

01-07 Committee Meeting: BBQ Competition, Route 66 Centennial, and Event Planning

Committee Members Present: *Mark Parker, Anita Ivey, Travis Brooks, Gene Newkirk, Walter Reese, Mark Verry, Keala Bennett, Evelyn Walters*

Key Decisions

- The meeting minutes from October 1st were approved.
- “Christmas in the Park” will be placed on the calendar for the Sunday after the Waynesville parade.
- Family Dance event planned for February will be cancelled.
- Mark Parker- Paul’s Furniture will fund the \$400 sponsorship for the One Meat Ribs prize. - This was decided immediately after the need was stated.
- The participant breakfast will be donuts only, instead of making biscuits and gravy. - Rationale: This simplifies logistics, as participants arrive very early.
- The team will proceed with the proposed t-shirt concept, and Mark Parker will create an updated mock-up for final approval.
- The original date for the Route 66 Centennial event has been abandoned due to a direct conflict with a larger event in Lebanon.
- The team will attempt to recruit members for a new, dedicated barbecue committee.
- The group will move forward with a sub-committee structure for managing major events, starting with the Route 66 Centennial celebration.
- The committee will concentrate its primary efforts on the three major events: the barbecue, the centennial, and the tree lighting.

Detailed Minutes

[00:13-01:33] **The October 1st meeting minutes are approved.**

- Mark Parker calls the meeting to order at 3:30.
- The minutes from the October 1st meeting were distributed in the meeting packet for review.

- Mark Verry moved to accept the minutes as written, with any necessary corrections to be made before archiving.
- The motion was seconded and approved by Keala Bennett.
 - Key Decision: The meeting minutes from October 1st were approved.

[01:33-10:53] **The team discusses the scheduling and future of the “Christmas in the Park” event, weighing its viability against other competing December events.**

- The initial review of the 2025 calendar prompts a discussion about the “Christmas in the Park” event, which faced challenges.
- **Analysis of Past Event Challenges:**
 - Attendance for “Christmas in the Park” was down, which was attributed to moving the event to a Saturday to avoid conflicting with the Waynesville parade (Thanksgiving weekend) and the Spouses Club event.
 - The date change resulted in the inability to secure Santa and Mrs. Claus, as they were already booked for an event in Dixon and an installation “Breakfast with Santa” event.
 - Vendor participation has been a persistent issue. The previous year, when held on a Sunday after the Spouses Club event, vendors were unwilling to work both Saturday and Sunday. Even with the date change, only 10 of the 12 paid vendors showed up.
 - Volunteer availability was also low due to the high number of other events and taskings in December.
- **Strategic Discussion on the Event’s Future:**
 - A proposal was made to either discontinue “Christmas in the Park” or merge it with the successful “Mayor’s Tree Lighting” event to consolidate efforts.
 - The high saturation of Christmas events in the region (Crocker, Dixon, Waynesville, Richland, St. Robert) was noted as a significant factor diluting attendance, vendor pools, and volunteerism.
 - There is a conflict with the Spouses Club event, which has become a significant competitor for vendors and attendees in the last two years. The Spouses Club has confirmed they will hold their event on the Saturday before the parade again.
- **Discussion of Mayor’s Tree Lighting as an Alternative:**
 - The “Mayor’s Tree Lighting” was a successful first-year event.
 - A key distinction is that the Mayor’s event was intended as a “give back” event where vendors gave items away, not a for-profit venue.
 - Some food vendors declined to participate in the Mayor’s event because they were not permitted to sell their products. It was

noted the Mayor might be open to changing this policy in the future.

- **Scheduling for the Upcoming Year:**

- A suggestion was made to keep the “Christmas in the Park” event on its traditional date, the Sunday following the parade, to maintain consistency.
- The date of the Christmas parade for the upcoming year is December 6th.
- It was noted that putting the event on the calendar early helps with promotion.
- Key Decision: "Christmas in the Park" will be placed on the calendar for the Sunday after the Waynesville parade.

[10:46-11:24] The committee briefly reviews other calendar items and decides to cancel a planned February event.

