TOWN OF AWENDAW

6971 Doar Road | P.O. Box 520 | Awendaw, SC 29429

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Katharine Watkins | *Town Administrator*

Takeya White | *Town Clerk*

Town of Awendaw
South Carolina
SETTLED 1696

Chris Crolley | *Mayor*

Town Council

Paul Brown | Grace Gasper

Wendy Helms | Rodney Porcher

Kent Prause | John T. Timmons

Municipal Park Foundation Board Regular Meeting
Agenda
Tuesday August 11, 2026
6:00 PM

1. Call to order
2. Invocation
3. Civility pledge and pledge of allegiance
4. Approval of the August agenda
5. Approval of the previous meeting minutes
    a. July 14th
6. Public Comments
7. Budget Report
8. Unfinished business
    - **A.** Update on Special Event Application from Town Council Meeting
        i. Schedule Joint Meeting with Town Council to Discuss (*Action Item*)
    - **B.** Update on the status of the cameras at the Municipal Park
    - **C.** Consideration of sign quotes at entrances (North South Event and Greenbelt)
    - **D.** Consideration of the logistics for the upcoming 5K Fun Run Event on September 12th from 10 AM – 2 PM
    - **E.** Consideration and recommendation of the maintenance scope of the mowing schedule, send RFP
    - **F.** Update on accounting of historical donations from the annual bike event
    - **G.** Consideration and recommendation of McAdams Proposal and additional quotes
    - **H.** Consideration and recommendation of the dark sky initiative, nighttime use of the park
    - **I.** Consideration and recommendation of the Commercial Use of Public Property Ordinance
    - **J.** Update on the approval of the request from the Citadel Chemistry Department regarding Mushroom Sampling
9. Chair Report
10. Board Member Comments
11. Adjournment

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Municipal Park Foundation Board Meeting
Tuesday, July 14, 2026
6:00 PM
Minutes - Draft

1. Call to Order, Roll Call

   Awendaw Park Board Present: Chair Blythe, Colson, Coan, Daniels, Frazier, Ott, Pepper Alston

   Absent: None

   Staff Present: Town Administrator - Watkins

2. Prayer - the meeting opened with the Lord's Prayer, led by Chair Blythe.
3. Civility Pledge and Pledge of Allegiance, led by Mr. Pepper-Alston.
4. Approval of July Meeting Agenda
   A. Motion: Mr. Colson moved to approve the July 14th meeting agenda. Mr. Pepper-Alston seconded the motion, all voted in favor, motion carried.
5. Appointment of Municipal Park Board Officers
   A. Chair
   - Mr. Colson moved to nominate Ashley Blythe. Mr. Pepper-Alston seconded the motion, all voted in favor, motion carried.

   B. Vice Chair
   - Chair Blythe moved to nominate William Pepper-Alston. Mr. Coan seconded the motion, all voted in favor, motion carried.

   C. Secretary
   - Chair Blythe moved to nominate Chris Ott. Mr. Pepper-Alston seconded the motion, all voted in favor, motion carried.
6. Approval of Rules and Procedures for the Municipal Park Foundation Board
   The Board reviewed the proposed Rules and Procedures and discussed several revisions and clarifications.

- Section 3, Board Officers, was amended to remove the word "help" so that the Chair is responsible for preparing agendas in coordination with Town staff.
- The Board discussed moving its regular meeting from the second Tuesday to the third Tuesday of each month at 6:00 PM so that recommendations can be presented to Town Council without waiting nearly a full month.
- Ms. Watkins advised that changing the regular meeting date requires an ordinance amendment. Until that amendment becomes effective, meetings held on the third Tuesday may need to be advertised as Special Called Meetings.
- Motion: Ms. Frazier moved to recommend changing the regular meeting schedule from the second Tuesday to the third Tuesday of each month at 6:00 PM. Mr. Coan seconded the motion, all voted in favor, motion carried.
- The Board also reviewed provisions moving public comments earlier in future meetings and limiting individual public comments to three minutes unless additional time is approved by the Board.
- Motion: Chair Blythe moved to approve the Rules and Procedures with the amendment to Section 3 described above. Mr. Pepper-Alston seconded the motion, all voted in favor, motion carried.

7. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes of June 9th, 2026

- Chair Motion: Mr. Colson moved to approve the meeting minutes of June 9th, 2026. Ms. Frazier seconded the motion, all voted in favor, motion carried.

