

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

Meeting Minutes

Date: September 30, 2025

Time: 10:00 AM

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

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

Staff Present – Michael Sands, Town Administrator. Staff Absent – Deleia Hutcherson, Town Clerk

Call to Order and Welcome: Chairman Curt Bennett called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. He welcomed members and guests, expressing appreciation for their participation and commitment to improving the town's parks and recreation initiatives.

Introductions: Each member introduced themselves and provided professional and personal background information. Notable highlights included:

- Several members are retired educators or local business owners.
- Many have deep community roots in Stoneville.
- Members expressed shared enthusiasm for revitalizing local parks and recreational programs.

Reading of Mission Statement: Chairman Bennett read the PRAB's mission and purpose statement: *The advisory board shall advise the Town Council and Manager on parks and recreation issues, including but not limited to park areas, safety, and community recreation programs, and shall offer guidance and recommendations for improvements and future initiatives.*

Approval of Agenda: A motion to approve the September 30, 2025 meeting agenda was made by Kasie Pruitt. Seconded by Charles Rakestraw. Motion carried unanimously.

Review of Bylaws: The board proposed an amendment to the bylaws that would increase the number of official advisory board members from six (6) to eight (8). The board agreed to recommend this amendment to the Town Council at the October 7, 2025 meeting.

Election of Vice Chairman: Discussion was held regarding electing a Vice Chair to serve in the Chair's absence. Members agreed to defer the election until the next meeting to allow absent members (Pastor Moore and Jerry Smith) to be present. Pastor Moore was suggested as a potential candidate for the position.

Meeting Schedule: The board agreed to hold the required monthly meetings on the third Tuesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. Meetings will be held at the Vera Holland Community Building unless otherwise specified. The next meeting was scheduled for October 21, 2025.

Property Updates

Stoneville Memorial Park

- Major community park; maintenance remains a key concern.
- Improvements needed for safety - tree removal along trail, and communications equipment for emergencies.

Downtown Pocket Park

- Funded through a McMichael grant (\$50,000).
- Committee emphasized need to resume development, focus on beautification (painting, landscaping), and secure property owner's consent to paint murals on exterior walls of adjoining structures. Mr. Rakestraw offered to contact property owner to discuss an easement for the side of the building.
- Discussion about the addition of bathroom facilities near the proposed Downtown Park area and Pocket Park; strong community need noted, especially for large events.

Downtown Stage/Farmers Market Concept

- Presentation of two design concepts (simple stage vs. stage with agricultural market component).
- Discussion of potential USDA and other grant funding as well as a dedicated grant writer.
- Coordination needed with community groups to ensure unified vision.

Future Trail and Park Connectivity

- Discussion of potential connection between Memorial Park and Mayo State Park via walking/biking trails.
- Need for engineering review to assess feasibility and safety.
- Noted that the Mayo State Park Superintendent is supportive of collaboration.

Short-Term Goals

- Resume work on Pocket Park.
- Improve Memorial Park safety
- Develop a clear, written Parks and Recreation plan aligned with the Town's comprehensive plan.
- Identify quick-win community engagement opportunities (e.g., walking trail events, youth sports pilot programs).

Long-Term Goals

- Develop a comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan to strengthen grant eligibility (including PARTF grants).
- Create a unified vision for recreation expansion—soccer fields, walking trails, and downtown green space.
- Pursue collaborative grants with county partners.
- Prioritize inclusivity by engaging the entire community in planning and programming.
- Recruit and train qualified volunteer coaches and youth mentors.

Community Engagement and Grant Fundings

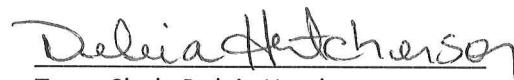
- Emphasis on “dreaming big” and setting aspirational goals.
- Explore hiring or contracting a professional grant writer.
- Explore large-scale funding for long-term projects

Chairman Curt Bennett thanked everyone for participating and the meeting was adjourned.

Adjourned at 11:29 a.m.



Chairman, Curt Bennett



Town Clerk, Deleia Hutcherson