- The committee confirms that the “Christmas in the Park” discussion was the main point of concern for the calendar.
- A planned event for February was deemed unfeasible due to an already crowded schedule.
 - Key Decision: The unspecified event planned for February will be cancelled.
- The committee discussed the 2026 Christmas parade date, which is projected to be December 6th, the first Sunday of the month.
- It was suggested that maintaining a consistent schedule for their own events is preferable to adjusting for everyone else’s.

[11:29-13:49] The committee receives an update on the planning status for the upcoming BBQ competition.

- The next major event on the calendar is the BBQ competition, noted as one of the largest events the park hosts.
- **Event Details:**
 - The event is scheduled for Saturday, March 28th. Teams will arrive on Thursday, March 26th, with a cooks’ meeting on Friday, March 27th.
 - This will be a one-day event, a change from the two-day format in previous years.
- **Planning Progress:**
 - The event flyer has been created and distributed on Facebook.
 - The site map is complete.
 - The park venue has been reserved on the calendar.
 - Team applications are live, and registrations have begun (2 backyard teams, 2 Master Series teams).

- **Registration Fees and Deadlines:**

- A typo on the registration form regarding the early bird discount was clarified. The correct deadline is February 1st, not January 1st.
- Master Series: \$225, with a \$25 discount for registering before February 1st.
- Backyard (one meat): \$125.
- Ribs category: \$75.
- A question was raised about whether a specific person, Dan Wright, had signed up yet; as of the meeting, he had not.

[13:49-14:51] Prize money structure and sponsorship needs for the barbecue competition are being finalized.

- The competition currently has one team from Steeleville, two from Illinois, and one from Wisconsin signed up.
- A guaranteed prize money structure is in place:
 - Master Series: \$5,600 guaranteed.
 - Backyard Series: \$1,000 guaranteed.
 - One Meat (non-ribs): \$1,000 guaranteed.
- The “One Meat Ribs” category has a unique prize structure:
 - It features a \$1,000 guarantee but is ultimately a 100% payout based on the number of registered teams.
 - The final prize amount will be calculated based on the team count at 3:00 PM on the Friday before the event.
 - This structure means a higher team count (e.g., 50 teams) will significantly increase the prize money.
- Sponsorship outreach is a key upcoming activity to support the prize money.
- Action Item: @[Team] - Reach out to the sponsor list for business sponsorships to support the prize money.

[14:51-16:55] A silent auction will be held to benefit the “Shop with a Cop” program, and the logistics have been established.

- The team will solicit businesses for monetary sponsorships at three different levels, with details on these levels to be distributed later.
- If a business cannot provide a monetary sponsorship, they can donate items or baskets for the silent auction.
 - Past examples include side tables or a recliner from Paul’s Furniture, and a battery-operated children’s car from John Deere.
- The silent auction proceeds are designated to support the “Shop with a Cop” program.

- The auction will close at approximately 2:30 PM on Saturday.
 - This timing is strategically set between the completion of judging and the announcement of awards to allow participating judges to place their final bids.

[16:55-18:10] The team is discussing whether to serve a public lunch and clarifying that it will not be competition-grade barbecue.

- A discussion is needed with Gene regarding the plan to serve lunch for public purchase.
- It must be made clear that the food sold to the public is not the same barbecue being submitted for competition.
 - A high percentage (approx. 95%) of teams use expensive ingredients like Wagyu beef, with a single brisket costing around \$300.
 - Competitors will not donate this high-cost meat for public sale.
- Historically, donated meat from competitors has been limited to pulled pork and chicken.
 - Teams typically cook more chicken (e.g., 18 pieces) than they need for turn-in (6 pieces), leaving leftovers.
- In the past, the public lunch consisted of smoked chicken or pulled pork, baked beans, and potato salad, sold as a dinner plate.

[18:11-18:42] A decision is pending on whether to continue the public lunch service, considering logistical challenges.

