

Town of Stoneville - Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB)

Meeting Minutes

Date: November 18, 2025

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: Vera Holland Community Building – 203 E Main Street, Stoneville, NC

Members Present – Chairman Curt Bennett, Kasie Pruitt, and Bob Bailey. Members Absent – Charles Rakestraw, Pastor Kenneth Moore, David Price, Chris Avis, Jerry Smith, Ed Brown.

Staff Present – Town Administrator Michael Sands and Town Clerk Deleia Hutcherson

Call to Order and Welcome: Chairman Curt Bennett called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

Approval of Agenda: A quorum was not present and no action taken.

Approval of Minutes: A quorum was not present and no action taken.

Introduction and Grant Discussion

The meeting opened with introductions and remarks regarding grant opportunities for youth programs in the Stoneville area. Ms. Popi Makris, Founder of After School Brilliance, STEM Kids NC Inc. shared her experience with 21st Century Learning Grants and similar funding streams. She highlighted that her current program offers tutoring, mentorship, and creative enrichment for children, completely free of charge, but faces transportation challenges preventing broader participation from Stoneville students.

A major topic centered on the lack of student transportation from Stoneville to Madison's after-school facility. Ms. Makris explained her attempts to gain district approval for a shuttle service, which had been denied. Discussion followed regarding the need for advocacy by parents before the school board and exploring partnerships with local entities or county commissioners. Suggestions included leveraging existing school buses during the summer months, shared-use agreements with churches, or even purchasing a small, dedicated shuttle vehicle. It was also suggested that Stoneville parents be encouraged to present transportation needs to the School Board.

Ms. Makris offered to prepare a presentation for a future session demonstrating how AI tools such as ChatGPT can help identify grant opportunities related to Parks and Recreation.

Grant Planning and Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

The Board emphasized the need to establish a comprehensive master plan as a prerequisite for most grants, including the State's PARTF grant. Members agreed that without a unified plan outlining the town's goals, facilities, and community needs, future grant applications would be incomplete or rejected. The group discussed aligning short-term and long-term goals, with immediate priorities focused on community engagement, identifying recreational needs, and defining the scope of desired programs and facilities.

The Advisory Board will start the process of drafting a Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Plan to include public input sessions. Mr. Sands will compile examples from neighboring municipalities to guide structure and scope. The plan will serve as the foundation for future grant applications and budgeting.

Funding, Staffing, and Consultant Considerations

Mr. Smith's recommendation to consider hiring a consultant for approximately \$30,000 to help develop the comprehensive plan was discussed. Some members felt external expertise could accelerate progress, while others preferred to leverage internal resources and partnerships through regional councils, universities, or volunteer experts. The group acknowledged that hiring a full-time Parks and Recreation Director—estimated salary between \$40,000 and \$65,000—was not financially feasible until the FY 2026 budget cycle.

The Advisory Board will evaluate consultant proposals and compare them to available support from the Piedmont Triad Regional Council and UNC School of Government programs before making a formal recommendation to Town Council.

Short-Term Recreation Programming

Members debated the feasibility of organizing a youth basketball season during the current winter. After reviewing existing commitments and resource constraints, the Board concluded that organizing a basketball program in the short term would be unrealistic. Attention shifted toward spring and summer programming, such as baseball, softball, or tee-ball, which previously had strong community engagement. The Board emphasized the critical role of volunteer support in sustaining programs. This item will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Parks and Recreation Responsibilities

The committee discussed the distinction between "parks" and "recreation" functions, noting that each area requires unique expertise. Some members proposed eventually appointing separate coordinators—one focusing on facility maintenance and parks, and another on community programming. The discussion recognized that current staffing limits prevent immediate division but affirmed the need for clear role definitions in the forthcoming master plan.

The Board concluded by reaffirming the need for a structured, long-term strategy that includes community input and sustainable funding models. While no formal motions were adopted, consensus was achieved on prioritizing the comprehensive plan and developing spring recreation programs.

Adjourned at 11:16 a.m.



Chairman, Curt Bennett



Town Clerk, Deleia Hutcherson

