

GRAHAM RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION  
MONTHLY MEETING  
January 8, 2025 6:30 PM  
Graham Historical Museum

AGENDA

- I. Welcome
- II. Approval of Minutes – November 13, 2024
- III. Chairperson's Report
- IV. Director's Report
- V. Old Business
  1. Land Acquisition - Cooke Park – Teer Property – Closing finalized on Dec. 18, 2024
  2. Land Acquisition - Graham Regional Park – Stewart Property – will be addressed during Master Plan process
  3. Accessible Parks Grant - Budget amendment approved, projects to begin in March.
  4. Graham-Mebane Lake projects
    - i. Ramp Project
    - ii. Slip Dock Project
    - iii. Trespass Issue & Monitoring
- VI. New Business
  1. Graham Regional Park Master Plan – WithersRavenel approved; initial timeline mtg. held in December. Master Plan expected by December 2025.
- VII. Activity Reports
  1. Recreation Center
  2. Athletics
  3. Programs
  4. Parks
  5. Graham-Mebane Lake
  6. Marketing
  7. Hall of Fame
- VIII. Other Business
- IX. Adjournment

# GRAHAM RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION

November 13, 2024

## GRAHAM HISTORICAL MUSEUM

### MINUTES

**PRESENT:** Chair Jay Cook, Laurie Pickard, Casey Johnson, Patrick Burnette, Brian Cutlip, Madison Sykes (guest)

**STAFF:** Brian Faucette

Chair Cook called the meeting to order at 6:30 with a welcome.

### MINUTES

-Mr. Cutlip made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2024 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Burnette and unanimously approved.

### CHAIR'S REPORT

-Chair Cook did not have a report this month.

### DIRECTOR'S REPORT

-Mr. Faucette reminded the Commission of the City Christmas Lunch on Dec. 11 @ 11:30 at Trailhead Church.

-Mr. Faucette reviewed the City Manager's budget timeline and asked Commission members to submit facility improvements and program ideas to be included in the budget request.

-Mr. Faucette updated facility repairs at the Historical Museum (windows have been replaced) and Maple St. Center (floors to be replaced in early Dec.).

-Mr. Faucette informed the Commission that City Council accepted a gift of a kaleidoscope sculpture to be placed at Graham Regional Park.

### OLD BUSINESS

-Mr. Faucette updated the Commission on several actions taken by City Council at the Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> meeting:

1. Land Acquisition: Teer Property – Council approved a budget amendment to fund the purchase of property adjacent to Cooke Park owned by the Teer Family.

2. Accessible Parks Grant – Council approved a budget amendment to fund the required local match.

3. Graham Regional Park Master Plan – Council selected WithersRavenel to complete the Master Plan.

-Mr. Faucette reported there are no updates on the Stewart Property (Graham Regional Park) but hopes to revisit the project during the Graham Regional Park Master Plan process.

### NEW BUSINESS

-Mr. Faucette updated the Commission on several projects at Graham-Mebane Lake:

1. The ramp replacement project start date has been delayed by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission to late April-early May.

2. A design plan for slips docks with a roof was presented

3. The family involved in a trespassing issue discovered this spring has met with GRPD staff to work out an agreement to restore the bank.

### ACTIVITY REPORTS

**Marketing:** N/A **Lake:** N/A **Friends Group:** N/A **Parks:** N/A **Programs:** N/A **Sports Hall of Fame:**

Chair Cook asked Commission members to suggest/nominate athletes for consideration by the Hall of Fame Committee. He also explained the qualifications and the type of information needed for the nominations.

**Athletics:** The recently completed Adult Pickleball League was a success and will be offered again in the spring. To accommodate the league, updating lights on the courts will be explored.

**Centers:** A meeting will be held in the coming weeks to determine how the program can be offered.

### OTHER BUSINESS – N/A

With all business concluded, Chair Cook made a motion to adjourn at 7:37pm, seconded by Mrs. Pickard and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Faucette

