



Town of Sykesville

7547 Main Street, Sykesville, MD 21784

p: 410.795.8959 f: 410.795.3818

townofsykesville.org

Town House

Stacy Link, Mayor

Joseph Cosentini, Town Manager

Jennifer Livesay, Town Treasurer

Kerry G. Kavaloski, Town Clerk

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF JULY 24, 2025 REGULAR PARKS AND RECREATION

The Sykesville Parks and Recreation (SPARC) meeting was held on Thursday, July 24, 2025. Commissioner Sheets called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. in the Town House Conference Room.

PRESENT: Commissioners Dan Gilbert, Lauren Hanratty, Amy Poet, Nick Sheets, and Billy Shifflet. Council Member Alex Ries

ABSENT: Commissioners Chris Sevic and Eric Valenstein

STAFF: Drew Rittenhouse, Parks and Recreation Coordinator

MINUTES:

- May 22, 2025
- June 26, 2025

MOTION: Commissioner Sheets motioned to approve the May 22, 2025, and June 26, 2025, meeting minutes. Commissioner Poet seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

BUSINESS:

- **Sykesville Cinema – Band Shoppe Showcase and Despicable Me**

Commissioner Sheets explained that the electric did not work properly during the movie. Drew Rittenhouse, Parks and Recreation Coordinator, explained that he reached out to a local electrician who believes it was the GFCI tripping due to the damp conditions from recent rain. The concert did not have any issues with the electrical system.

The Commissioners discussed doing a test run of the movie equipment prior to the next movie.

- **New Popcorn Machine**

Commissioner Sheets explained that the top of the popcorn machine was rusted. He explained that reviews of online popcorn makers mentioned using salt in the popper could be a contributing factor to the corrosion. Lee Hirschmann, owner of the Band Shoppe, recommended silica packets to absorb moisture when the machine is not in use.

Mr. Rittenhouse explained that the Town does have an account with a company that does sell commercial grade popcorn poppers. He will get prices and will send them to the Commission. Commissioner Hanratty asked for information on the warranties of the different options as well.

- **Sykesville Cinema – The Sandlot and World Premiere of ‘Skate or Hide’**
Skate or Hide will be shown at 7:30 P.M., with The Sandlot starting after it is done. The Commission expressed concern about not being able to see the Skate or Hide or the ad video. There was a discussion about the length of the ad video for next year.

It was decided to play 10 minutes of the ads prior to Skate or Hide and 10 minutes after it. During the 10 minutes after it, Steve Polites can host an informal Q&A session.

- **August Farmers’ Market**
Mr. Rittenhouse announced that the Downtown Sykesville Connection has offered a table or booth at any of their events. The Commission discussed the benefits of having a table at the Fall Fest instead of at one of the other larger events.

Commissioner Gilbert can staff the table at the August 3 Farmers’ Market. Commissioner Sheets will also be there. The Commission decided to only be at one Farmers’ Market a month.

- **Daycares at the Splash Pad**
Commissioner Sheets explained that the daycares continue to overpopulate the splash pad. One suggestion is to create a daycare-only day. There was discussion about how to enforce any options. There was also discussion about the capacity limits on the splash pad.

Council Member Ries will bring this topic to the Town Council at their next meeting.

- **Sykesville Youth and Elderly Program**
Commissioner Sheets explained that this was built off a community suggestion to create a database of students who are willing to help the elderly in the community. Commissioner Sevic received information from the schools that as long as SPARC is willing to sponsor the program, the students could earn service hours. There was discussion about whether SPARC is the correct sponsor for this program.

SPARC determined that it is a good idea, but it is not within their purview.

- **Let Freedom Ring Parade**
Commissioner Sheets announced that SPARC won the Let Freedom Ring Parade and was awarded a \$500 prize. He suggested using the money to build a new float.
- **SPARC Budget for FY2026**

Mr. Rittenhouse presented the budget for Fiscal Year 2026.

- **Little Free Library for Little Sykes**

Commissioner Sheets explained that the person who created the Little Free Library in Millard Cooper Park is interested in creating one for Little Sykes. Mr. Rittenhouse will also bring the idea up to the volunteers who run the Little Sykes Rail Road.

There was a discussion of maintenance of the Little Free Library.

MOTION: Commissioner Sheets motioned to approve the placement of a Little Free Library in the Little Sykes Rail Road Park. Commissioner Gilbert seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

TOWN UPDATES:

- **NRPA's National Parks and Recreation Month**

Mr. Rittenhouse announced that the Town Council passed a proclamation naming July as Parks and Recreation Month.

- **Sparky Branding**

Mr. Rittenhouse showed mockups for the branding for Sparky, along with trading cards.

- **September Cleanup in Connection with Parks for Pollinators**

Mr. Rittenhouse explained that he has been working on pollinator beds and soft landings. He thinks it would be a good option for the Cleanup in September.

- **MRPA's Recreation University Visit**

Parks and Recreation professionals will be in Sykesville for a day of learning on January 14.

- **Cleaned Playground Equipment**

The playground equipment has all been power washed. He explained that the scuff marks cannot be power washed away, so that may be something for a cleanup day in the future.

- **New Tickets for Little Sykes Rail Road**

The tickets that Little Sykes Rail Road had been using were worn and faded, so Mr. Rittenhouse created new ones for them.

- **Volunteer Newsletter**

Mr. Rittenhouse created a volunteer newsletter that was sent out to the volunteers. Commissioner Shifflet offered several comments and asked for the Commission to be able to review the future newsletters prior to them being sent out.

- **Meeting with S&P Railway**

Mr. Rittenhouse explained that S&P Railway is interested in being more involved. They would like to collaborate about the Santa visit in the future.

- **Splash Pad Closure**

The splash pad was closed for two extra days due to needing a new motor.

- Commissioner Shifflet asked to have a discussion about adding dog waste stations to the agenda. He also suggested a bike repair station.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before SPARC, Commissioner Sheets motioned, and Commissioner Gilbert seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 P.M.

The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted
Town Clerk Kerry Kavaloski