. Strickland said the Chair would run the meeting and keep them on task. The Chair would also be the person who communicated with staff. Pappas nominated McDowell, with Polacek seconding. Motion carried unanimously. Pappas nominated Nanda as Vice Chair, with Polacek seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

They discussed Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) projects, with Strickland saying there were still ongoing projects from 2017, as well as from the 2023 SPLOST. Strickland explained how tax collections funded the projects, and about four or five on the list were recreation.

Adjourn

There being no further business, Nanda moved to adjourn at 6:30 p.m. Polacek seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary



Erin McDowell, Chairwoman