Graham Recreation and Parks Commission  
Director's Report for November '24

- I. **Present Projects**
- II. **Future Projects**
  - a. **Land Acquisition**
    - i. **GRP** - Mr. Stewart is still waiting on an appraisal from his new firm.
    - ii. **Cooke** - Closing on the Teer Property was completed on December 18. City staff will now assess properties and grounds to determine immediate future uses and begin planning for long-term use. A grant application will be submitted next spring.
  - b. **Accessible Parks Grant** - Projects at the Rec. Center will begin in the spring.
  - c. **Cabin @ Cooke Park** - No updates on options for the cabin.
- III. **Policies/Manuals/Plans**
  - a. **GRP Site Master Plan** - An initial meeting was held with WithersRavenel in December to set a timeline for the Master Plan. The final plan is expected to be delivered by December 2025.
  - b. **Maintenance/Replacement Policy** - GRPD staff continue to record purchase and maintenance information concerning major systems and assets in order to create a maintenance and replacement policy and schedule to lead future budget requests.
  - c. **GIS database** - No additional work has begun on this project.
  - d. **GRPD Personnel/Orientation Manuals** - Work on a Personnel Manual and an Orientation Manual continues.
- IV. **Historical Museum Attendance** - 4 – December
- V. **Outside Committees**
  - a. **Wellness Collaborative** - No updates have been given for the grant for ADA projects across the County.
  - b. **Friends of GRPD** - A potential donation from a family foundation is being explored.
- VI. **Staffing**
  - a. GRPD supervisors are currently advertising the following positions:
    - i. PT Athletic Facility Attendant – Rec. Div.
    - ii. PT Centers Facility Attendant – Rec. Div.
- VII. **Financial Summary** - Convenience fees - \$67.83-December

**Recreation Division**

Open Gym/Weight Room/Pickleball	\$0.00
Maple St. Center rentals	\$0.00
Civic Center rentals	\$360.00
Rec. Center rentals	\$0.00
Staff Fee	\$410.00
Park Shelters	\$0.00
Field/Passive Area Rental	\$100.00
Table/Chair rentals	\$0.00
Youth Soccer	\$1,333.75
Youth Baseball	\$40.00
Youth Basketball	\$25.00
Youth Lacrosse	\$105.00
Adult Pickleball	\$600.00
Ice Rink – Skate w/ characters	\$335.00
Ice Rink - Concessions	\$333.00
Tree Lighting vendor	\$100.00
9/11 5K Sponsor	\$1,500.00
Donations/Misc. Sponsorships	\$28.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,269.75</b>

**Lake Division**

Fishing Boat launches	\$0.00
Non-Motor Boat launches (Kayak/Canoe)	\$0.00
Ski Boat launches	\$0.00
Jon Boat rentals	\$0.00
Kayak/Canoe rentals	\$0.00
Bank Fishing	\$0.00
Bait/Supplies	\$0.00
Annual Permit (motorized boats)	\$0.00
Annual Permit (non-motorized boats)	\$0.00
Annual Permit (bank fishing)	\$0.00
Shelter Rentals	\$0.00
Passive Area Rental	\$0.00
Big Bass Tournament	\$0.00
Catfish Tournament	\$0.00
Pontoon Boat Cruises	\$0.00
Paddle Tours	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

# Programs & Events Report

GRAHAM RECREATION & PARKS COMMISSION  
December 2024 Report

Emma Griffin  
Program Manager  
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"My faith demands - this is not optional - my faith demands that I do whatever I can, wherever I can, whenever I can, for as long as I can with whatever I have to try to make a difference." – President Jimmy Carter

"To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all." – Oscar Wilde

## Current & Upcoming Programs

- Arts Around the Square
  - Saturday, May 17: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
  - Event Details:
    - Downtown Graham around Court Square
    - Featuring artisan and craft vendors, live art demonstrations, four stages for music and performing arts, kids' activities, and community partners.
  - Marketing:
    - Brandy and I collaborated to send ideas of specific design elements, colors, and themes to a local graphic designer. We should have the first round of design options early January.
    - Once branding is complete, a save-the-date will be released with more digital and print advertising to follow.
  - Vendors (Applications opening ASAP upon being finalized):
    - Artisan & Craft Vendors (\$50 fee)
    - Non-Profit organizations & Community Partners (\$25)
    - Food Vendors (\$100 fee)
- Senior Games
  - March 24 – May 9, 2025
  - Registration Deadline: February 21, 2025
  - Serving as an Event Director this year to assist in Brittany Bradsher's (Burlington R&P) absence during her maternity leave.
  - Senior Games Sports Management Clinic: January 29
- First Responder Friday
  - Join members from the City of Graham Fire, Police, and Recreation & Parks Departments on the third Friday of each month (April – September) to connect, ask questions, and learn more about those serving you. This opportunity is open to all ages and free of charge. Southern Alamance Family Empowerment (S.A.F.E.) Food Ministry will also join us by providing information about their opportunities and programs for the community.

- This year we plan to release a Google Form to allow neighborhoods and communities to sign up and request FRF to be in their neighborhood. This will allow us to connect with citizens we have not yet met. If there are months that no one signs up, we will continue our partnership with Graham Housing Authority and its locations.

