

MINUTES
BRUNSWICK COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
November 9, 2021

I. Call to Order

- Laura Botto called the Meeting to order. The Meeting was held in Building G, Parks and Recreation Conference Room.

II. Invocation

- Dale Rabon gave the Invocation.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes from August 10, 2021, Meeting

- **Mike Sullivan made a Motion to accept the Minutes as approved and Dale Rabon seconded. The Minutes were approved 5 to 0.**

IV. Citizens Wishing to be Heard

There were no citizens wishing to be heard.

V. Commission Business Session

- **Youth Soccer Concerned Citizens – Megan Peattie**

Megan Peattie was present to discuss a soccer incident that occurred Saturday, 10/30/21. In addition, she brought with her Laura Bustebenbelh, Patricia Peattie and Nicole Wilcox. Ms. Peattie stated that she was at the meeting to make aware and explain what occurred at the Ocean Isle Beach Park soccer field on that date at 2:45 pm between the two teams of South Brunswick Cougars and Ocean Isle West Fire.

Ms. Peattie stated that during the second quarter, their goalie saved a goal but received a late attack by a member of the West Fire team. She stated no penalty was given for the late kick and the referee indicated he had no cards to give. Ms. Peattie removed and replaced the goalie for the remaining few minutes of the quarter.

Ms. Peattie said during halftime, one referee spent time in friendly conversation with the West Fire parents and coach and during the third and fourth quarters a few of the spectators from Ocean Isle shouted encouraging words to this referee as he did not call blatant fouls against their team. She continued saying near the end of the fourth quarter a team member of the West Fire team “took down” a member of her Cougars team with a hard kick to the leg. It was her son. Ms. Peattie said he was down and obviously hurt and the play was stopped. She said several Southport spectators were frustrated since this was the second foul by this West Fire player to the same player and again called for the player to be carded, which again the referee stated that he had no cards to give. Ms. Peattie stated that at the insistence of the Southport spectators, that the referee did remove her from the field by saying “go sit down sweetheart.”

Ms. Peattie said at this point, the two referees met in the middle of the field and were conversing and laughing, which further enraged the Southport spectators. Ms. Peattie stated the injured player, which was her son, had to be carried off the field and she was advised by a parent who is also a paramedic that her son’s leg looked bad and that he should be taken to the emergency room for an Xray. Ms. Peattie said that due to the short

time left in the game and the spectator's frustration at the behavior of the referees that she told her players that the game was over.

Ms. Peattie indicated that as the West Fire team was leaving the field that their coach was overheard calling his team "the ankle breakers", which further enraged the Southport spectators. Ms. Peattie said the West Fire coach yelled to her that this game would be a forfeit because she had ended the game. Ms. Peattie indicated that the Brunswick County Official leafed through her rulebook and could not find anything to explain this situation. She stated her team was ahead 4 to 2. Ms. Peattie said as she was faced with a forfeit, that will admit that she became very upset and cursed back at the West Fire coach, something that she does regret. She said her son was in a great deal of pain and she did not know the extent of his injury and wanted to seek medical attention ASAP.

Ms. Peattie explained she was also present to address the caliber of the referees this season. She stated that even at her home field that some of the referees have been lackadaisical, hardly running the field and certainly not calling fouls such as handballs and offsides. She stated that may be fine at the beginning levels of play with the young players, but it is in appropriate for middle school players. Ms. Peattie said the older, more mature referees or even the high school age referees who know the game and take it seriously should be placed at the games of the middle school players. Ms. Peattie stated those referees have been excellent this season.

Ms. Peattie said upon reaching out to Daniel Rabon and Aaron Perkins about the referees on 10/30/21, she was told by both that the referees are hired by a company and that they are trained. She stated that she knows for a fact that this is not true. Ms. Peattie said one of the best referees this season was recruited by his high school coach on a Friday night to ref the next day.

Ms. Peattie said it is very sad the season had to end this way for her team. She indicated they were tied for first place before the game on 10/30/21. She said the games for 11/6/21 were cancelled due to weather. Her team was suppose to play West Dash, but her parents voted to not travel there again due to Daniel Rabon could not assure her that her team wouldn't have the same referees as what they had on 10/30/21.

Ms. Peattie indicated she will not be coaching anymore for Brunswick County Parks and Recreation due to her son will be in high school next year, however, she wanted to make the following recommendations.

Ms. Peattie requested that at the middle school level there should be no mixed female and male teams. She said if there are not enough girls to make full teams, then the girls should be equally distributed among all the teams. She stated that this season there were some teams who had four girls, some teams with no girls and the West Fire team was all girls with one boy.

Additionally, Ms. Peattie stated the County officials at the fields on days of play should be familiar with the game and rules of soccer. She said the officials at the Southport fields had been very knowledgeable and that this was not the case at Ocean Isle Beach Park.

Ms. Peattie thanked the Advisory Board for their time.

