

**Minutes  
Recreation Committee  
May 4, 2015  
6:00 PM  
4<sup>th</sup> committee meeting**

**Members present were Chairman Terry Merritt, Committee members Taft Matney and Bob Cook . Recreation Director Van Brannon and City Administrator Trey Eubanks were also present.**

1. Call to order.- Chairman Merritt
2. Public comment.
3. Reading and approval of minutes.- Councilman Matney made a motion to approve the minutes with Councilman Cook seconding. The vote was unanimous (3-0).
4. Reports or communications from city officers.
  - a. Budget Review- The budget is doing well in all departments. Chairman Merritt asked about liability and child insurance. Trey said it may be a posting error and he would look into it.
  - b. Public/private partnerships- We have had input that there are groups that will help with our existing building in a public/private partnership. Someone is willing to build a locker room if we will allow them to play Rugby or another sport. Councilman Matney said he would say yes. There was a private entity last year that came to us to ask something similar. It didn't work out because of scheduling and funds, but if we could find the right proposal, he would like that. Councilman Cook agreed he thought it was a good idea. It would benefit us and them. Chairman Merritt said our partnership with Miracle League has been phenomenal. Van said he was involved in the discussion Taft was talking about and he thinks it would be great if it can be worked out.

Trey said when this opportunity came about last year, there were very productive meetings with the group and we can have similar meetings with other entities.

- c. Membership fee reviews- Van and Terry have discussed fee reviews at the Sports Center. They haven't been adjusted in a while. Some things are a

little out of balance. We do want to be careful not to burden the Seniors, who some are on a fixed income. Councilman Cook agreed and said we do need to look at this. There are full membership and then we can look at a la carte pricing, such as a walking pass. There is a walking pass that also includes 10 classes per week that is inexpensive. Walker plus includes 60 classes a week. It is a good value, but not equitable. It could very easily be doubled and still be a great value. Councilman Cook said we could compare with what other facilities charge. Bart said some private companies can do it cheaper for just equipment usage, but do not have classes. He also said the \$25.00 walking pass may seem like a lot to some Seniors, but they would burn that in gas to go to the mall and walk.

Councilman Matney said we are substantially lower than other facilities and we are providing a good value. He is not sold we need to be in the fitness business as a City, but we are listening to the citizens as far as classes and equipment needs.

- d. Addition of sports offerings- Chairman Merritt said Mr. Matney looked outside of the box in bringing Lacrosse here to Mauldin. Councilman Matney said he would like to compliment Van publicly on working on this. The first set of games were this past weekend and went very well. Chairman Merritt said he has been approached about travel league. We could look at a travel league type in Simpsonville, Fountain inn, Greenville. Recreation could possibly work with him and a small committee. Curtis Harper is the coach at Mauldin Middle School and has some interesting ideas. Chairman Merritt asked if Van, Willie and Bart might be interested in talking to Mr. Harper. This could generate revenue and bring people into our program.

Councilman Matney said this travel ball sets up an extended season and is very popular now. There are lots of tournament games. If we did it through the Recreation Department, kids could have the travel ball experience, but families would not have to travel as far. It would also be done during the week or different seasons to keep the weekends free. Chairman Merritt said we have some nice fields and the guy that coordinates travel ball is desperate

for fields and this could generate revenue for us.

- e. Potential effects of outside events adjoining recreation facilities- Chairman Merritt said he wanted to discuss events that are adjacent to the sporting facilities. He asked what sign is at Murray and East Butler Road. The Mauldin Sports Center is advertised there. When there is a holiday, the membership has said they wanted to stay there until Noon. The members want to workout on holidays. When we have the barbecue festival, we shut down City Center Drive. There is no access to the Sports Center when there are events. Bart said one section off Murray could be blockaded and we could let sports center members in on Butler Road. Councilman Cook said the Methodist parking lot is also used. Councilman Matney said police stop traffic to allow people to cross Butler Road.