## Professional Development

- NRPA
- NCRPA

## Committees

- Safe Kids Coalition
  - Meeting: December 17 at 9:00 am (CityGate Dream Center)
  - Child Passenger Safety Technician (CPST) Information:
    - CPST Continuing Education Class: February 11 at Trailhead Church
    - Now that most FT employees with GFP are CPSTs, I would like to add car seat checks as a service during First Responder Fridays. This will be beneficial to do while in neighborhoods as many people aren't aware of this necessary service that we offer.
  - Non-Profit Status
    - SafeKids Worldwide requires each local coalition to be affiliated with an agency that will assume the lead agency status and cover the coalition under its 501(c)3. This has been an ongoing process for our coalition that has inhibited our ability to spend money received through outreach programming grants. The Mebane Fire Department is in the process of finalizing paperwork to become the lead agency.
  - 2025 Goals and Opportunities:
    - Many members of our coalition have felt that the Alamance County SafeKids Coalition needs to be more present at events around the county and also to offer more education to the public. I suggested that at our January meeting, members come prepared with event and program dates for the first 6 months of 2025 to allow the coalition members to sign up to have a SafeKids booth at these events. This will at least allow us the opportunity to educate the public on the services our members can provide, like car seat installation and checks, fire alarm checks, etc.
    - SafeKids event for 2025: Pick a date for this event at the January meeting
  - Next Meeting: January 21 at 9:00 am (Graham Civic Center)
- Alamance County Programming Collaborative
  - Programming colleagues across Alamance County meet monthly to discuss special events and programs. Topics include dates of events and selection, policies and procedures, difficulties and solutions, and collaborative events for the group.
  - Meeting: No December Meeting
  - Next Meeting: January 7 at 1:00 pm (Graham Historical Museum)
    - When scheduling, I also including Department Heads from each department inviting everyone to the meeting in January and encouraging them to forward the invite or ask employees from their agency who oversee any programs or events to attend. Some departments that are larger have several people who are responsible for programs and I want to ensure we are getting adequate feedback and information from each department.
    - I was also able to connect with Brandon Enoch (Green Level Director) to invite him to join us at the meetings. This will be a new agency represented.
- Executive Safety Committee
  - Fire Extinguisher Training was held in December
  - NeoGov Annual Safety Trainings were released to employees. These are due to be completed by the end of January for most.

- City of Graham Wellness Committee
  - Meeting: No December Meeting
  - December Initiatives
    - Door Decorating Contest: Winners announced at the City of Graham Christmas Luncheon
      - Brandy, Tell, Brain, and I collaborated on a Telf the Elf themed door.
  - Next Meeting: January 16
- Alamance County Cooperative Extension Advisory Board
  - The purpose of the advisory board is to focus on advocacy, education, and partnership.

## **Miscellaneous**

- December 1: Worked at Ice Rink
- December 5: Assisted in decorating the Christmas Tree at City Hall with Brandy and Tel.
- December 8: Worked at the Christmas Tree Lighting Event
- December 12: Completed Fire Extinguisher training
- December 13: Worked at Ice Rink
- December 14: Worked at Ice Rink
- December 15: Worked at Ice Rink
- December 16: Assisted in breaking down the Downtown Graham Ice Skating Rink and supplies.

“Our generation has the ability and the responsibility to make our ever-more connected world a more hopeful, stable and peaceful place.”

– *Natalie Portman*

“If you want to touch the past, touch a rock. If you want to touch the present, touch a flower. If you want to touch the future, touch a life.”

– *Author Unknown*

## Facilities Report

GRAHAM RECREATION & PARKS COMMISSION  
December 2024 Report

Marquis Graves  
Facilities Supervisor  
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### **Facility Updates:**

#### **Recreation Center:**

Youth Basketball Games will begin Monday December 9<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm – 8:30pm. Basketball games will take place each day excluding Fridays and Sundays. Open Gym will operate 12:00pm – 5:00pm Monday – Friday in both the small and large gym. Gym Walkers are able to use the small gym and large gym from 9am – 12:00pm daily. The Congregate Nutrition Program for Seniors meet daily within room 1 of the rec center from 9am – 12pm. Pickleball at the Rec Center will be postponed until after the youth basketball season which is scheduled to end in late February. Rental calendar for December has also been attached.

#### **Civic Center:**

Calendar for December rentals is attached.