- Leftover turn-in products have traditionally been used to prepare to-go boxes to feed event volunteers.
- The group must decide if they want to continue the public lunch service (chicken, pulled pork, beans, potato salad) as done previously.
- If they proceed, they will need someone to handle the smoking, as Gene is considering competing this year.

[18:42-20:40] The competition needs to reach 25 Master Series teams for it to be a national qualifying event, and recruitment is underway.

- The “magic number” for the event to be a national qualifier is 25 Master Series teams. The competition has had to recruit actively in past years to meet this threshold.
- Achieving 25 teams allows competitors’ scores to accumulate points toward their season total for championships like the “Royal” (KCBS World Championship) and the “Jack Daniels.”
- Sunday events are often harder to fill as teams may have long travel distances (e.g., 500-1100 miles) and wish to leave early.
- Current registration stands at two Master Series and two Backyard teams.

- Recruitment emails have been sent to teams from previous years. The event typically attracts participants from 15-17 states and judges from about six states.

[20:40-21:09] Event judges are unpaid volunteers who participate for the experience and the food.

- Judges are not paid for their time or travel.
- Their compensation is the experience of tasting the competition food.
- Judges often bring coolers to save the single bite of each entry they take for judging.

[21:15-23:46] The team is centralizing event information and the registration process through the website to streamline communication.

- The team is actively promoting the event on Facebook. Posts are cropped from the main flyer to ensure key information (event name, date) is visible in the social media preview.
- All Facebook posts include a link to the event website, which contains the full flyer, application, and all other relevant details (schedule, amenities, hotel discounts).
- The goal is to direct all inquiries to the website to minimize individual questions for the limited staff (Travis Brooks and Mark Parker).
- There was discussion about adding a QR code to the flyer for direct sign-ups, as some attendees experienced confusion last year.
- The current online application process:
 1. Teams fill out the application online.
 2. The completed form is emailed to Travis Brooks and Mark Parker.
 3. The team follows up based on the selected payment method (phone call for credit card, awaiting mail for check).

[23:47-25:30] A sponsor has been secured for the “One Meat Ribs” competition prize.

- The team has experienced issues with teams attempting to leave without paying their entry fees if they did not win prize money.
- A sponsor was needed for the “One Meat Ribs” prize.
- Action Item: Mark Parker - Find a sponsor for the "One Meat Ribs" competition for \$400. (Item subsequently resolved in conversation).
- Key Decision: Paul's Furniture will fund the \$400 sponsorship for the One Meat Ribs prize. - This was decided immediately after the need was stated.
- The \$400 sponsorship covers the cost of a large “wrestling-style” prize belt (approx. \$200) and allows the sponsor's logo to be featured on it.

- The sponsor also gets to present the awards (checks, ribbons) for the One Meat competition.

[25:34-27:00] The process for selecting and managing judges for the competition is based on a specific formula and past performance.

- Judge invitations have not yet been sent out.
- The number of judges required is calculated based on the number of teams:
 - One judge per team.
 - One table captain for every six teams.
 - A 30% buffer of additional judges must be scheduled to account for potential no-shows.
- Action Item: Paul's Furniture - Obtain the logo for the new sponsor and provide it as a JPEG file to Speaker 2.

[27:00-29:44] There is a careful vetting process for judges to ensure fair and standardized scoring.

- Mark Parker prioritizes inviting judges who have attended and performed well in previous years. The initial number of invited judges is around 25, which is then adjusted as team registrations increase.
- Some judges were unhappy last year about being assigned as table captains because table captains do not get to taste the food.
 - To compensate, special to-go boxes with extra meat are made for table captains and volunteers.
- All judges must be KCBS (Kansas City Barbeque Society) certified.
- The team has had issues with certain local judges who scored based on personal preference rather than the strict KCBS criteria, negatively impacting all teams at their table.
- The KCBS representative helps identify reliable judges and warns against those who do not adhere to standards. Proper judging involves specific criteria, such as how a rib pulls from the bone.
- For 25 teams, the target is 35-40 scheduled judges, which includes 25 for tasting, approximately six table captains, and 6-8 backups.

[29:44-30:24] The judge invitation process is on hold pending final team numbers.