8. Unfinished Business

A. Rental Agreement Proposed by the Town Attorney

The Board reviewed the Town Attorney's revisions to the proposed Special Event/Rental Agreement. Discussion and requested revisions included:

- Restore the previously discussed fee schedule to the application.
- Add missing Yes/No selection boxes under the Event Setup section concerning amplified music, announcements, DJs, speakers, or other sound equipment.
- Clarify the Park Board's role in reviewing applications for events held at the Municipal Park.
- The Board agreed that events proposed for the Municipal Park should first be presented to the Park Board for review and recommendation before being forwarded to Town Council.
- Events involving other Town-owned public property would not necessarily require Park Board review.
- The Board discussed retaining a single application that could be used for different Town properties rather than creating multiple separate applications.
- Action/Recommendation: The Board agreed to forward the agreement to Town Council with the requested amendments and clarification that applications involving the Municipal Park are to be reviewed by the Park Board.

- Ms. Watkins will work with the Town Attorney to obtain the necessary revisions for consideration by Town Council.

B. Park Security Cameras
   - Ms. Watkins provided an update regarding the four security cameras installed at the Municipal Park.
   - Cameras were purchased in November 2025, received in December, and installed January 13, 2026.
   - Connectivity and account-access problems remain unresolved with T-Mobile.
   - The cameras currently appear in the mobile application on Ms. Watkins' device but are not accessible on other authorized devices using the same credentials.
   - The Town has paid approximately $125 per month for four T-Mobile SIM cards, totaling approximately $1,320 since December 2025, despite the system not functioning as intended.
   - Town Council has requested that the Town pursue reimbursement for service charges incurred while the system has not been operational.
   - Ms. Watkins has retained written documentation of communications with T-Mobile.
   - Alternative cellular providers, including Verizon and AT&T, will be investigated.
   - Coastal Burglar Alarm, which recently completed security camera work at Town Hall, will be contacted to evaluate the existing park system and possible future improvements.
   - The Board also discussed whether future cameras capable of reliably capturing license plates may be appropriate.
   - Action: Ms. Watkins will continue pursuing resolution/refund with T-Mobile, investigate alternate SIM/service providers, and request an evaluation from Coastal Burglar Alarm. No formal motion was required.

C. Gate/Fencing Quotes - Security Improvements
   - Ms. Watkins presented updated fencing quotes for security improvements associated with the Event Entrance, North Entrance, and rear/Greenbelt access area.
   - Superior Fence provided the lowest quote at $6,172.42.
   - A second contractor submitted a quote of approximately $9,500.
   - An additional contractor had previously been contacted but had not provided a quote.
   - Approximately $14,000 in previously reallocated PARD grant funding is available for security improvements associated with Entrances 2 and 3.
   - The Board discussed possible future use of remaining grant funds for related security improvements, including cameras, barriers, landscaping, or other measures intended to prevent vehicles from bypassing the gates.
   - Staff will confirm that the fence posts will be set in concrete.

- Motion: Chair Blythe moved to recommend proceeding with the $6,172.42 Superior Fence quote for the identified security fencing improvements. Mr. Pepper-Alston seconded the motion, all voted in favor, motion carried.
- Action: Ms. Watkins will coordinate with the contractor and assemble the procurement documentation for Town Council. Mr. Ott will provide documentation regarding the effort to obtain an additional quote.

D. Entrance Sign Quotes
- The Board continued discussion regarding permanent signage for the South, North, Event, and Greenbelt entrances.
- Examples from Laurel Hill County Park and Georgetown were reviewed.
- Board members expressed preference for a more substantial, attractive entrance sign like the Georgetown example and large enough to be easily visible from Doar Road.
- The current concept uses approximately 36" x 24" digitally printed metal signs mounted on wood posts.
- After an additional 20% discount, the current estimated cost for the original sign concept is approximately $2,445.
- Mr. Pepper-Alston will continue working with the vendor on revised concepts incorporating the preferred design and Municipal Park branding.
- No formal action was taken.

E. September 12th – Fun Run
- The Board continued planning for the Town-sponsored Fun Run scheduled for September 12, 2026. Town Council has already approved the event date.
- Mr. Cohen provided an update on event planning:
    - A local health clinic plans to participate with its mobile health unit and provide health screenings such as blood pressure and diabetes checks.
    - The clinic intends to invite additional health partners and provide giveaways and information regarding available community services.
    - The event will be free and open to the public; registration fees will apply to individuals participating in the run/walk and receiving an event T-shirt.
    - Participant registration is currently anticipated at approximately $30.
    - Potential donations of fruit, food, and supplies will be pursued from local businesses and organizations.
    - Food trucks and other vendors are being considered, with a possible vendor fee in the range of $50–$75.
    - A participant liability waiver will need to be developed and reviewed.
    - Coordination will be required with law enforcement for traffic control and with emergency services for medical coverage.