#### **Maple St. Center:**

The following reoccurring classes and groups utilize the center during the month of September Shag Dancing classes at Maple St have concluded but may continue at a later date in the Calendar for December rentals at Maple St. is attached. New floors were installed at Maple Street by Floor Designs Unlimited on December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

- Maple St. Line Dancers: Mon. & Tue. 9:00am – 11:00am Instructors: Carolyn Gantt and Frances Woodlief
- Xtreme Hip Hop : Mon. & Wed. 6:00pm – 7:00pm Instructor: Delicia White
- Mah-Jongg: Tue. 12:00pm – 3:00pm
- TOPS: Tue. 5:15pm – 6:15pm Instructor: Belinda Smith
- Troxler Ballroom Dance: Wed. 9:30am – 10:30am
- Liz and Lou Dance Practice: Wed. & Thur. 7:30pm – 8:30pm

- Beginners Yoga Class: Thur. 6:00pm – 7:00pm Instructor: Tava
- ALCO Vets: Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month. 6:30pm – 7:30pm Contact: Bobby Chin
- Alamance arts has begun utilizing the Maple St. center for art classes beginning in October. Classes occur every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday.

**Programs/Events/Additional Info:**

- The 30+ pick up basketball program occurs every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month and will be supervised by Recreation Staff member Ja-Vontae Bryant.
- Had a meeting with Randi Lee of Drums Alive to discuss the possibility of bringing a new program to the Recreation Center. We are looking to bring start the program the last week of February.



# Athletics Report

GRAHAM RECREATION & PARKS COMMISSION

December 2024 Report



Joshua Cutlip

Athletic Supervisor

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## Winter Programs

Basketball season is fully underway as we're into the games portion of the season! We've had some intriguing games already this season with multiple games ending in buzzer-beaters or game winning shots. The most competitive age division so far has been 10U boys which has 3 teams at the top that're a step above the rest. The other 4 teams are pretty even and all have the ability to win multiple games this season.

This season we'll be partnering with Gibsonville and Green Level in some age divisions. With the increase in numbers our goal is to play everything in-house but some age divisions we still combine with other departments to help form a full league. Originally, we planned to play with Green Level and Gibsonville in the 6U age division but due to headaches in schedule making we backed out at are going in-house for 6U.

- 5U (Graham Only)
- 6U (Graham Only)
- 8U Boys (Graham and Green Level)
- 8U Girls (Graham and Gibsonville)
- 10U Boys (Graham Only)
- 10U Girls (Graham, Green Level, and Gibsonville)

- 12U Boys (Graham Only)
- 13U Girls (Graham, Green Level, and Gibsonville)
- 14U (Graham and Gibsonville)

We've made a couple of rule changes for the season that will be in effect for our in-house leagues and the 5U age division. In our in-house leagues that keep score (8U and above) we're putting in a "mercy rule". This rule will require a team's top two scorers to sit on the bench if their team is up by 15 or more in the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter. If a lead of 14 or less is restored then the two players may re-enter the game; once the score goes back to 15+ they're required to sit again. So far, the rule has been effective and helped reduce the number of "blow-outs". We're seeing that when teams sit their top scorers the games become more even and in most cases the leads reduce to inside 10 points.

In the 5U age division the rule change revolves around the beginning of games. Each game will begin with free-throws attempted by each player. This will give every player a chance to shoot the ball!

Winter Basketball (ages 4-14)

- 5U: 51 participants (5 teams) (7 on wait-list)
- 6U: 61 participants (5 teams) (20 on wait-list)
- 8U Boys: 70 participants (7 teams) (24 on wait-list)
- 8U Girls: 18 participants (2 teams)
- 10U Boys: 70 participants (7 teams) (28 on wait-list)
- 10U Girls: 22 participants (2 teams) (2 on wait-list)
- 12U Boys: 50 participants (5 teams) (11 on wait-list)
- 13U Girls: 10 participants (1 team) (6 on wait-list)
- 14U: 21 participants (2 teams) (1 on wait-list)

### **Upcoming Spring Programs**

Registration for soccer and lacrosse opened on December 1<sup>st</sup> and will run through February 1<sup>st</sup>. Registration for baseball, softball, and t-ball will open on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Adult Pickleball will be returning for the Spring with us expanding from 2 divisions to 3! We have opened registration for returning teams, they had until December 31<sup>st</sup> to inform me if they're playing in the Spring. If I don't hear back their spot will become open to the public when public registration opens on January 1<sup>st</sup>.

Soccer registration was slower than I hoped for through January but hopefully it'll pick up as we turn the calendar to 2025.

## Spring Soccer Registration Numbers

- 5U: 5 players
- 6U: 13 players
- 8U: 15 players
- 10U: 17 players
- 14U: 16 players

Thus far I've had 10 of the 16 pickleball teams confirm they're returning. This leaves 14 spots open for new teams.