- 41 judges have already signed up and expressed interest in participating.
- Action Item: Mark Parker - Select the final judges from the list of 41 applicants once team registration numbers are more firm.

- The process involves cross-referencing the applicant list with the list of reliable judges from the previous year.
- Once selected, judges will be sent an official invitation letter so they can make hotel reservations.

[30:24-31:35] The team has decided on catering for the Friday night and Saturday morning meals for participants.

- In previous years, Culver's sponsored a Friday night supper, and TK's sponsored a Saturday night meal. As this is a one-day event, a Saturday night sponsor is not needed.
- Action Item: @[Team] - Contact Culver's to see if they will sponsor the Friday night supper.
- Previously, breakfast was biscuits and gravy on Saturday and donuts on Sunday.
- Key Decision: The participant breakfast will be donuts only, instead of making biscuits and gravy. - Rationale: This simplifies logistics, as participants arrive very early.
- Action Item: Mark Parker - Ask Masters if they will sponsor five dozen donuts for the Saturday morning breakfast on March 28th. (Note: Mark Parker later corrects the date to March 27th for the cooks' meeting).

[31:36-33:55] Logistics for BBQ contest T-shirts and judge payment are discussed.

- Donuts would be needed on Friday, March 27th, for the cook's meeting. The donuts should be picked up at 5 o'clock.
- Barbecue T-shirts have been offered for the last three years and have become a popular item.
- Judges are now asking to pre-order and pay for their T-shirts when they register to judge, ensuring a shirt in their size is waiting for them at check-in.

[33:56-36:02] The team is refining the AI-generated t-shirt design for the Route 66 BBQ Challenge.

- Mark Parker reviewed a non-proofread t-shirt design, noting several necessary corrections and additions.
 - Many neon signs in the AI design are incorrect and should be replaced with pictures of the actual Neon Park signs.
 - The design should incorporate specific elements like a certain type of truck, event mascots, and smokers in the truck bed.
 - Correct signage to include are the "Welcome to the Neon Park" sign, the "St. Robert" sign, and the barbecue emblem.
- The name of the event is incorrect in the design ("Rouse 66 BBQ") and needs to be changed.

- A suggestion was made to split the official event name, “Kickin’ It Route 66 BBQ Challenge,” across the top of the shirt.
- The “Route 66 Centennial” text should be kept, possibly arranged vertically down the middle along with “Neon Park.”
- Key Decision: The team will proceed with the proposed t-shirt concept, and Mark Parker will create an updated mock-up for final approval.
- Sponsors will be featured on the back of the t-shirt, specifically the top-tier sponsors who donate \$1,000 to \$2,000. There are typically four to five such sponsors.
- A question was raised about whether the final design could be put on a square canvas, similar to an item Anita has in her office. Mark Parker confirmed this is possible after the design is finalized and proofread.

[36:02-36:27] The team discussed the production and cost implications of the multi-colored t-shirt design.

- Mark Parker noted the design has many colors, which could affect production options and costs.
- Last year’s four-color print shirts were produced by Digital Silver in Lebanon for approximately \$6.57 each, which is a very competitive price.
- For a design with many more colors, it may be necessary to use a vendor like Blue Fish, which uses a direct-to-garment printer capable of handling complex color schemes.

[36:27-37:21] Action items for finalizing the t-shirt design were established.

- Action Item: Mark Parker - Revise the t-shirt design to incorporate the following changes:
 - Split the event name “Kickin’ It Route 66 Barbecue Challenge” across the top.
 - Include “Route 66 Centennial” with the correct year, 2026 (not 2020).
 - Place the event emblem at the bottom.
- Speaker 2 will research whether the slogan “getting your nicks on Route 66” is copyrighted.
 - If it is copyrighted, a new slogan will be generated, possibly using AI, that connects to the theme of “smoking under the neon lights” to tie into the Neon Park.

[37:22-38:42] Discussion shifted to sponsor outreach and covering the guaranteed prize money for the event.

- The Neon Park will be featured on the t-shirt for this year only because it is brand new.