    - Additional directional and Fun Run signage may be needed.
- The Board discussed transportation/logistical considerations for participants finishing at the park.
- Ms. Watkins stated that Town Council will need a consolidated event plan showing projected revenues, anticipated expenses, logistics, and any funding required from the Town.
- Action: Mr. Cohen and other Board members will continue developing the event plan and budget for presentation to Town Council in August. Ms. Watkins will assist with identifying the appropriate Town event funding source and posting the event flyer through Town communication channels.

F. Maintenance Scope and Mowing Schedule
- The Board discussed the current maintenance and mowing schedule and the need for a more defined future scope of work/RFP.
- The park is currently being mowed on an established schedule, generally approximately monthly.
- The Board discussed recommendations received from environmental and academic contacts regarding vegetation around the lake.
- Bush hogging or wholesale removal of shoreline vegetation is not currently recommended, as cattails, grasses, and other vegetation help stabilize the lake banks.
- Selective thinning may eventually be appropriate for designated views or access areas.
- Future maintenance specifications should recognize the ecological and shoreline-stabilization value of existing vegetation.
- No formal action was taken. The maintenance scope will continue to be developed before an RFP is issued.

G. Historical Donations from Annual Bike Event
- Ms. Watkins reported that Town records confirm receipt of a $1,600 donation associated with the annual cycling event.
- Additional research in QuickBooks is required because prior deposits were not consistently coded in a manner that makes the historical record easy to identify.
- Ms. Watkins will continue reviewing previous years to determine the history and frequency of these donations.
- The Board confirmed that the $1,600 donation was intended for the Municipal Park.

H. Well Pipe Repair
- Ms. Watkins provided an update on the waterline/well repair at the park.
    - The broken pipe was reported in March 2026 following freeze damage.
    - The Town contacted its water contractor, Robinson, and received an estimate for the repair.

    - Ms. Watkins believed the work had already been completed following authorization but will verify the final status with the contractor.
- The Board emphasized that functioning water service is needed at the park, particularly before upcoming events and contractor work.
- Action: Ms. Watkins will confirm the repair status and ensure water service is operational.

I. McAdams Proposal and Additional Quotes

- Mr. Ott provided an update on efforts to identify firms offering services comparable to McAdams:
    - McAdams offers a combination of park planning, environmental stewardship, grant-funding assistance, design, and implementation support.
    - Two Charleston-area firms, Seamon Whiteside and Thomas & Hutton, were identified as possible alternatives; however, their available services do not appear directly comparable to the comprehensive scope offered by McAdams.
- The Board discussed the difficulty of obtaining three genuinely comparable proposals.
- Ms. Watkins reviewed the Town's sole-source procurement provisions. For goods or services valued below $50,000, the procurement officer may submit written justification to Town Council when research indicates there is only one viable source capable of providing the required services.
- Town Council may approve the sole-source procurement if it determines the justification is sufficient.
- Action: Mr. Ott will prepare a written summary of the firms researched, the services compared, and the reasons the Board believes McAdams provides a uniquely comprehensive scope. This information will support a potential sole-source procurement recommendation to Town Council.

J. Dark Sky Initiative and Nighttime Use of the Park

- Chair Blythe provided an update on the Dark Sky initiative:
    - The Dark Sky application fee has been paid.
    - The certification process is expected to take approximately one to one-and-a-half years and will require continuing documentation, photography, measurements, educational activities, and other supporting work.
    - Demetrios Papadopoulos continues to assist the Board with the process.
    - Board members will assist with required nighttime photographs and other documentation.

    - Current Town ordinance generally limits park access to sunrise through sunset. A future ordinance amendment will therefore be necessary to accommodate nighttime public access associated with Dark Sky activities.
  - Ms. Watkins will work with the Town Attorney on appropriate ordinance language, potentially for consideration later in the year.
  - Existing park-hours signage may eventually require modification or supplemental language.
  - No formal motion was taken.

K. Commercial Use on Public Property Ordinance
  - The Board reviewed the draft Commercial Use on Public Property Ordinance, which was developed in part from examples used by other municipalities.
  - Several Board members indicated they had not yet had sufficient opportunity to review the complete draft and accompanying materials.
  - Consensus: The Board agreed to postpone action and allow members additional time to review the proposed ordinance before forwarding it for legal review or making a recommendation.

