

Recreation Committee Meeting

October 16, 2025

A meeting of the Recreation Committee was held on this date beginning at 2:02 p.m. at 80 Broad Street and over video conference call.

Councilmembers Present: Councilmember Caroline Parker (Chair) (*virtual*), Councilmember Jim McBride (*virtual*), Councilmember Kevin Shealy, Councilmember Keith Waring (*virtual*), and Mayor William S. Cogswell, Jr.

Staff Present: Jason Kronsberg, Director, Parks; Laurie Yarbrough, Director, Recreation; Elizabeth Dieck, Chief of Staff (*virtual*); Daniel Riccio, Section Chief, Community Services; Magalie Creech (*virtual*), Assistant Corporation Counsel; Melissa Cruthirds, Assistant Corporation Counsel (*virtual*); Hampton Logan, Executive Assistant and Special Projects Manager – Chief of Staff; Jennifer Cook, Clerk of Council; and Wanda Stepp, Clerk of Council's Office (*recording*).

Also Present: Christopher Adams (*virtual*).

Chairwoman Parker called the meeting to order.

Chairwoman Parker opened the meeting with a moment of silence.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Councilmember Parker, seconded by Councilmember McBride, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2025 Recreation Committee meeting.

Public Participation:

None.

4. Old Business:

None.

5. New Business:

a. Recreation updates:

Ms. Yarbrough said they were in the middle of their fall youth sports season, which was their busiest youth sports season. They were starting girls' volleyball playoffs the following week. All their other sports, flag football, tackle football, soccer, baseball, and softball were still in their regular season. The prior week's rain had given them a couple of challenges. They had to reschedule games and move things around, but their fields had recovered well. They were back on schedule and would get the rest of those games made up. The fields had held up well during the rain.

Ms. Yarbrough said they were still using W.L. Stephens pool, which was an outdoor pool. They planned to use it sparingly and would use it into November, which was when they would close it and move all their programs to the MLK pool. She and Facilities Maintenance had walked around

and made a list of items that they were going to address maintenance-wise on the dome knowing that was going to be their only pool when they started work at W.L. Stephens pool in June. Their high school swimming program just ended. The kids competed in the State meet. All their high school swimmers would be returning to the SMRT Swim Team. There were at about 280 currently, which was all they could handle. They were already going to have to rent pool space. She would be coming to Council in December with an agreement to rent pool water at St. Andrews Family Fitness Center.

Ms. Yarbrough said their tennis program was in the fall season and all their teams were competing. They had teams that were in Rome, Georgia the prior weekend playing in intersectionals. They had great weather and people were everywhere except for the rain over the prior weekend. Recreation was going very well.

b. Parks updates (Capital Projects, Maintenance):

See attached Exhibit A.

Mr. Kronsberg gave the traditional long list of duties they had accomplished over the last month.

Mayor Cogswell asked if there was any feedback on the current design of the pools at the Johns Island recreation centers. Mr. Kronsberg said they were working on the depth of the therapy pool trying to figure out how to get more of a proper therapy pool versus a pool where they taught children to swim. They were trying to figure out how to get accessible ramps down into the pool and keep the size appropriate without expanding anything too much. There was a lot of discussion on the 25-meter, 25-yard pool. If they were going to have 25-yard, 25-meter, one of the comments was that the depth needed to be consistent so that they could be used both ways from a starting block diving point of view. Generally, those were the big questions and comments that came out of that session, but they were impressed with everything. They showed the floorplans and talked about programming and how they would move through the buildings. That was for both W.L. Stephens and Johns Island Park.

6. **Alan Fleming Tennis Complex concerns/discussion (*Requested by Councilmember McBride*):**
7. **Discussion regarding “no dogs signs” at the baseball fields at Johns Island Park (*Requested by Councilmember McBride*):**

Councilmember McBride said there was a request from one of the coaches of the high school baseball team about putting ‘no dogs’ signs on the high school baseball field fences as people were walking their dogs, or allowing their dogs, on the fields. He asked if they could allow CCSD to put ‘no dogs’ signs on the baseball field fences. Mr. Kronsberg said he had noticed that, as well, and had created a work order about two weeks ago. This week they had installed signs in all the ballfields, got the pickleball time sign re-installed, and they had all new rules signs installed around the park, both in English and Spanish. There was a request from Public Safety to get that done, so it was the first park that had a full set of rules signs in Spanish. He thought there was five or six ‘no dogs on fields’ signs listing the code. Unfortunately, rules were for rule followers. He was hopeful that it helped a little bit. When he and Ms. Yarbrough were out and about in the parks, they did explain to people why there was a code. Sometimes it went okay, sometimes not. It was something that happened everywhere. Councilmember McBride said at least the rule followers would see the signs and not let the dogs go on the fields. Ms. Yarbrough said one of Mr. Kronsberg’s employees contacted Recreation and they ordered two more pickleball rules signs that could be placed in other spots around the pickleball and tennis courts at Alan Fleming Tennis

Complex. They would be installed in two weeks when they came in. Councilmember McBride thanked Mr. Kronsberg and Ms. Yarbrough for being proactive.