Lacrosse currently has 3 players registered. We'll be shooting for double digits so that we'd be able to have a program.

## Fall Sport Surveys

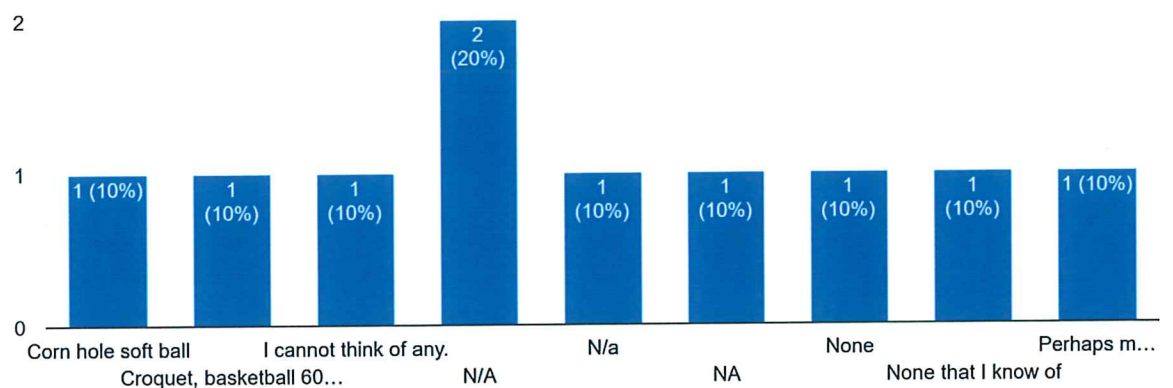
Surveys were sent out for all of our Fall Athletic Programs; pickleball, soccer, and flag football. Overall, the responses have been positive with some of the usual complaints (kid not playing enough, uneven teams, not liking the coach). I'll be taking each of the responses into consideration and look to make any rule changes that can help to improve our programs.

Below are some results from the surveys.

## Adult Pickleball (10 Responses)

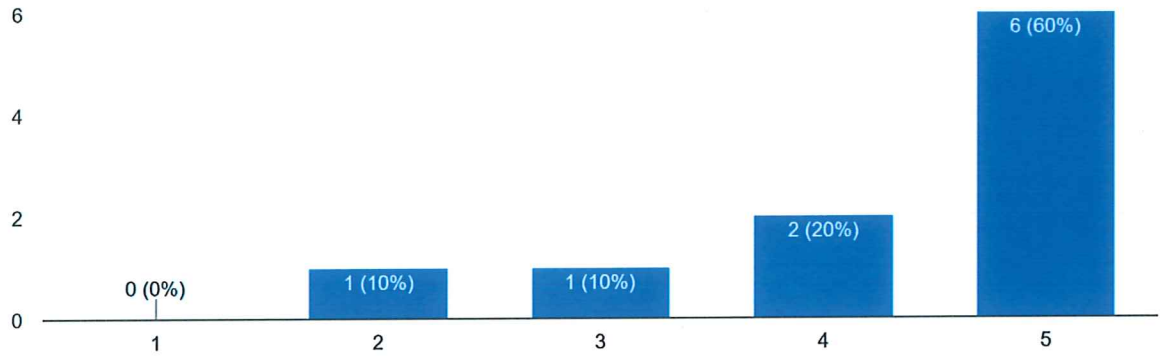
What athletic program(s) would you like to see added in the future?

10 responses



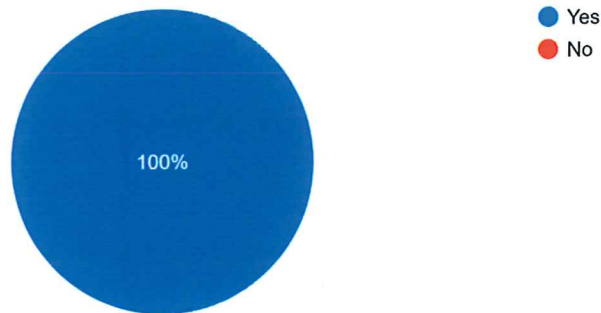
On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate your overall experience with the sport?

10 responses



Did you enjoy the program?

