

Recreation Advisory Group of Peachtree City

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 1, 2025

5:00 PM

Call to Order

The Peachtree City Recreation Advisory Group (RAG) met Tuesday, April 1, 2025 in the Floy Farr Room at the Peachtree City Library. Chair Erin McDowell called the meeting to order at 5 p.m. Other members present were Michael Polacek, Tommy Johnson, Michael Pappas, and Stacey Clarke. Rohit Nanda and Derek White were absent, as was Recreation Director Cathy Wilder. Assistant Recreation Director Harold Layton and Assistant City Manager Chris Hobby also were present.

Minutes

A. March 17, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Polacek moved to approve the March 17, 2025, meeting minutes. Pappas seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion

A. Special Events presentation

Layton introduced Special Events and Marketing Coordinator Maria Puckett and Assistant Coordinator Kim Lindsey to brief the group on what they did. First, Lindsey asked everyone to introduce themselves and name the last special event they attended in Peachtree City. She said she was in a newer position with the City that was created to aid Puckett with things such as working with Southern Conservation Trust, creating fliers and posters, facility bookings, and Food Truck Thursdays.

Puckett said she had been in her role for four years. The City planned to work with 52 events this year. Thirty of those were put on by third parties, such as the Atlanta Air Show and Night Market, but still required effort from City staff. She said the special events team, which included representatives from Public Safety and Keep Peachtree City Beautiful, in addition to Recreation, met with each party that wanted to use a City facility for an event. Non-profit organizations did not have to pay rental fees for their events, she noted, but others did, including crews that wanted to use City resources and facilities for filming.

The other 22 events, including the July 4 celebration, Hometown Holiday, Sunset Sounds, and the Shakerag Arts and Crafts Festival, were run by the City from start to finish. They had a budget from Council, but Puckett mentioned that obtaining sponsorships had become a big part of her job because extra money enabled them to hold more and bigger events.

Johnson asked why there weren't more events? Puckett replied that one reason was the weather. Summer thunderstorms often required events to be cancelled, and turnout was low during the hottest months of the year. She also mentioned that

July 4 was labor-intensive, so they didn't plan much in the summer before then. There couldn't be any events on the same night as a concert at The Fred. They also tried not to have events at the same time as big events in nearby cities, such as Alive After Five in Senoia.

Johnson said he thought a lot of people would be willing to pay in order to get some bigger-name bands at Sunset Sounds. Polacek said he thought streaming parties during the World Cup next summer would be a good idea, and Puckett told him they had discussed that, and it was a possibility.

Pappas mentioned that the people who came to stay in Peachtree City for a special event were putting money back into the City, and Layton explained that funds from the hotel/motel tax went into the tourism and product development (TPD) fund, which was limited to use at venues that brought people to the City, such as the Peachtree City Athletic Complex.

Puckett mentioned that Peachtree City had about 38,000 residents, and there were more than 42,000 spectators along the two-mile Fourth of July parade route last year. She said there would be three information sessions for participants before the parade this year.

B. Splash pad design

Layton next showed plans for the new splash pad at Pebblepocket Park. He said the engineers were beginning work on the final design. They had settled on a concept that provided more golf cart parking and had asked the engineers to remove the entrance from Pebblestump Point to help keep cars out of the cart parking area. The splash pad would be 2,500 to 3,000 square feet. They would utilize the existing restrooms and pump room. There would be two playgrounds—one for younger children and the other for children up to age 12. This all mirrored what the Recreation Master Plan said, Layton noted. He indicated where pine trees would have to be removed but said there would be new landscaping. He said they were four to six weeks away from getting the design completed.

Pappas asked why so many cart parking spaces, and Layton said they felt they would be needed. It would keep people from parking along the sides of the paths. He mentioned that Glenloch's splash pad would be opening this year with no admission, and this one would be free as well. McDowell cautioned that many places with free splash pads were overrun with day care and summer camp children. Admission was a way to control access to residents. Having more golf cart parking might limit users to residents. Clarke asked about accessible parking spaces, and Layton said they were making allowances for that.

They were looking to get this finished as soon as possible because Council had set it as a priority, Layton noted. It was a capital improvement plan project, not a special purpose local option sales tax (SPLOST) project.

C. Homework discussion

At the last meeting, Layton asked the members to visit a park or recreation area that they often frequented and look at it with a critical eye. Johnson went to Blue Smoke Park, and while it was in good shape, he noticed mulch kicked everywhere under the swings. He also visited Lake Kedron, but Layton told him that was a County park. Johnson said it was well-shaded there, but Glenloch, which he also visited, was not shielded at all.

Layton mentioned that the life cycle of playground equipment was not long, and it was expensive to replace. Layton said they had budgeted \$85,000 for four shade sails at Glenloch.

Clarke noted that Glenloch had many diverse options, but most of it was not wheelchair accessible. She said she was sad to see so much trash at the Line Creek Nature Area and noted that more educational signage was needed. She commented also on how much her family enjoyed visiting Spyglass Island.

Polacek said he texted a few friends to get their feedback. Someone suggested a secondary fence at the community garden to keep rabbits out. Another suggestion was more toddler-friendly parks.

McDowell said she and her family spent a lot of time at Meade Fields. She mentioned fences that were rolled up at the bottom, saying visitors had commented on them. The City was planning some infrastructure changes there, and she said they were looking forward to them.

The tot lot at The Oaks was where Pappas visited, and he noted that it was heavily used, especially after school. He also commented on the good appearance of the Tennis Center, but said the clay courts needed a lot of work before they could be playable. Parking was also an issue. Braelinn Park, which he visited on a weekend day, was packed, and everything looked good. There were people waiting to play on the pickleball courts, so the new courts couldn't come fast enough, Pappas stated. New windsocks were needed there, and the water fountains along the path needed repair.

Layton agreed about the heavy use of Braelinn Park. He commented that repairs were done first because of safety, with mechanical issues next. They got around to aesthetics when they could and tried to maximize every dollar.

He assigned homework for the next meeting:

1. Go to a park that they did not go to on a regular basis or that was more difficult to access.
2. Think more about unauthorized use of athletic fields, such as for private lessons, and what should be done.

He told Clarke it would be a good idea for her to update City Council soon on what RAG was doing. Layton also told them to reach out to each other with comments and suggestions.

Clarke asked if Council had decided on adding paid parking for non-residents at Peachtree City facilities, but Layton said that was just a topic of conversation at the Council retreat, and no action was taken.

Adjourn

There being no further business, Pappas moved to adjourn at 6:27 p.m. Polacek seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary



Erin McDowell, Chairwoman