Councilmember McBride said two months ago he had brought up the desire to do pervious paving of the parking lot at the Alan Fleming courts. He noticed it had been graveled, so it was better than it was as it had been just dirt. Mr. Kronsberg had brought up the idea of getting budgeting for the next budgeting cycle. He asked if they could get confirmation if it was possible to pave that parking lot. Mr. Kronsberg said they did have a lot of gravel lots around the City and it was cheaper to do that when they were put in, but it was not cheaper in the long run. He said they graveled, re-graded, and compacted it. He had been there frequently, and it was not muddy anymore. That request came in after their budget requests, so they would just have to continue to evaluate that scenario to see if they could figure that out. Currently, they didn't have anything identified to do that work. Councilmember McBride said so they were going to wait and see if the gravel worked versus paving, and if not, then potentially put in money to pave it. Mr. Kronsberg said that was right.

Councilmember McBride said someone had pointed out to him that the port-o-johns by the courts were supposed to be cleaned out every week or on a regular basis, and they hadn't been for several weeks. They had pointed out trash down in the port-o-john. He asked how often they were supposed to be cleaned. Ms. Yarbrough said they contracted with United to clean them weekly. They had added that stop over to their second tennis maintenance worker's list to check and they had put a call into the company to let them know they were checking them and getting complaints. They were watching it, but they the City was paying them to clean them weekly.

Councilmember McBride said the stormwater renovations that happened by the Alan Fleming courts, cleaning out of the ditch and cutting down trees, one of the residents in the neighborhood on Field Planters Road had been in contact with Ms. Dieck every couple of weeks. The last he understood was that the City was going to plant trees to replace some of the trees that were cut down to provide a natural barrier between the Alan Fleming courts and the Field Planters Road portion of that neighborhood. He asked if that was happening. Mr. Kronsberg said they did have a plan and had funds in their tree mitigation bucket. He asked the Charleston County School District, who was online, to give them an update on the CCSD project and the close-out process. They had to wait for all that stormwater system to be accepted by the City's Stormwater Department and the project closed out before they could plant trees on that steep ditch bank, so it didn't affect their close-out process. Chris Adams said he had discussed this with the engineer and general contractor, and they were re-submitting their stormwater close-out and it should be by the end of that week. The engineer believed that they had done everything they needed to do to satisfy that close-out, so they were in the process of getting feedback from the Stormwater Department. If everything went well, it would be closed out. Then, they had completed adding the grass to the infield of the baseball field and had made improvements to the swales behind the softball and practice field. He had met with Clark DeCiantis the prior week and a contractor they were going to be using to address drainage issues in the plaza area. That contractor was scheduled to begin work the following week and should be done with his scope within a week and a half to two weeks. Mr. Kronsberg said as soon as they got that work signed off on, they were ready to move forward with the tree planting plan, which was a robust plan. It was a perfect time of year to do it. They didn't want to do it in the middle of the summer as it just wasn't a good time to plant trees, but they were ready to mobilize as soon as that permit got signed off on. Councilmember McBride said that was great and he thanked CCSD for being all over it.

Councilmember McBride said the pickleball noise issues with the homes along 3491, 3495, and 3498 Field Planters Road and a couple other houses occasionally, CCSD had went above and