9. New Business

A. Form for Town-Sponsored Events
  - The Board discussed a proposed streamlined form for Town-sponsored events.
  - Town Council had requested a more consistent process for identifying the scope, budget, anticipated revenue/donations, and logistical requirements for Town-sponsored events.
  - Board members discussed the distinction between the Park Board's responsibility for the Municipal Park as a venue/facility and responsibility for organizing general Town recreational or community events.
  - Several members expressed concern that the Park Board's primary mission is to develop, protect, and manage the Municipal Park rather than function as the Town's recreation or event-planning department.
  - Members agreed that the Board may initiate or assist with individual events, such as the Fun Run, but questioned whether responsibility for traditional Town events such as Easter egg hunts, holiday celebrations, or similar activities should automatically fall to the Park Board simply because an event might use the park.
  - Action: No formal recommendation was made. Additional clarification will be sought regarding Town Council's expectations for the Park Board's role in Town-sponsored events.

B. Citadel Chemistry Department Mushroom Sampling

- Mr. Daniels presented a request from The Citadel's Chemistry Department to collect mushroom samples from the Municipal Park for scientific research.
    - The research involves studying environmental contaminants, including metal particles absorbed by fungi.
    - Sampling would be conducted by faculty/students during normal park operating hours.
    - Researchers would walk into the park, collect limited mushroom specimens, and remove them for laboratory analysis.
    - No vehicles, significant equipment, or disturbance of the property is anticipated.
- The Board expressed support for the research partnership and discussed the value of receiving information and photographs regarding species identified at the park.
- Motion: Mr. Pepper-Alston moved to recommend that Town Council authorize The Citadel Chemistry Department to collect mushroom samples from the Municipal Park for scientific research. Ms. Frazier seconded the motion. All voted in favor, motion carried.
- Action: Mr. Daniels will obtain a brief written description of the research from the appropriate Citadel faculty member. The Board will prepare supporting documentation for presentation to Town Council in August.
- Mr. Daniels also reported a recent encounter with a Charleston County Sheriff's deputy at the park involving an apparently abandoned campsite and difficult driving conditions caused by concealed ruts in an unimproved area. Ms. Watkins will follow up with the deputy regarding the incident.

10. Chair Report – Ms. Blythe

- Chair Blythe reviewed the July Park Progress Report, updates included:
    - Completion of the South Entrance parking area.
    - Installation of the portable restroom, with no reported vandalism or damage to date.
    - Reduced evidence of unauthorized ATV/side-by-side activity.
    - Low lake levels due to sustained dry conditions, with shallow areas and portions of the former roadbed becoming exposed.
    - Continued mowing and maintenance.
    - Completion of assembly and installation work on park benches during the recent volunteer workday.
    - Continued development of partnerships with The Citadel and the Sustainability Institute, including possible future AmeriCorps assistance with trail development.
    - Publication of two Municipal Park trails on the *AllTrails* application: the Lake Loop Trail and Overlook Trail.

    - Continued consideration of shoreline vegetation management, with an emphasis on preserving vegetation needed for bank stabilization.
- The Board also discussed holding another volunteer cleanup prior to the September 12 Fun Run. August 29 was identified as a potential date. Because a cleanup event was not specifically listed on the meeting agenda, no formal action was taken. Staff will also investigate whether the Fire Department can assist with removal or controlled burning of deteriorated wooden debris, subject to applicable requirements and conditions.

11. Public Comments

- None

12. Board Member Comments

- Mr. Colson discussed the need to begin moving forward with trail design and development during the current fiscal year.
    - Approximately $50,000 had been identified for trail development in the Park Board's proposed budget.
- The Town's final adopted budget consolidated several proposed Park capital items into an approximately $65,800 Municipal Park allocation.
- Board members emphasized the importance of establishing priorities and beginning trail planning before the end of the fiscal year.
- The current trails displayed through *AllTrails* were discussed as a useful starting point.
- Action: A detailed breakdown of the Park Board's originally proposed capital allocations will be circulated before the August meeting, and trail development/budget priorities will be placed on the August agenda.

13. Adjournment

Mr. Pepper-Alston moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Colson seconded, all voted in favor, motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:41 PM.

Date: July 14, 2026 Prepared By: Christopher R. Ott

Municipal Park Board Secretary

Note: These meeting minutes are not verbatim. To watch the full meeting video, please visit the town's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/TownOfAwendaw