- Mark Parker has initiated sponsor outreach by emailing Kevin at Seeger Toyota but has not yet received a response after four to five days.
- Last year's major sponsors included Archer, Security Bank, and Willard Asphalt. Ed Morris might be a possibility but was not a sponsor last year.
- The primary goal is to secure enough sponsorships to cover the guaranteed prize money. Last year was the first time money was guaranteed, and entry fees alone were almost insufficient to cover it.

[38:42-40:08] The team reviewed the event's financial status, revenue streams, and sponsor follow-up.

- Other event expenses include ribbons and plaques. The sponsor for the championship belt is already secured.
- Paul's Furniture is donating \$500, which provides \$300 towards the prize money after accounting for the \$200 belt cost.
- Concessions and a silent auction are additional revenue streams. Last year, these two sources generated just under \$2,000, all of which was donated to "Shop with a Cop."
- During the meeting, Gene Newkirk contacted their brother Kevin (presumably Kevin from Seeger Toyota) to ask if he would be the main sponsor again and if he could contribute \$1,000 or \$2,000.

[40:08-42:03] Sponsorship tiers and benefits were defined.

- A donation of at least \$1,000 is required for a sponsor's name to be printed on the back of the event t-shirt.
- Sponsors who donate at least \$300 can provide a 2'x4' banner to be displayed at all park events for the year, including at the swimming pool during the summer and on the baseball fence for other events.
- An informational flyer detailing the sponsorship levels will be emailed to potential sponsors.
- Action Item: Mark Parker - Send out the sponsorship information flyer to the team and potential sponsors.

[42:03-44:36] The group discussed strategies for securing sponsors and event personnel.

- Kevin from Seeger Toyota responded, acknowledging he had not yet replied to the email.
- The team emphasized that all sponsorships, large or small, are valuable for the silent auction and contribute to the "Shop with a Cop" fund. Examples include gift certificates from beauty shops or discounts from businesses like Big O Tires.
- Action Item: Travis Brooks- Will reach out to Tanya to see if her business wants to sponsor a category, such as the "Chicken in the Master Series," for a \$1,000 donation.

- Category sponsors would present the ribbons for all 10 places in their sponsored category and have their banner displayed prominently during the awards.
- The team identified the need for a photographer for the event on March 28th.
- It was suggested they ask Jamie, who photographed the Christmas event, if she would be interested in being a sponsor in exchange for her photography services.

[44:37-46:21] The team strategized on negotiating with the potential photographer and reviewed the event budget.

- Mark Parker suggested approaching Jamie first for a monetary sponsorship to cover prize money before offering an in-kind sponsorship for her services.
- A compromise was proposed: offer a reduced sponsorship fee (e.g., \$100 off a \$200 sponsorship) if she also provides photography services.
- The primary financial goal is to ensure the barbecue event does not lose money, as that would jeopardize its future.
- Significant event costs already paid or anticipated include:
 - \$800 KCBS event fee for the Master's series.
 - \$100 fee to KCBS.
 - A future fee for the backyard barbecue.
 - Post-event payments to KCBS for the two judges and per-team fees.
- The total payment to KCBS is typically around \$2,500, in addition to prize money and other expenses like concessions and ribbons.

[46:21-51:08] The team discussed the need to form a dedicated barbecue planning committee to distribute the workload.

- A question was raised about whether a dedicated working group for the Route 66 BBQ exists, similar to the one for the Christmas event.
- For the last two years, the planning has been handled by the park staff Mark Parker, and Anita. Previously, some council members like John Moore and Linda Daniel were part of a "barbecue working group."
- Keala Bennett strongly recommended re-establishing a separate barbecue committee, distinct from the main parks committee, to ensure dedicated focus and resources.
- The previous attempt to form such a committee was unsuccessful, but Keala Bennett argued that now is a good time to try again due to a new generation of "young entrepreneurs" and community members (e.g., Carnivores) who are eager to be involved.
- Key Decision: The team will attempt to recruit members for a new, dedicated barbecue committee.