beyond by putting the sound barriers around the tennis courts. After all that was done, it seemed like the sound had gotten a little bit better, but it was still loud persisting all day long. He knew if he lived in those homes right next to the courts, his wife would want them to move tomorrow. He asked if they had done a follow-up livability assessment of the sound for those homes next to the pickleball courts. Mr. Riccio said in those situations with the pickleball, he had personally been out there himself when pickleballers were playing. He accidentally ran into the complainant who lived right behind there who was explaining that he was upset. He told the complainant that sometimes in those situations noise levels were subjective and they had to go by their current stipulations and rules, but where he was standing, he personally did not witness that it was that loud. He was outside and the complainant was outside. He wasn't sure if the complainant was willing to invite himself or another livability officer inside the house. That was where typically they would be in any situation whether it was a restaurant, a bar where they had a certain expectation of their noise level inside versus outside. There was expected noise that they would hear in their backyard versus inside their house. They would then go to the distance of if the air was on, if the windows were open, so they would kind of do a deep dive into that just to let the individuals know that inside their house, yes, if it was that loud, they were going to have a problem, but outside there was an expectation of certain noises that were going to exist that may not satisfy one versus another. Mayor Cogswell said Councilmember McBride asked if there had been an additional assessment. Councilmember McBride said yes as the complainant was still complaining that inside the house was the main issue. He said Mr. Riccio was right that they couldn't eliminate all sounds everywhere, but inside the house with a sound meter, he asked if there was an ordinance threshold that stated an official standard instead of just being subjective that they could measure. Mr. Riccio said there was not. The current ordinance was not based on a decibel level. The levels that some agencies and cities had could also prove ambiguous. Mayor Cogswell said the City did have sound ordinances that did relate to a certain level of decibels, but that was more for revving of engines or music, not pickleball. He guessed it could be PA systems or something like that. Unless they created an ordinance specifically for pickleball and the noise associated with it, which was a whole other can of worms to open, he thought they could do an assessment on the inside. They could go check it out and inspect, but the reality of it was, the City didn't have an ordinance for that specific situation and they had taken measures to add reasonable industry standard sound proofing. He guessed really the question was if there continued to be complaints, was there any other option short of shutting down pickleball courts, which were used by a lot of people, that could be done. Ms. Yarbrough said the only other option she was aware of was an equipment option. The pickleball community did not like the paddles that were considered padded and quieter. It was not something that was well respected in their game. Other cities had looked at that. It was the only other option she had.

Mr. Kronsberg said they did move the pickleball courts further away from Mr. Nagurney's house so the angle of deflection from the sound had changed. They could move the sound barrier a couple courts over. It was a bigger project to take the sound barrier off that existing fence and shift it over closer to where the pickleball was currently played. Maybe that would help some, but they would have to put new fencing in and then shift that fabric over. Councilmember McBride said he would have the gentleman submit a Citizen Services Desk request to make it official to have it documented what the audible pickleball sound was inside his home if he was willing to do that. It would be documented and even though there wasn't an ordinance currently, they could at least compare that decibel level with other standards around other cities in the Country and make a more informed decision. He didn't like operating in the subjective as it made things difficult, so he would rather get it documented as to what the decibel sound level was on a typical pickleball morning. Then, they could decide whether it was excessive and move or add the sound barrier to one of the other fences, but he didn't want to not address it to the best they could. CCSD and the

City had done a lot to try to mitigate it, so it wasn't like they hadn't tried, but it was still an issue he wanted to get buttoned up.

Councilmember McBride said there was a "no pickleball before 9:00 a.m." sign that was pulled out of the ground and needed to be replaced. Mr. Kronsberg said that had been completed yesterday.

8. Discussion regarding adding a tennis professional at the City of Charleston Peggy Bohne Tennis Center (Requested by Councilmember Waring):

Councilmember Waring said there was a good turnout to the unveiling for the naming of the tennis center for Ms. Bohne. While he was there, he had been approached by Cynthia Hill, who had been playing tennis there for over 45 years. He read an e-mail from Ms. Hill stating: 'I'm writing to request that the City consider hiring a dedicated City of Charleston tennis pro who is an employee at the tennis center like they have done at Maybank Tennis Center (MTC). As you heard yesterday, the community camaraderie and competition are very important to the tennis center for happy memories. Toni Young at the MTC is a perfect example of a job well done as a City of Charleston employee. She has done such an exemplary job at building the center that many players prefer MTC because they know there is a great support system there. One way the evidence shows is how large the teams are at MTC and the player advancements at MTC. MTC has contributed greatly to the success of many players and teams largely due to, what I believe, and others believe, as the total focus to grow and strengthen the center and players. I constantly hear from players how Toni Young and Donzell Bailey work very closely with the players and teams to create success. Their hands-on approach has led to what many players and teams advance and thrive in their competition.' He said there was an active petition being done that they were going to present to Council. He asked if they used to have a tennis pro at the Peggy Bohne Charleston Tennis Center (PBCTC).