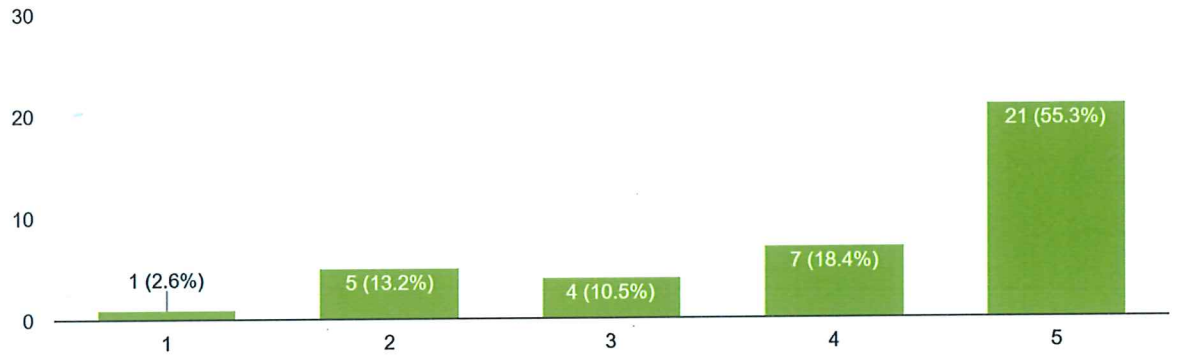
10 responses



**Fall Soccer (38 Responses)**

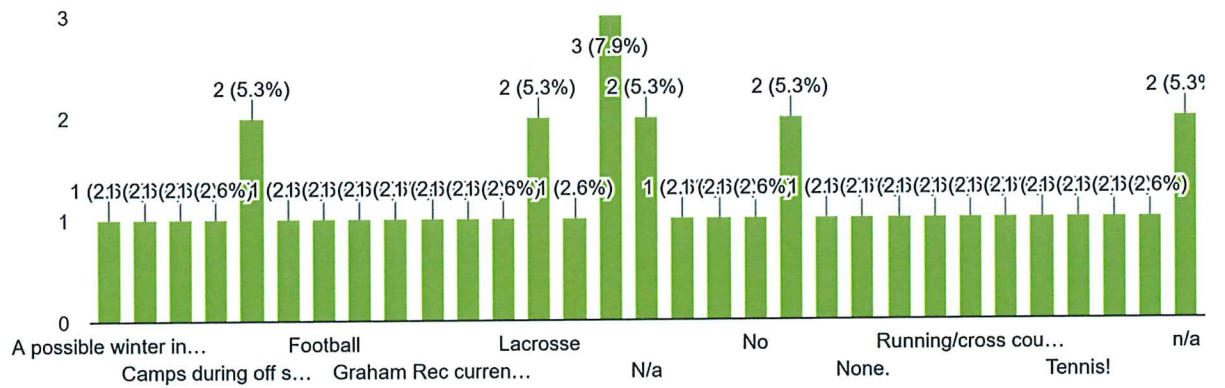
On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate the participants overall experience with the sport?

38 responses



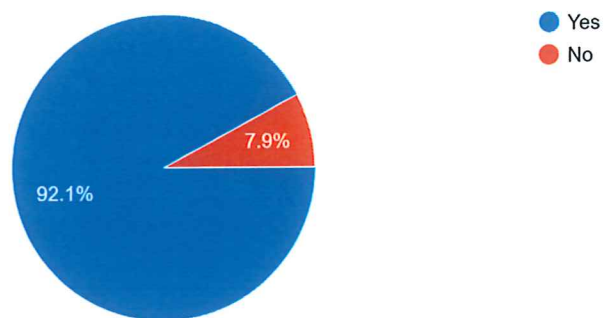
What athletic program(s) would you like to see added in the future?

38 responses



Did the participant enjoy the program?