- A strategy was proposed to recruit new members for the 2027 committee by asking current sponsor prospects if they would like to join. They could volunteer and observe this year's event to learn the process.
- The previous barbecue committee was effective because tasks were divided, with each person or group taking ownership of a specific piece (e.g., parking, judging, silent auction), which all came together on event day. This structure was lost after COVID and as members moved away.

[51:08-51:56] A brief discussion took place regarding an upcoming event deadline and a new idea for team recruitment.

- Mark Verry expressed concern about the February 1st "no refunds" deadline, noting it signifies the event is approaching quickly.
- Walter Reese suggested asking veteran organizations (American Legion, VFW) to form a team and potentially act as a sponsor for their team's entry.

[51:55-53:11] A concept for a year-long, county-wide barbecue championship was revisited.

- I mean, anything can help, Walter.
- The idea involves creating a series of local barbecue competitions throughout Pulaski County (e.g., Richland, Dixon, Waynesville).
- Competitors would participate in these events, and points would be aggregated over the year to crown an overall "Pulaski County Champion."
- A significant challenge identified is securing dedicated individuals to form a committee and commit to organizing the series.
- It was suggested to solicit volunteers this year to form a dedicated committee for next year, allowing for a longer planning runway (a full year) instead of the current two-month timeline.

[53:13-56:39] The team must select a new date for the Route 66 Centennial event due to a scheduling conflict.

- The originally selected date for the 2026 Route 66 Centennial event conflicts with a major event in Lebanon that features a big-name band.
- A sound technician advised that holding the event on the same weekend as Lebanon's would result in very low attendance.
- The group is now considering new dates and needs to decide on a new timeframe, such as summer, later in the year, or at the start of the school year.
- Potential dates discussed include:

- June 6th: This date is significant for Route 66 ("6-6-66"), but another event involving bikes ("Oggs and Bronx") is already scheduled in Waynesville Park on that Saturday.
- November 11th: This date is noted as historically significant for Route 66, possibly the date it was completed or first traveled. However, concerns were raised about potential bad weather (rain/snow) in November, which could impact an outdoor event like the planned sock hop.
- The original vision for the event included a sock hop, a DJ, and hula hoop contests, with potential bands like Cricket Alley and the Baker Band being considered.
- Key Decision: The original date for the Route 66 Centennial event has been abandoned due to a direct conflict with a larger event in Lebanon.
- Action Item: @[Group] - Propose and select a new date for the Route 66 Centennial event.

[56:42-01:00:00] A new proposal was introduced to add a skateboarding competition to the Route 66 Centennial event.

- Mr. Jeff Knoll has proposed organizing a major skateboarding competition at the city's state-of-the-art skate park.
- The concept is to create a significant venue event, drawing participants from areas like St. Louis, leveraging Mr. Knoll's experience and contacts in the skating world.
- This idea is seen as a way to engage a younger demographic (Converse and Airwalks crowd) that complements the older demographic targeted by the sock hop.
- Mr. Knoll has offered to present this concept to the committee if they are interested in considering it. He has a successful track record, having organized a similar vision for the Fall Fest in Waynesville.
- The idea was well-received, with suggestions to combine it with other activities like a car show, similar to what was done for a past barbecue event.
- An alternative event date of July 10th was suggested, noting its historical significance as the day John Ashcroft signed legislation designating Route 66 as a historic highway at the Pulaski County Courthouse in 1990.

[01:00:01-01:04:22] The group is strongly considering holding the Route 66 event in August in conjunction with the 100-Mile Yard Sale.

- Holding the event in August would de-conflict with other planned events, such as the "Big BAM" bike ride in September and another car event in July, preventing event saturation.
- There was a debate on whether the 100-Mile Yard Sale would detract from or enhance their event.

