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Volunteers save BPR; Bronson fireworks set for launch at 9:05 p.m. on July 4



Bronson Town Councilman Berlon Weeks tells other Council members that he wants to give the Bronson Parks and Recreation method of providing for team sports for young people in Bronson another year. Weeks changed his stance after 44 people showed up Saturday in the park. People will be in James H. Cobb Park again on the Fourth of July.

Story and Photos

By Jeff M. Hardison © July 2, 2019 at 7:29 a.m.

BRONSON -- With 44 people showing up as volunteers Saturday (June 29) at James H. Cobb Park, the tide turned for Bronson Parks Recreation (BPR) continuing as a department in the Town of Bronson for at least another year.

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The phone where Town Councilwoman Beatrice Roberts seconded the motion by Berlon Weeks to keep the BPR active for another year is seen here, moments before the start of the meeting Monday night (July 1).



Three of the five people who unanimously voted on the motion by Berlon Weeks, seconded by Beatrice Roberts, to keep BPR active are seen here listening to Weeks share his thoughts on why he chose to not seek the dissolution of the BPR. They are (from left) Mayor Robert Partin, Town Councilman James Beck and Vice Mayor Jason Hunt.

For at least a couple of months now, Bronson Town Councilman Berlon Weeks has been leading a movement to convert the BPR back to a private non-profit group, like the Bronson Youth League (BYL) -- that the town government took over five years ago due to the failure of BYL to function without repeatedly seeking Town Council intervention.

On Monday (July 1), Councilman Weeks did an about-face and made a motion to

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keep the BPR as the method for organized youth sports games in the town. Town Councilwoman Beatrice Roberts, who has been steadfast in her support of continuing the BPR, seconded the motion via telephone.

Councilwoman Roberts was unable to attend the meeting Monday night as she continues her recovery from surgery she had on Thursday (June 27).

Mayor Robert Partin, Vice Mayor Jason Hunt and Councilman James Beck all voted in favor of the Weeks'-Roberts' motion -- heralding a year of potential growth for sports in the Town of Bronson. This positive turn of events appears to have resulted from the promise of people volunteering more to help BPR Director Curtis Stacy as he leads the programs.

Before Weeks made his motion, Mayor Partin spoke about the work day in the park on Saturday – which included a chance for people to volunteer to help the BPR.

The mayor said he is very appreciative of everyone who showed up at the park to paint, replace bleachers and perform other work to improve the facility.

Weeks said that when he was appointed, he could not find records for three years of the budget. That is why he thought the BPR was draining the town's coffers.

With the 44 volunteers who showed up, Weeks sees the BPR can thrive.

“The only way for this to work again,” Weeks said, “is for there to be volunteerism that is there to help (BPR Director) Curtis (Stacy).”

Weeks said he sees a need for a revision on how Bronson Public Works handles park maintenance. The Town Council member said he sees areas of the park that need to be restored to a better condition, including repairs to some structures.

By looking at park maintenance from the Public Works perspective and from the BPR perspective, Weeks said he thinks the town's recreation department can be a sustainable asset going into the future.

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Plaque Presentation Planned

On the Fourth of July (Thursday), there is a plaque presentation planned at 7 p.m. to be in James H. Cobb Park.

The plaque has the names of the five women who helped bring the park to fruition decades ago. The park was named in memory of a town worker who died after suffering from heat stroke while on duty.

At 9:05 p.m. on the Fourth of July, Bronson Fire Chief Dennis Russell and his team of firefighters are prepared to launch the fireworks, which have attracted hundreds of people on this annual patriotic day – when Americans celebrate the Declaration of Independence from England's royal tyranny of that time.