Ms. Yarbrough said she couldn't go back forever in history, but she said Arthur Anastopoulo was one of the first tennis pros. She thought Billy Silcox was a tennis pro there, as well. Back in the '70s they had head tennis pros. During the time she had been with the City starting in 2002, Mr. Anastopoulo had just left to go to Macon, Georgia. There was a search for a tennis pro, and they had gone through seven different contracted folks over time trying to get someone that fit in that mold and worked in that facility. They were currently under contract with a tennis service called Tinkey Tennis and Jamey Tinkey was the Head Tennis Pro. He wasn't a City employee, but he had the tennis teaching services. He did all the lessons, camps, clinics, and he hired all the folks that ran those. He did all the marketing. In her opinion, it allowed the City to function without having any liability. Some of those years, between Mr. Anastopoulo and currently, the City was paying out \$100,000 or more to a tennis pro and not bringing in nearly the revenue they were designed to bring in. The current arrangement had them bringing in over \$450,000 a year. The City took a cut of that and didn't pay Mr. Tinkey anything. Mr. Tinkey was in charge of the growth of those programs. If they went well, he made money. And if they didn't go well, he didn't. If it didn't make money, then they could stop the contract. She had found Mr. Tinkey to be a great ambassador of the tennis game. He was also doing tennis services in other courts. She admitted that the Toni Young situation was a wonderful situation to have. She wished she had 200 more employees like Toni Young. Unfortunately, they didn't make everybody like Toni Young. She started out teaching as a Courting Kid Instructor in the mornings when her children were young. She was currently teaching 40 to 50 hours a week at MTC, and it was like a family over there, but it was a very different tennis center as it was on James Island, and it had a little different vibe than the PBCTC. She looked for that to change. The numbers were picking up at PBCTC. Their team numbers were picking up. She was happy to work closely with Mr. Tinkey to try to get more

involvement with the leagues and teams. They had a lot of 3.0, 3.5 teams playing out of there, which were the beginning teams, the teams that needed that nurturing that were looking for that and that was something that their new Tennis Manager, Kimberly Faust, was working with them on. She was in a meeting earlier having the same discussion, not about getting a tennis pro, but about making sure they grew the family experience at PBCTC. MTC was a great tennis center. It was run by great people. It had a great tennis pro. If Ms. Bohne left tomorrow, she wasn't sure that they would hire someone and have that on them or if they would contract that out. It was really a way that a lot of folks did it. The Town of Mt. Pleasant contracted out their tennis pros. A lot of clubs around did the same thing. They were just trying to keep with the industry. It was an ever-changing industry. It was a lot like the golf business and sometimes things changed over time, especially when they had someone that was willing to spend \$100 to \$110 on a tennis lesson. That was a lot different than just coming out and using a court to play with their friends. So, they did have a tennis pro, and she was happy to answer any questions or look at it however the City would like her to. Councilmember Waring said it sounded like the will was there and he understood an independent contractor versus a full-time employee. He asked if they had somewhat of a tennis pro at PBCTC. Ms. Yarbrough said they absolutely did. It was Jamey Tinkey, who was over the company. It was called Tinkey Tennis. He was on the court 40 to 50 hours a week. He taught a lesson while she was out there that morning for a meeting. He hired staff that also helped him. In the evenings, if they stopped by when the kids were out of school and the adults were playing league matches, Mr. Tinkey would be on one court teaching clinics, and he may have two to three other instructors on the other teaching courts doing things for other ages and skill levels. So, they did have an instructional tennis program and she was excited by what she had seen in the tennis community over the last six months. They were ready to start their elementary and middle school program which predominantly took place at the PBCTC. She thought they would see Coach Tinkey out there with those kids, so there was a tennis instruction presence there just like they did at MTC. Councilmember Waring said he would circle back with Ms. Hill and another lady who had come up to him as he had left with the impression that they didn't have one. Ms. Yarbrough told Councilmember Waring if he wanted to share that e-mail with her, she would be happy to schedule a time to sit down and talk to them about if they had some suggestions of how she could make it more visible for them or to the community. She would be willing to do that in a heartbeat to make it better. Councilmember Waring said that would be great.

Councilmember Waring thanked the Clerk and Chairwoman Parker for adding this item to the agenda at the last minute and thanked the Committee members for entertaining that. Councilmember Shealy said it was a very good meeting with a lot of good information. He thanked Ms. Yarbrough, Mr. Kronsberg, and Mr. Riccio for their contributions, all their information, and all the work they did all year long.

Councilmember Waring asked for a status on WPAL Park. Mayor Cogswell said the house had been torn down. It was something that they needed to decide in terms of prioritization on Capital Projects as there was money in the budget, and had been money in the budget, for some improvements there, but not nearly enough to what it would take to make it happen. That was one thing he had been meaning to catch up with Councilmember Waring on to discuss what some interim options might be to try and activate sooner rather than later. Councilmember Waring said one of the things Act 236, the fee income with Tourism dollars, he thought Mayor Cogswell was in the General Assembly when that passed. He didn't know whether they should have a conversation about that before this budget cycle was done. That could potentially be a source of revenue.