- The consensus is that it would be a net positive, drawing in a large, pre-existing crowd traveling along Route 66 who might then attend the Centennial celebration.
- The events are seen as complementary; yard sale attendees might visit the event, and event attendees might browse the yard sale.
- Combining the events provides a larger marketing opportunity, potentially branding it as the “100-Mile Yard Sale and Swap Meet.”
- The Route 66 Association has grant funding available that could be used for publicity, advertising, hiring a band, and renting a stage and sound system.
- Logistically, the event could span from Friday through Saturday, aligning with the yard sale’s typical schedule.
 - The skateboarding competition could be held on Saturday, and the swimming pool would likely be open.
 - The sock hop (dance) could be scheduled for a different time than the skateboarding, attracting different demographics sequentially and maximizing venue use.

[01:04:23-01:09:09] The group agreed on the need to form dedicated sub-committees to manage large events effectively.

- Mr. Knoll was identified as a key resource for coordinating complex event elements like a hot air balloon, reinforcing the value of his expertise.
- A suggestion was made to create a dedicated committee solely for the Route 66 event, similar to the barbecue committee, to ensure focused planning and execution.
- This model was used successfully in the past, where a larger “park committee” existed, but individual members served as chairpersons for specific events (e.g., Christmas in the Park, Halloween, barbecue), each forming their own teams.
- This division of labor prevents individuals from being overwhelmed and ensures accountability, as each committee is responsible for its own event from planning to execution.
- It was noted that this structure allows people to volunteer for committees that align with their interests and skills (e.g., someone might join the Route 66 committee but not the barbecue committee).
- The KCBS (Kansas City Barbeque Society) provides a detailed guide for their event, which facilitates breaking down tasks for smaller committees to handle.
- Action Item: Keala Bennett - Reach out to Mr. Knoll to confirm his availability and interest in an August event and invite him to join the Route 66 celebration committee.
- Key Decision: The group will move forward with a sub-committee structure for managing major events, starting with the Route 66 Centennial celebration.

[01:09:11-01:11:33] **A plan was discussed to use a public appeal to solicit volunteers for the new event committees.**

- It was suggested that a key figure (“Mayor Breckenridge”) could make a personal video appeal to the community, asking for suggestions and volunteers for upcoming events.
- This person’s personality is seen as effective for engaging the community and military leadership, who can then disseminate the information to their respective groups.
- This approach is believed to be effective, citing the success of a previous event that went from “zero to an executed event in less than three months” with significant turnout.
- Creating these committees would reduce the workload on the core group, allowing them to oversee rather than manage every detail of every event.
- Past success with the committee model was reiterated, emphasizing that it led to events running smoothly “like clockwork” and provided continuity.
- Action Item: Keala Bennett - I will reach out to Jeff Noel about the August date and invite him to the 'Route 66 Celebration' committee.
- Action Item: @[Group] - Begin soliciting volunteers for the new event committees.

[01:11:15-01:13:11] **A strategy for increasing community event participation was established, centered on leveraging personal relationships and making direct appeals.**

- Responsibility for speaking with ‘Bradford’ was discussed, with Gene Newkirk offering to set up a meeting.
- It was noted that past efforts to solicit volunteers via general surveys were unsuccessful, as people are more likely to help when there is a direct, personal relationship.
 - The Mayor Tree Lane event was cited as an example, where nearly all volunteers had a personal connection to Mayor Breckenridge or his wife.
- The current park committee has the highest membership in years, indicating a positive trend.
- A plan was formed to recruit volunteers for an “August committee” by making direct appeals to individuals and through leaders of local organizations.
 - Action Item: Mark Parker - Set up a meeting with Mayor Breckenridge to discuss publicizing the need for volunteers. Mark Parker will handle the conversation.
 - Action Item: Keala Bennett - Be available to talk with potential volunteers.

[01:13:11-01:14:48] The group discussed a shift in community sentiment, with more residents wanting to get involved, and how to harness this by engaging community leaders.

- There is a perception that a growing number of people want to be involved in community activities but are unsure how to do so.
- A proactive approach by the committee to solicit involvement is expected to foster growth and reduce the workload on current members.
- The strategy involves making personal appeals to leaders of community groups, such as the DFW commander, to encourage them to bring their members forward to help.
- This approach also presents an opportunity to mentor new volunteers to eventually take leadership roles, with the current committee providing oversight and ensuring milestones are met.

