

**BENSON PARKS AND RECREATION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BY-LAWS**



**BY-LAWS GOVERNING
BENSON RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ADOPTED: FEBRUARY 24, 1994
UPDATED: FEBRUARY 1, 1999**

ARTICLE I

- (a) **Name** There is hereby created a Recreation Committee to be known as the Benson Recreation Advisory Committee.

ARTICLE II

- (a) **Purpose** The Recreation Committee shall serve as the advisory body for the Department of Recreation and the Town of Benson. The Committee shall suggest policies to the Department, the Town Administrator and the Governing Body, within its powers and responsibilities as stated in these by-laws. The Committee shall serve as a liaison between the Department and the Governing Body of the unit, the Town Administrator and the citizens of the community. The Committee shall consult with and advise the Department, the Town Administrator and the Governing Body in matters affecting recreation policies, program, personnel, finances, and the acquisition and disposal of lands and properties related to the total community recreation program, and its long-range, projected program for recreation.

- (b) **Powers and Duties** The Recreation Committee shall assume duties for recreation purposes, as follows:

1. Make recommendations

- for the establishment of a system of supervised recreation for the unit
- to set apart for use as parks, playgrounds, recreation centers, water areas, or other recreation areas and structures, any lands or buildings owned by or leased to the unit, and for approval by the unit's authorized body, and may suggest improvements of such lands and for the construction and for the equipping and staffing of such buildings and structures as may be necessary to the recreation program within those funds allocated to the Department
- advise in the acquisition of lands and structures through gifts, purchase, lease or loan, or by condemnation through eminent domain, and as approved by the Governing Body of the Unit;
- advise in the acceptance by the unit of any grant, gift, bequest or donation, any personal or real property offered or made available for recreation purposes and which is judged to be of present or possible future use for recreation. Any gift, bequest of money or other property, any grant, devise of real or personal property so acquired shall be held, by the unit, used and finally disposed of in accordance with the terms under which such grant, gift or devise is made and accepted;
- advise in the construction, equipping, operation, and maintenance of parks, playgrounds, recreation centers and all buildings and structures necessary or useful to Department function, and will advise in regard to other recreation facilities which are owned or controlled by the unit or leased or loaned to the unit.

ARTICLE III (membership)

- (a) **Appointment** There shall be seven members appointed by the Town Commissioners. The membership should be 4 residents and 3 non-residents of the Town of Benson.
- (b) **Ex-Officio Member** The Town Commissioners shall appoint a member to serve as an ex-officio member. The ex-officio member will not have a vote on items coming before the Recreation Advisory Committee.
- (c) **Length of Appointment** Each member shall be appointed for a 3-year term. Initial appointments shall be arranged so that 3 members shall serve 3-year terms, 2 members serve 2-year terms and 2 members serve 1-year terms. The terms will expire each December 31, except for the representative from the Town Commissioners who will serve concurrent with his/her term of office.
- (d) **Vacancies** Whenever a vacancy occurs on the Committee by resignation, death or otherwise, it shall be filled without undue delay by the Town Commissioners. The appointee shall serve for the duration of the unexpired term.
- (e) **Removal of Members** Any one or more of the members of the Committee may be removed with or without cause, at any time, through a request of the Committee to the Town Commissioners or directly by the Town Commissioners.

[No member being allowed to serve more than two (2) consecutive terms]

Article IV

MEETING ATTENDANCE

- (a) **Meetings**
 - Regular meetings of the Recreation Advisory Committee shall be held at **6:00pm** on the **1st Tuesday** of each month and shall be held in the Office of **Benson Parks & Recreation**, or at some other designated place.
 - Newspapers (Benson Review, Daily Herald and Smithfield Herald) must be notified of monthly meeting 48 hours in advance.
 - Recreation Advisory Committee Members must be notified of meetings 24 hours in advance.
- (b) **Special Meetings** Special meetings may be called by the Chairman or upon written request from a majority of the body.
- (c) **Quorum** A majority of the members constitute a quorum.

- (d) **Order of Business** The order of business at regular meetings shall be as follows:
- Reading of minutes of previous meetings
 - Communications
 - Report of Director and Chairman
 - Special Reports
 - Unfinished Business
 - New Business
 - Adjournment
- (e) **Absence** The absence of any member from three consecutive regular meetings without leave except when such absence is made necessary by sickness or other similar causes, rules as emergency in nature will declare vacant the seat of such member, in which event the vacancy this created shall be filled by the Benson Town Commissioners.

ARTICLE V

OFFICERS

- (a) **Officers** The election of officers for the ensuing year, a Chairman and Vice-Chairman, shall take place at the regular meeting in July of each year. A nominating committee of three members shall be appointed by the Chairman, at the June meeting (or before) to bring in, to the July meeting, nominees for these offices.
- (b) **Date of Office** The new officers shall take office at the regular August Meeting each year.

ARTICLE VI

DUTIES

- (a) **Chairman** It shall be the duty of the Chairman to preside at all meetings and to sign official papers.
- (b) **Vice-Chairman** The Vice-Chairman shall perform duties of the Chairman in the absence of the latter.