9. **Adjourn:**

With there being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 2:41 p.m.

Submitted by Wanda Stepp
Clerk of Council's Office

Department of Facilities and Capital Projects
Recreation Committee Updates
October 16, 2025

Athletics Maintenance

- Completed 265 Drags of Baseball/Softball fields
- Completed setup for 44 Baseball/Softball games
- Completed setup for 192 other games (including youth and adult soccer)
- Repainted 375 fields for practices and games
- Completed field work for 37 permits
- Completed grooming of Stoney Field 2x's and performed a debris removal from the field
- Continuing to treat broadleaf weeds and sedges from sports fields
- Mowing of all Athletic fields at 1" height every 3-4 days

General Maintenance

- Continued with mulching along West Ashley Park roadsides
- Completed parking lot grading at West Ashley Park, Bayview, and Ackerman
- Completed rock installation at West Ashley Park fence line to improve erosion and to stop soccer balls from rolling under the nets
- Added 789 granite to Stoney Field Parking lot and re-graded. This location gets large amounts of cut through traffic when intersection is flooded.
- Weed control for new playground at Bridge Point and installed new locks for the bollards

Daniel Island / Cainhoy

- Nowell Creek Bike/Ped Crossing:
 - Construction work to begin this week 10-13-25.
 - Construction duration to be 14 months due to surcharge process.

James Island

- Ft Pemberton Park:
 - Consultants completed the required plan modifications based on settlement agreement, contractor is preparing cost proposals.
 - The picnic shelter has been assembled.
 - Several mature trees on the site have shed large limbs recently, and another large tree failed completely in June. Existing tree assessment underway.
- Stephen Washington:
 - Playground: Design concepts underway based on feedback from neighborhood.
 - Cemetery: Clemson Cultural and Historic Landscape Program has re-mobilized to conduct additional GPR transects in and around the cemetery where the clearing has been accomplished. They have also completed the GPR transects around the playground and picnic shelter location with no apparent gravesites found. The final report will be ready at the end of the month.
- Facilities Maintenance:
 - Muni Golf Course cleaned out grease traps for snack bar sinks.
 - Harborview / Ft. Johnson Tennis Court replaced 2 Lamps and ballasts on pole lights.
 - James Island Rec. replaced photocell for restroom outside lights.

Johns Island

- Johns Island Recreation Center and Pool:
 - Swim Community meeting conducted 10/14
 - Community wide meeting scheduled for 10/20
 - Design and estimating continues
- Johns Island Park
 - Pickleball start time sign replaced.
 - New rules sign installed.
 - No dogs in ball fields signs installed on ballfields.

Peninsula

- St. Julian Devine Smokestacks Rehabilitation
 - Work continues at the exterior of each stack
 - Interior gunite materials on site.
 - Interior structural improvements begin in the next few weeks.
 - Currently working at the 45-50 elevation of each stack
- Facilities Maintenance:
 - St. Julian: Replaced failed Back Flow to building and repaired 3rd floor drinking fountain.
 - Mall Park: cleaned outside drinking fountain.
 - Hazel Parker: repaired office AC unit.
 - Jack Adams: installed new bolt cover for pole light
 - Wragg Square: brick edging to Charlotte Street Entrance, donor plaques installed

West Ashley

- WL Stephens Pool at Forest Park Playground:
 - Swim Community meeting conducted 10/14
 - Community wide meeting scheduled for 10/22
 - Design and estimating continues
- Mary Utsey
 - Ballfield – installed new foul poles for practices and games
 - Playground:
 - We have been working with CM Tinkler and the neighborhoods surrounding this park to replace the playground equipment circa 1994. The neighborhoods have approved the proposals, and we are working to bring this contract through bids and purchases soon to get this project scheduled with the vendor.
- West Ashley Bikeway Resurfacing
 - Project is out for bid now, with bids due 10/22.
- Bridge Pointe Ecological Park
 - Playground under construction, estimated completion by 10/24.
 - Fence contractor bidding complete working to schedule work.
- Deming Park – installed new SHPO roadside marker for the Deming School marker and mulched all areas.
- Facilities Maintenance:
 - Mary Utsey: replaced time clock for Tennis court lights.
 - Deming Park: unclogged and repaired toilet and new AC coil is on order.
 - Peggy Bohne Tennis Center sign installed

Other

- Tennis and Basketball Maintenance:
 - Resurfacing complete with Maybank Tennis Courts 7/8 at end of year.