[01:14:54-01:18:15] A proposal for a “Mai Fest” (May Fest) as an alternative to a traditional Oktoberfest was debated, focusing on logistical and liability challenges, particularly concerning alcohol.

- A suggestion from the Christmas committee was raised to hold a German-themed festival in May to avoid oversaturation from other local Oktoberfests in the fall.
- A key logistical issue is that the city itself cannot be involved in serving beer.
 - Any alcohol service would require a third-party vendor with the appropriate city license and their own insurance, such as Hoppers, to operate a beer garden as a vendor at the event. This model is used at the “Hogs and Frogs” event.
- Significant concerns were raised about the city’s liability if an alcohol-related incident occurred, even with a third-party vendor.
 - Mark Parker expressed a desire to research the feasibility and insurance implications before proceeding.
- The idea of using only non-alcoholic beer was briefly suggested as a potential way to mitigate liability concerns.

[01:18:15-01:19:22] The group discussed the logistics and liability of a potential skating competition.

- It was confirmed that liability waivers will be required for every participant.
- An individual knowledgeable about skating competitions, who is reportedly able to bring in teams from Kansas City, will be consulted for more information.
- The group considered that there might be an established guidebook or process for setting up such a competition, similar to what exists for barbecue events.

- It was decided that this idea is for future consideration, as May of the current year is too soon to organize it.

[01:19:23-01:20:08] The committee decided to prioritize the three major annual events before expanding to smaller ones.

- Key Decision: The committee will concentrate its primary efforts on the three major events: the barbecue, the centennial, and the tree lighting.
- The goal is to establish strong committees for these key events so they can become self-sustaining.
- Once the major events are well-managed, the group can then focus on filling in the calendar with smaller, “arbitrary” events (e.g., a bike-a-thon) to maintain community engagement in the parks.

[01:20:08-01:23:21] The committee was updated on significant upcoming cycling events and the development of a new mountain bike course.

- The “Big Bam” (Bicycle Across Missouri) ride will have its halfway point stopover in Waynesville Park over Labor Day weekend.
 - The event is expected to bring over 600 people (riders, support staff, and families) to the area for an overnight stay, presenting a significant economic opportunity.
 - A working group is already coordinating with the City of Waynesville for this event.
- A separate working group is making progress on building a NICA-sanctioned mountain bike course on Mark Twain Forest land dedicated to Waynesville.
 - Missouri S&T and NICA (National Interscholastic Cycling Association) personnel are involved in the planning.
 - The course could potentially be completed by the end of the year, with the goal of eventually hosting NICA-sponsored events.
 - Past NICA events hosted in Rolla reportedly raised nearly half a million dollars in a single weekend and attracted over 3,000 participants, highlighting the potential revenue for Pulaski County.

[01:23:24-01:25:44] The committee reviewed and assigned specific action items for event planning and sponsorship outreach.

- Action Item: Mark Parker- Send sponsorship information to the committee members for outreach.
- Action Item: Keala Bennett - Solicit members for a committee for the August Route 66 event. Paul's Furniture has already been secured as one sponsor.
- Action Item: Mark Parker - Reach out to Archers as a potential sponsor.

- Action Item: Gene Newkirk- Introduce Speaker 2 to Taylor Grubaugh of Grubaugh Chevrolet in Waynesville, who is reportedly eager to get involved in community sponsorship.
- Action Item: Mark Parker - Finalize the t-shirt design for an upcoming event.
- Action Item: Keala Bennett] - Talk to an unspecified "him" about reaching out for the good of the community.

[01:25:50-01:26:50] The meeting was adjourned, and the schedule for future meetings was established.

- Motion to adjourn meeting by Mark Verry
- 2nd Motion to adjourn meeting by Keala Bennett
- The next meeting is scheduled for the first Wednesday in February, and an invitation will be sent out.
- Meeting frequency will increase as events get closer.
- Future meetings will focus on assigning specific volunteer roles for events, such as parking management, judge transportation, and team check-ins.
- There was a brief discussion about who handled judging in the past, mentioning Linda.