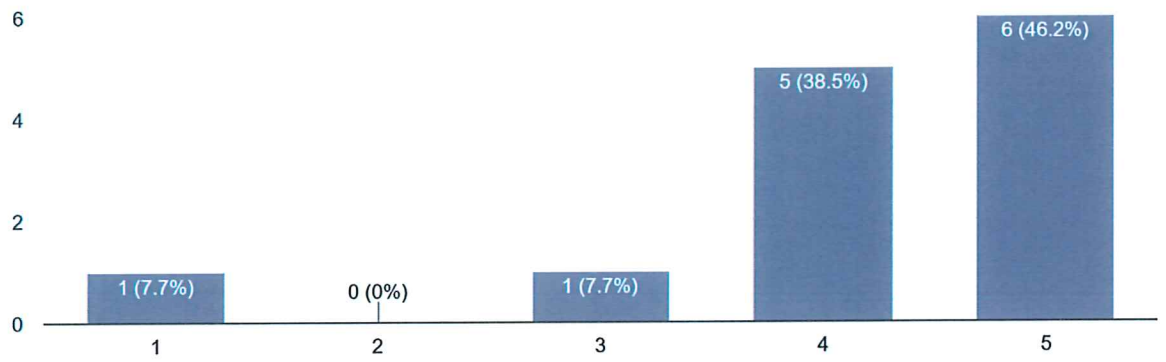
38 responses



**Flag Football (13 Responses)**

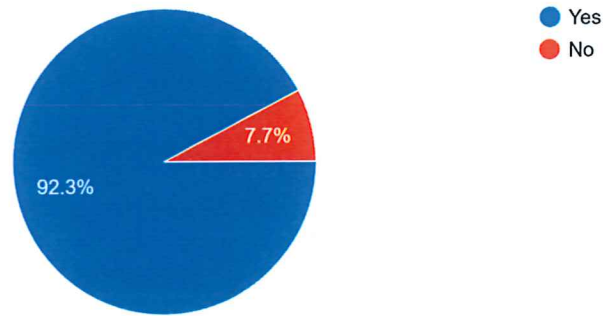
On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate the participants overall experience with the sport?

13 responses



Did the participant enjoy the program?

13 responses



# Marketing Report

GRAHAM RECREATION & PARKS COMMISSION  
December 2024 Report



Contact: Brandy McCandless  
Title: Marketing Supervisor  
Phone: (336) 513-5510  
Email: bmccandless@CityofGraham.com

*"Winston Churchill once said, "It is not enough that we do our best; sometimes we must do what is required." Think about what you are working toward this year. Are you doing what is required or are you looking for a shortcut?" - James Clear, author of the #1 New York Times bestseller Atomic Habits*

## Project & Program Updates

- GRPD Full-Time Staff Photo Shoot...for 2024 Holiday Cards! (12/03)
- Brian, Emma, Tel, and I participated in the City of Graham Christmas Door Decorating Contest, submitting a Telf the Elf themed door (12/06)
- The City of Graham's Christmas Tree Celebration was held on Sunday, December 8 with great attendance. However, the fireworks planned for the evening following the ceremony were canceled due to dry conditions, low humidity, gusty winds, and heightened fire danger. All other evening activities proceeded as scheduled. Thank you to all of the GRPD staff who helped with the event! (12/08)
- The monthly Hikes with Hounds program explored Graham Regional Park with three shelter dogs (Baxter, Gator, & Spud) and 9 volunteers. Going into 2025, we will be celebrating 10 years of the Hikes with Hounds program! (12/13)
- Special thanks to the GRPD Team for their help with covering shifts at the Ice Rink this season and breaking down the rink! (12/16)
- The 2024 Special Events Survey was sent out through social media and available on event webpages for holiday events: tree lighting & ice rink. A separate staff survey was sent out for the ice rink. (12/17)
- Emma and I compiled a listing of 2025 Road Closure needs for upcoming special events in downtown Graham to be presented to the City Council for approval at the January 14 council meeting. Downtown businesses received a letter on 12/18 about the proposed dates and upcoming meetings to discuss road closures taking place in-person and through Zoom 01/07: 2 times offered. (12/18)
- Teamed up with Joshua and the GRPD athletics crew to create a [reel](#) for the youth basketball season (12/19)
- OFF for City holidays & vacation (12/23 – 12/27)
- 2025 Open-Air Park Shelter Reservations were updated in Community Pass. Reservations can be made for the 2024 season beginning January 1, 2025. (12/31)





## Ongoing Projects

- Coordinating new Park Signage with Syntech for Bill Cooke Park and South Graham Park
  - Up Next for 2025: wayfinding, walking track/trail length, additional rules/hours
  - Future Goal: entryway sign for Graham Regional Park
- Graham Recreation Center Display: option to host a mini-exhibit in a glass case at the GRC to promote the museum/nature topics)
  - available time options: January- April / May-August (reserved for nature display for campers) / September-December
- 200 North Main Street Pocket Park Project - exploring lighting options to purchase with possible community partners/sponsors
- Pursuing the NC Environmental Education (NCEE) Certification. The goals of the NCEE Certification Program are to increase environmental literacy, provide practice in environmental education teaching methods, and foster community leadership.

