

The Town of Smithfield Appearance Commission met on Monday, June 17, 2025 at 5:35 in the Town Hall Conference room located at 350 East Market Street, Smithfield, North Carolina.

Members Present

Kaitlyn Tarley – Chairperson
Emery Ashley, Jr. – Vice Chair
Michelle Choe
Carmen Zepp
Julia Narron
Pam Yelle

Members Absent

Robin Cook
Sharon Lynch

Staff Present

Elaine Andrews – Town Clerk

Staff Absent

Lawrence Davis – Public Works Director

Call to Order

Chairperson Kaitlyn Tarley called the meeting to order at 5:26 pm.

Approval of Minutes

Board Chairperson, Kaitlyn Tarley asked for approval of the minutes from February and June 2nd sessions.

Julie Narron made a motion, seconded by Michelle Cho the February 18th and June 2nd 2025 meeting minutes. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Budget and Funding

- Updates were provided on the cost of new trash cans and the overall mural project budget, including a \$10,000 allocation from tourism funds
- Discussion included the allocation of funds for the mural and related infrastructure, such as for benches or trash cans
- It was clarified that the funds can roll over into the next fiscal year, but documentation must reflect any current earmarked amount

Bridge Mural Design

The Commission discussed the proposed design for the bridge mural with artist Magen Pike. Magen presented a concept featuring colorful horizontal lines representing layers of earth and flood levels. The design incorporated historical flood data and aimed to be educational.

Several committee members expressed concerns about the design:

- Some felt it was too abstract and might not be easily understood by passersby.
- The Board discussed possible educational signage or plaques to explain the mural's meaning
- There were questions about how the flood level data would be accurately represented on the 10-foot wall space.
- Some members wanted to see alternative design concepts before making a final decision.

Pike explained her rationale for the design, noting that the bold colors and patterns would stand out in the dark underpass area, and provide a photo opportunity for passersby. She emphasized that the concept could incorporate educational elements and historical information.

The committee discussed potential modifications and additions to the design:

- Adding silhouettes or historical elements to the base design
- Incorporating local historical figures like John Smith
- Possibly including fish or nature elements at the bottom of the mural

After discussion, there was consensus to request additional design concepts or variations from Magen, with a preference for options that balance abstract and representational elements. The Board stated they would like to see two to three additional design concepts from Magen. They asked her to email sketches within a week so they could review options before officially voting.

The committee also discussed the timeline and budget for the project:

- The total budget was confirmed as including funds from tourism
- The Board clarified that while the funds needed to be earmarked in the current fiscal year, the project could extend into the next fiscal year
- Pike was given approval to begin prep work on the wall, including cleaning and priming

The Board agreed to hold a special meeting the following week on June 24, 2025 to review design options and vote on a final concept.

No official motion was made regarding the mural design, as the committee decided to defer the vote until reviewing additional concepts.

Updates:

Trash cans for Parks and Rec-

The Appearance Commission received an update on the planned purchase of trash cans for parks and recreation areas. Key points included:

- The total cost for 12 trash cans would be \$10,042.78 after tax
- The trash cans would be placed along the greenway, at the boat ramp, and in park areas
- There was discussion about the exact placement of cans, particularly at the boat ramp due to flooding concerns
- The committee noted that Parks and Recreation already had some locations in mind, but they could provide input on additional areas of concern.

The Board also briefly discussed a separate issue regarding chain-link fencing along the river. They were informed that a \$15,000 project for chain-link fencing had already been approved and was moving forward. Some members expressed disappointment with the choice of chain-link, but acknowledged it was too late to change the plan.

No formal motion was made regarding the trash cans, as this was an update on an already-approved project.

Adjourn:

Michelle Choe made a motion, seconded by Emery Ashley moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 6:40pm. Unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:


Elaine Andrews, Town Clerk

