



## **Municipal Park Foundation Board Meeting Tuesday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Minutes**

### **1. Call to Order, Roll Call**

Present: Coan, Colson, Daniels, Frazier, Freeman, Pepper-Alston

Staff Present: Town Administrator - Watkins

Not Present: Blythe, Ott

### **2. Prayer**

### **3. Pledge of Allegiance**

### **4. Civility Pledge**

Vice Chair Pepper-Alston opened the meeting with a prayer and then led the board in the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Colson then led the board in reading the civility pledge.

### **5. Approval of the meeting minutes of September 9<sup>th</sup>.**

Correction: Pepper-Alston was not listed as a member of the Fundraising and Grants sub-committee as approved during the September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Mr. Pepper-Alston moved to approve the meeting minutes of September 9<sup>th</sup> as amended.

Ms. Freeman seconded. All voted in favor. Ms. Frazier abstained since she was not present for the meeting.

### **6. Review of Sub-Committee Assignments and Actions**

#### **A. Fundraising & Grants Subcommittee**

The board reviewed three outstanding grants (applied for by former Town Administrator):

- 2023 grant (~\$7,000) for benches and berm improvements
- 2024 grant (~\$7,400) for additional seating/fencing
- Signage grant (~\$9,979)

Total value of pending grants is approximately \$24,000. Discussion on grant expiration dates (2026–2028 depending on the grant). The board discussed and clarified that funds must be spent on the specific approved project scopes. The board noted that some grants can be pursued without completed audits, but most require them.

#### B. Finance Subcommittee

The ordinance language regarding board roles is redundant and unclear, clarification is needed on the following:

- Whether the board makes decisions or only recommendations
- Board authority in contacting contractors
- Coordination with Planning Commission

Ms. Watkins explained that the Park Board recommends procurements and project plans and council must approve expenditures. The board may participate in reviewing RFPs.

Budget Process:

- Fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30.
- Board needs to prepare recommendations for FY 2026–2027.
- Current budget includes allocations for:
  - Park improvements – \$60,000
  - Maintenance – \$40,000

Board financial discussion raised the following points and questions:

- Actual available funds vs. projected revenue needs clarification.
- How much money is currently available for park projects?
- Must the board raise revenue before spending allocated town funds?
- What are the essential items required to open the park (gates, signage, parking, etc.)?

#### C. Events & Community Engagement

Mr. Coan brought up the idea of a small community run.

- Previous event a few years ago had ~36–40 runners participate.
- Fleet Feet supported with course setup and participant badges.
- Seen as a simple, engaging, community-building activity.
- Partnership Opportunities:
  - Health clinics possibly connected through Roper Hospital
  - Local businesses or organizations (Costco, Fleet Feet) could donate water or support logistics.

Other board discussion focused on a July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks event at the park.

- Main costs are pyrotechnician and security.
- Past contracts were reasonable in price.
- Potential for broad community attendance, including neighboring towns.
- Could charge a small fee or kept free while avoiding financial loss.

#### Event Approval and Funding Discussion

- Any ideas or events would need Town Council approval.
- Suggest approaching local corporations (e.g., Boeing, Nucor, REI) for sponsorships.
- There are precedents for corporate-sponsored community projects (e.g., playgrounds, shelters).
- Overall event goals:
  - Activities are intended to bring the community together with minimal cost.
  - Planning is feasible with sufficient organization, partnerships, and sponsorship.

#### Event Planning for 2026

- Priority is to first open the park and establish awareness.
- Potential events:
  - July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration
  - Oyster roast/fall festival
  - Spring festival
  - Small Christmas event
- Focus on gradual build-up and coordinated planning with the town.

#### D. Park Operations

The immediate operational priorities needed to open the park:

- Front gate installation (active project)
- Parking area improvements
- Signage installation
- Benches and tables (grant-funded)

Clarified that:

- Gate project estimates are in progress.
- Grant-funded benches/tables can proceed once bids are obtained.
- Mowing schedule: handled by town, may need weekly cuts during active park use.
- Trail maintenance requires monthly inspection for safety.

#### E. Legacy & Cultural Affairs

- Plan is to incorporate local history and cultural figures through signage, activities, and partnerships with historical societies, museums, and national forests/refuge.
- Potential for mini-museum or interpretive gazebo highlighting wildlife and the Gullah Geechee heritage.
- Ensure safety, community engagement, and cultural preservation.
- Build events gradually while establishing park infrastructure and awareness.

#### 7. Adjournment

Mr. Pepper-Alston moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Coan seconded. All voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:12 PM.

Date: Oct 14, 2025

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](http://www.youtube.com/TownOfAwendaw)*