



Town of Laurel Park
Parks and Greenway Board Regular Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2025, 9:30 am
Location: Town Hall, 441 White Pine Drive, Laurel Park, NC 28739

Present: Interim Chair Judy Lyons and members Paula Bailey, Todd Plessel, Knox Crowell, acting secretary Denise Layfield as well as town councilman George Banta.

Absent: Board members Anne Waring and John Glover as well as town staff representative

1. Call to Order

Interim Chair Judy Lyons called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

2. Public Comment

Monte Kruger and her husband Curtis Kruger addressed the board regarding the rebuilding of the stone archway at Canal Park as well as continued work to remove a large tree trunk/root ball and other Hurricane Helene damage. They are working with other town residents with a goal of raising \$6,000 to hire a private contractor to repair the stone arch. So far, the group has raised \$2,000. Monte asked the parks and greenways board to consider contributing \$2,000 to the fund for the repair. Denise suggested that any mortar used be dyed to match the patina of the historic arch. Monte said she would check on the feasibility of that. Work cannot begin on the arch repair until the large root ball is removed from the bank just above the arch. Interim Chair Lyons said the board would consider the request and discuss/vote on the issue likely at the board's next regularly scheduled meeting. Also, newcomer Greg Summers, a Laurel Park resident, introduced himself to the board. He said he recently joined the Native Plant Species Stewardship Committee.

3. Approval of the Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by Interim Chair Lyons.

4. Approval of the Minutes

Motion to approve August 12, 2025, minutes made by Interim Chair, first motion Paula and seconded by Todd.

5. Old Business

- A. The board welcomed its new member Knox Crowell and thanked Knox for his willingness to serve on the board.
- B. 2026 comprehensive plan review update – Denise stated that she thought plan revisions were awaiting a public survey regarding parks and greenways to be conducted by the Laurel Park Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.

- C. George reported that the revision of by-laws regarding what constitutes a majority on the parks board was approved by Town Council.
- D. IPM update – no update
- E. Details of tree sapling program—Denise reported that after doing research and meeting with an N.C. Forestry Service forester who toured Laurel Park, she could no longer recommend that the parks board purchase bare root tree saplings from the state forestry service to give to the public to help restore Laurel Park's tree canopy lost in the hurricane. The forester said preliminary estimates are that the area lost between 25 to 30 percent of its tree canopy in the storm. Many of the more desirable varieties of forest service's hardwoods and conifers have already sold out for this year. Also, with delivery of bare root saplings in January – March 2025, Denise stated that she felt the survival rate of bare root saplings delivered during that time frame would be poor.
- F. The board continued its review of various concepts for Canal Park. Permaculture expert Luke Costlow of Gribbley Permaculture addressed the board with his preliminary concept of adjusting the grade of sections of the park to make it more resilient to water run-off and to prevent the further erosion of Lake Drive and Primrose Lane. He presented preliminary drawings of the land surface modifications and spoke about the benefits of changing certain aspects of the park's terrain to make it less subject to erosion and water run-off. The board discussed his concepts and whether or not to adjust land contours as he suggested. Denise agreed to follow up with Costlow to get cost estimates. The board also discussed how to continue to remove the invasive vines on the site, including kudzu and wisteria, and discussed the use of biocides and manual removal. Denise agreed to call Valley Hill Fire Department to see if a controlled burn could be an option. On another topic, the board continued its discussion of planting a vegetative buffer between Laurel Green and the Ecusta Trail. The board agreed that directing traffic across the foot bridge was desirable and will meet at the site to configure a plan for planting on Sept. 23, 2025, at 4 p.m.

6. Park Technicians Report

Bryon reported that he is continuing to mow and maintain the parks.

7. Native Species Stewardship Committee

Paula is the liaison between the parks board and the native species committee and attended its last meeting. She provided the board with the committee's preliminary guiding document.

8. Bee Committee

Denise reported that the committee recently elected a new chair, Susan Brooks, and an interim secretary, Denise, and welcomed a new member, Monte Kruger.

9. Board of Commissioner Comments

George reported that council had approved both the parks board bylaws amendment and new member, Knox Crowell, to the board.

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Paula at 11:55 a.m. and second from Todd.

Next Meetings: Site meeting Sept. 23, 2025, at Ecusta Trail and Laurel Green Park border at 4 p.m. The next regular meeting will be held on October 14, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. at Town Hall.

Minutes were submitted by Denise Layfield on September 24, 2025