ARTICLE VII

DIRECTOR OF RECREATION

- (a) **Director of Recreation** The Director shall serve as secretary of the Recreation Advisory Committee. It shall be the duty of the secretary to notify members of all meetings, to keep a permanent record of the proceedings of all meetings, and to have a copy of the proceedings of each meeting sent to each member.
- (b) **Director/Advisory Committee** The Recreation Advisory Committee shall advise with the Director concerning the administration of the affairs of recreation. The Director shall be the agent of the Recreation Advisory Committee and to that end shall supervise the operation of all the Recreation Department's activities. The Director shall submit a detailed report of the activities and administration of the program of the Recreation Department to each regular meeting for the month prior to the meeting. A copy of this report shall be sent to each member and to the Town Administrator.

ARTICLE VIII

COMMITTEES

- (a) **Committee Appointments** Standing committees shall be appointed by the Chairman at the regular February meeting of each year. Vacancies on the standing committees shall be filled by the Chairman at any regular meeting.

ARTICLE IX

ANNUAL REPORTS

The Director shall submit preliminary annual reports, of the program and of finances at the regular meeting in July of each year. The final Annual Report will be rendered no later than the September meeting.

ARTICLE X

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Special committees may be appointed for such purposes as deemed necessary.

ARTICLE XI

EX-OFFICIO COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Chairman and Director shall be ex-officio members of all committees, and, as such, notified of all committee meetings.

ARTICLE XII

AMENDMENTS

All amendments to these by-laws must be proposed in writing in seven days and acted upon at the next regular meeting.

INFORMATION FOR RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

All Members Should Have:

1. A sincere interest and commitment to the importance of Recreation and Park Services.
2. A willingness to give freely of your time and energy to learn about and to carry out your responsibilities.
3. The ability to work well with all other committee members.
4. Complete open mindedness and respect for varied points of view and consideration of all Board business.
5. Good judgement, intelligence and courage of your conviction.
6. A dedicated interest in the Recreation welfare of all citizens of the community.
7. The capability of speaking out and articulating parks and recreation needs.
8. The ability to accept and weather criticism gracefully.
9. The strength to refuse to be intimidated by pressure groups and issues which are not in the best interest of the whole community.
10. A strong feeling for teamwork between the Director and the Advisory Committee.
11. A desire to truly know the community and the recreation needs of all citizens.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

ADVISING with officials and leadership of recreation
ASSISTING in furthering the recreation program
UNDERSTANDING all aspects of the program
INTERPRETING the program to the people of the Town
OFFERING constructive suggestions and criticisms
PROMOTING needs and achieving results
INTERPRETING the wishes and desires of the citizens
STIMULATING public involvement in decision making

QUALIFICATIONS OF RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

When considering potential committee members for appointment, it is important to review the qualification of those individuals who would make positive contributions and work towards the goals and objectives of the department. Some qualifications, which may be considered, include:

1. Interest in Parks and Recreation and a commitment to improve the quality of life for ALL citizens.
2. Sensitive to the residents of the community – aware of their needs and desires.
3. Ability to understand and interpret the needs and interests of the TOTAL community.
4. Ability to work well with others.
5. Good judgement, intelligence and a good knowledge and understanding of the community.
6. Ability to inspire the confidence, respect and support of the community.
7. Ability to attend meetings.
8. Ability to deal with issues and policies without becoming involved in administrative details.
9. A desire for personal service with no thoughts of advantages given to self or friends.

References: Recreation Resources Services
Parks, Recreation & Tourism Management
North Carolina State University

THE PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Cities and Counties have an opportunity to more adequately provide recreation services to citizens when recreation departments of these governmental units have an Advisory Committee.

The purpose of an advisory group is to work with the Director in planning and developing a program that will best fill the recreation needs of the community. Since the director and the advisory committee must work together closely the Director should assist the group in organizing and cooperate with the group in carrying out its functions.

Advisory Committees become helpful only when they clearly understand what they are supposed to do, and when they accept their responsibilities willingly and enthusiastically. They function in an advisory capacity influencing through advice, recommendations, involvement and support. An Advisory Committee is the “go-between” for all leisure interests of the community and the Director, Manager and governing body.

Local people who are genuinely interested in developing a broad community recreation program for all age groups, usually make a good advisory committee. Members do not have to be “key people” and should not be selected because of certain political or organization associations. Real interest in recreation is the main requirement. The natural or potential leadership ability of a person is also important. A person should be selected on the basis of what he/she is as a person and what his/her interests are rather than because he/she belongs to an organization that is interested in a field related to Recreation.

An individual who is genuinely interested in developing a good program in the town can be more helpful than an influential person who has many other interests and who probably will be too busy to visit the programs, attend meetings and learn the true interests and recreation needs of the community. **Although members who are congenial should be selected, one should not let personal friendships determine decisions. Executives and people in important positions do not always make good advisory committee members.**

Seven or nine persons make a very workable advisory committee that can be rather broad in its views, experiences and interests. In selecting members one should keep in mind general responsibilities of the advisory committee as well as the specific duties of a committee chairman.