Kris Crane said her children participate in soccer at the Ocean Isle Beach Park and she knows the referees. She was aware of the incident, but it was not portrayed this way to her.

Kris Crane asked how Ms. Peattie's son was doing and what injuries he may have sustained.

Megan Peattie said her son had a contusion and was on crutches for three days.

Teagan Perry-Hall stated that Joyce Lowrimore was the Facilitator and that the referees and facilitator should have taken control of the situation.

Aaron Perkins said we have had problems in the past with spectators at basketball games and we have Sheriff Deputies present to assist.

Kris Crane stated she has heard parents before be disrespectful at games.

Laura Botto stated it is the referee's job to keep control of the game.

Nicole Wilcox indicated that she had been a coach for junior varsity and varsity soccer and had issues with referees at Smithville Park. She stated a wife of a coach had taken a swing at her before and nobody did anything. She stated two weeks later the referee apologized, but that Daniel Rabon did nothing about it.

Aaron Perkins said trying to get workers is not the easiest.

Teagan Perry Hall stated that Daniel Rabon sent out emails for players and parents to sit on opposite sides of the field.

Mike Sullivan said in football that there is 50 feet to separate players.

Aaron Perkins indicated that Brunswick County Parks and Recreation is a recreation league and our Department could move forward and not keep score to keep it from being so competitive.

Nicole Wilcox indicated she had no referee and no field on her last game of 10/30/21 and had to ref her own game on unmarked fields.

Megan Peattie stated there needs to be someone to contact when there are issues.

Aaron Perkins said issues will happen and our Department does the best to have a good league.

Megan Peattie stated if this was football or baseball that it would not happen.

Nicole Wilcox said County should do a better job and have fields marked. She stated benches are falling apart at Smithville and kids could get hurt.

Aaron Perkins stated that the Parks and Recreation Staff does a great job.

Megan Peattie said the fields at Ocean Isle Beach Park were lined and awesome, but at Smithville Park they were not.

Aaron Perkins indicated we had a lot of staff in and out with Covid.

Dale Rabon said he felt one of Ms. Peattie's concerns is that the referees are not competent.

Dale stated he had coached baseball for 30 years and you had to be certified.

Mike Sullivan made a Motion to allow Aaron Perkins time to investigate the situation further and provide a solution to bring back to the Board and sources of officials. Teagan Perry Hall seconded and the Motion passed 5 to 0.

Mike Sullivan asked if Smithville Park plays soccer at the front field.

Nicole Wilcox said yes.

Patricia Peattie said she has never experienced what she experienced at the 10/30/21 soccer game. Patricia indicated that Cathy Johnson, who facilitated Spring Soccer at Ocean Isle Beach did a great job with controlling an issue.

Mike Sullivan stated he has been doing football and baseball for years and that next time by Smithville Park he will look at the equipment that Ms. Wilcox was referring to.

Megan Peattie stated that she continued to coach because we always needed coaches and asked why girls and boys are not distributed properly on teams.

Nicole Wilcox stated if you show up and are short players that the other team will allow you to borrow a player.

Dale Rabon indicated that this would not be cleared up tonight and as a Board the members would work with Aaron to see what options could be proposed.

Laura Botto asked why not have the site facilitators know the rules. Laura stated she appreciated them coming in and they will move forward to take the steps to have referees better equipped and educated.

Teagan Perry-Hall said Daniel Rabon is not the best communicator and does not respond to emails and phone calls.

VI. Director's Report

• **Update on Smithville Park Project**

Aaron stated restroom facility will be delivered in the next three weeks and be placed at front of Park. New Deputy County Manager understands old lighting and the need for new. Have \$500,000 to spend, but it doesn't go as far as all the needs based on everything being so expensive.

• **Brunswick Waterway Park**

Park currently on hold and will look to turn back in grant funding, which should not affect applying for future grant funds.

• **Navassa Park**

Restroom facility is in place. Will be getting CO on building. Operation Services will put in second exit signs to meet code, as well as have Knox box. May need to hire a general contractor with commercial license.

• **PGMS Tree Planting**

Planted Friday 11/5/21. Was suppose to have 200 trees and had 100. Planted at Lockwood Folly Park and Town Creek Park. Will do Ocean Isle Beach Park and Northwest Park later.

• **LUP and Comprehensive Park Master Plan**

On 11/18/21 there will be a public meeting from 4 pm till 7:30 in Building N Cooperative Extension.

VII. Comments from Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission Members

No comments.

VIII. Adjourn Meeting

Mike made a Motion to adjourn meeting and Dale seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

IX. Meeting Roll Call

Board Members Present: Teagan Perry-Hall, Laura Botto, Kris Crane, Dale Rabon and Mike Sullivan

Board Members Absent: None

Staff Members Present: Aaron Perkins and Tanya Jackson

Citizens of Interest: Megan Peattie, Patricia Peattie, Nicole Wilcox and Laura Bustedenbelh

Next Scheduled Meeting: Tuesday, December 14, 2021