5. Unfinished business.

- a. Facility improvements- Chairman Merritt is disappointed that it takes so long to get simple things fixed on our buildings. The Senior Center needs improvement. The facility is terrible. He has talked to Trey about gutters for nine weeks. He doesn't know why it took so long to get the gutters fixed. Water ran down the building for 3-4 months. Chairman Merritt said he is embarrassed.

6. New business

7. Public comment.

Tommy Shaleuly: It is refreshing to hear you address the Sports Center. I am glad you are finally looking at the rates.

Dean Kirkland: This is my neighbor of 34 years. I talked to RC and when he left as Mayor, there were about 5,000 members. Now there are about 2000 members. He said if you raise the rates, the membership will decline. I have a card in my pocket from Brookwood. They have a pool that is heated in the winter. The old Y down there focuses on children and young people. It is \$75.00 a year to do anything for AARP. RC wasn't aware of that. I talked to Mr. Matney and it was \$414,000. Do you know how far down it is now?

Maybe God has blessed me because I have been a pretty good old boy, but when I was growing up, we were poor. I was dirt poor. Maybe it was built before its time, but if it is failing like this, we don't want to raise the rates. If it is down to about 2000 members, it is dying. I don't know how to stop it. I can't compete with Brookwood.

Chairman Merritt said we are looking at maybe partnering with health systems like the Y. They have a program called silver sneakers.

Dean Kirkland: It is no competition with Brookwood.

Chairman Merritt: They have a pool. I know.

Dean Kirkland: A pool. I was a coach in the City of Mauldin for many years. Coaches think this is a pro level. One of the coaches took a boy and shoved him down after he missed a ball. That kid is a good boy and I couldn't believe it. What I am saying is when we tell people they are not good enough, there is a biblical principal about drawing lots. This is about fun. The other thing about travel ball, if we have enough local teams to play against each other, I don't understand why we can't do that. I don't understand why we are telling people they aren't good enough. Do we have money for people who can't afford this? We do? Some of the parents pay pretty good money. Rec coaches need to be reminded these aren't pros. They are judged on tryouts. The lot thing takes away I am better than you.

What was the thing about ball? People wanting to do something on our property?

Chairman Merritt: Private and public partnerships like with the Miracle League.

Dean Kirkland: We don't want them in there. Our children don't get time. One thing Rush Limbaugh said, and I don't always agree with him, he said follow the money trail. That way you can tell if it is just a car salesman trying to sell you a car his way. Ok, anyway, the travel, the cost for them is to be on the team. I

don't understand why we would have travel league when there is park and rec. They are no better than Rec. A neighbor of mine has a child that scored four goals. Life can be cruel I am not an idiot. On that, one thing I mentioned to Councilman Cook, my Dad didn't have no money. At 15, I started going to a roller skating rink and by 19 I was one of the best athletes in the state of South Carolina. Physically, mentally, I could do things people wouldn't believe. There is an ice skating rink on the other side of town. Everyone loves skating. No one answered my question about going into the hole on the building.

Chairman Merritt: We have another committee that needs to meet. I appreciate your comments, they are good, but if you could wrap it up. I think you need to talk to Mr. Eubanks about the sports center. We are trying to raise the membership back.

Dean Kirkland: Why are we taking out a bond? I understand. I am a minister and I am sensitive to children. No city team has been drawn by lots. Tryouts only.

Chairman Merritt: I can debate the meaning of lots with you all night. Some people say drafts aren't fair.

8. Committee concerns.- Chairman Merritt asked about the code of conduct. Van is going to give him a copy. It is on the back of signup information. Chairman Merritt asked about GCRA money for handicapped accessibility money for Springfield. They said we are going to check with Martin Livingstone.

Willie Stewart: we are doing background checks on all coaches to make sure we don't have any child abusers or anything.

Chairman Merritt: We are paying roughly \$12 to do that. I can go along with that. Thank you.

Councilman Matney reminded everyone of cheerleading signups. Football signups will start June 15<sup>th</sup>.

9. Adjournment.- Chairman Merritt adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy Miller

Municipal Clerk