

Bryant Parks Committee Meeting
September 9, 2025 - 6:00 PM
Bishop Park Administration Building - Conference Room
6401 Boone Rd. Bryant, AR 72022

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Call to Order - Amanda Jolly at 6:00 PM

Committee Members Present - Amanda Jolly, Renee Curtis, Tony Williams, Lynn Farmer, Chera Moore and Drew Martin

Others Present - Parks Director Keith Cox, Parks Assistant Director Matt Martin, Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator Cassie Henry-Saorrano, Bryant Senior Adult Center Council Members Rhonda Sanders, Butch Higginbotham and Dale Johnson; Carelink representatives Deborah Wray and Lori Green; Lisa Bergren, City Council Members Jack Mosely and Jon Martin

Approval of Minutes

1. July 8 Parks Committee Meeting

Motion to approve by D. Martin, seconded by Curtis. Motion carried.

Associations / Club Reports

2. Bryant Senior Adult Center Annual Report

Rhonda Sanders, Chair of the Senior Adult Center Council, opened by introducing the Council Board and Carelink staff. She highlighted the Center's role in providing meals and social engagement for seniors who might otherwise go without. Sanders outlined the collaborative partnership between the Council, Carelink, and the City of Bryant: the Council serves as an advisory group and raises funds for facility needs; Carelink manages daily operations and federal and state funding for meals and activities; and the City of Bryant supports operations through an annual contract, with the Parks Department providing the facility, maintenance, and utilities.

Senior Council treasurer Butch Higginbotham then gives an update on the state of the Council's funds; where those funds have come from and what they have used them for over the years. Center Coordinator Deborah Wray then gives a report of the services provided by Carelink at the Bryant Senior Adult Center and throughout the region, including the number of seniors impacted and meals served.

D. Martin and Moore followed up with questions regarding the number of regular participants and if the grant funding would increase if more individuals were regularly attending. Carelink

Program Administrator Lori Greene answers saying that there are approximately 500 active registered participants but that the grant money is a flat rate regardless of how many people are participating. Farmer asks how the seniors have been impacted by parking limitations behind the Center due to construction and the gates being added. Higginbotham and Sanders said that although it is a challenge they understand the reasons and offered suggestions that could help from their board.

Director's Report

3. Parks Department Monthly Summary

Cox provides the monthly summary of activities and highlights that the Seresco dehumidification system has been delivered and is currently being installed. He said that it should be up and running in the next couple of weeks and the fencing and gates will be installed behind the Center once that construction is complete. He then shared some things the Department is doing to try and alleviate the parking challenges for the seniors and says that handicapped members will still have access to the back parking.

Cox also highlighted Woofstock, staff training and current programming. He then gave an update on the Mills to Alcoa Connector Trail and the pool cover at Mills Pool before introducing Cassie Henry-Saorrone to give an update on upcoming community events; Movies in the Park, Fall Fest, Jack-O-Lantern Jamboree and It's a Wonderful Bryant Christmas Lighting.

D. Martin asked if we had an update on the grant applications for Bishop and Alcoa lighting. Cox answered that we are still waiting but did receive notice that due to a large amount of applications that an answer would take longer than anticipated.

Public Comments

Lisa Bergren proposes that we add shade structures to the inclusive playground at Mills Park. She said that although there is a shaded area provided, there are some children that do not get access to equipment because none of the actual play equipment is shaded. She also gives examples of other playgrounds in the community, specifically at Bishop Park and the park on Raymar Rd, that provide shade on playground equipment.

Old Business

There was no Old Business

New Business

4. Request to Change Location and Time for October Parks Committee Meeting

Cox requests to host the October Parks Committee Meeting after the conclusion of the Council budget workshop, which will also include Parks budget. The meeting would be held on the same date, October 14, but at 6:30 PM at the Boswell Municipal Complex.

Motion to approve location and time change by Moore, seconded by D. Martin. Motion passes.

5. Request to Change Date for November Parks Committee Meeting

Due to our regularly scheduled November Parks Committee meeting falling on Veteran's Day, Cox is requesting to move that meeting to November 3rd. He said that day had the most positive responses from the poll he sent out to committee members. The meeting would still take place at the regular time and location.

Motion to approve date change by Farmer, seconded by Williams. Motion passes.

Committee Comments

Moore asks the Committee about her desire to create a fundraising group to help raise money for the Parks Department similar to what the Senior Adult Council does.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by D. Martin, seconded by Curtis. Motion carried.