## Current & Upcoming Programming

- **Sunflower/Crimson Clover Project at Graham Regional Park**
  - Crimson Clover Field was planted at the end of September, with flowers in April 2025
  - Sunflower Field to be planted in May 2025, flowers to peak in mid-July
  - A GRPD Parks & Athletic Facilities Team, City of Graham Public Works, and the Alamance County Soil and Water Conservation District Project
- **Hikes with Hounds**
  - Year-round, one Friday each month
  - Partnership with the City of Burlington Animal Services and Recreation & Parks
  - 2025 Dates & Locations (weather & trail conditions permitting)
    - January 10      Burlington - Springwood Park (2 miles)
    - February 7      Graham - Bill Cooke Park (2 miles)
    - March 14      Burlington - Lake Cammack Park & Marina (2 miles)
    - April 11      Haw River Trail - Shallow Ford Natural Area (2-3 miles)
    - May 9 or 16      Haw River Trail - Cane Creek Mountains Natural Area (2 miles)
    - June 13      Haw River Trail - Longmeadow Trailhead (3 miles)
    - July 11      Haw River Trail - Glencoe Paddle Access (2 miles)
    - August 8      Haw River Trail - SAX Island (2 miles)
    - September 19      Alamance Parks - Cedarrock Park (2-3 miles)
    - October 10      Burlington - Guilford Mackintosh Park & Marina (2 miles)

- November 14 Burlington - Willowbrook Park (2 miles)
  - December 5 Graham - Graham Regional Park (1-2 miles)
- **Graham Historical Museum**
  - Current Exhibit
    - Funeral Services & Processes
    - *Tentative - (March-Spring 2025) Baseball in Alamance County Exhibit at the Graham Historical Museum (needs board approval)*
  - Programs
    - Lunch-and-Learn
      - *Tentative - Topic: Textile Leagues and Minor League Baseball in Alamance County • Speaker: Dr. Mark Cryan, Elon University Professor of Sport Management (May-Spring 2025)(needs board approval)*
- **Downtown Graham's Ice Skating Rink on Synthetic Ice**
  - 2024 Dates: November 22 – December 15, 2024 (3 weeks – closed for Thanksgiving 11/28) (*weather & staff permitting*)
    - Times: (see website for details)
    - Location: Downtown at Alamance Arts
    - Special Ice Rink Events
      - Skate with the Characters Nights – Thursday Nights
        - Date: Thursday, December 5 – Skate with the Princesses: Jasmine & Elsa (by Princess Parties of North Carolina)
        - Date: Thursday, December 12 – Skate with the Grinch (by Graham Recreation & Parks – THANK YOU Travis & Tel!)
      - Friday Theme Nights
        - Friday, November 22 – Theme: Glow Night
        - Friday, November 29 – Theme: Flannel & Frost
        - Friday, December 6 – Theme: Festive Headwear
        - Friday, December 13 – Theme: Ugly Christmas Sweater
      - NEW! Jolly Jams Karaoke Night (Saturdays beginning at 5:00pm)
      - Graham High School National Honor Society (NHS) Toy Drive (led by part-time staff Axel Rojas)
        - Dates: November 25 – December 10
  - 2024 Attendance: 922 skaters (modified hours due to staffing - closed Mondays & Tuesdays & shorter Fri-Sun hours, most full-time supervisors worked a min. of 3 shifts)
- **City of Graham's Christmas Tree Lighting Celebration**
  - 2024 Date: Sunday, December 8, 2024 (no rain date)
    - Time: 5:00pm – 7:30pm
      - Tree Lighting Ceremony: 6:30pm, fireworks were canceled for 2024
      - Location: Front Lawn of the City of Graham Municipal Building (City Hall)

- Fun for the Evening
      - Alamance County Public Libraries read during the ceremony and offered Take & Make crafts
      - Ice Skating on Synthetic Ice at the Downtown Graham's Ice Skating Rink
      - Painted Grape offered free face-painting
      - Graham Middle School Falcon Singers sang Christmas carols throughout the evening by the ice skating rink
      - South Graham Elementary Inspirations Chorus sang during the ceremony
      - Visits with Santa Claus from 5:30pm – 6:30pm
      - Food Trucks: Belle's Brew, Dickie-Do's Pig Rig, City of Graham Fire Explorers (due to unforeseen circumstances, two of our other scheduled food vendors were unable to attend the evening)
    - 2024 Attendance: approx. 500+
- **Arbor Day in Graham Activities**
  - During April (programs & social media tree education)
    - Arbor Day in Graham's Tree Planting Ceremony – Date: Friday, April 25, 2025
  - Collaboration with the City of Graham Appearance Commission & Tree Board
- **TENTATIVE EVENT - Earth Day Event at South Graham Park**
  - Date: Saturday, April 26, 2025
  - Time: TBD
  - Location: South Graham Park • 1609 Rogers Road, Graham, NC 27253
  - Collaboration with the Alamance County Public Libraries
- **Alamance Creek Week**
  - One week during May: Dates TBD
  - Collaborating with Graham-Mebane Lake and StormwaterSMART for activities
- **NEW! Outdoor Concert Series** (*replacing Musical Chairs Countywide Outdoor Concert Series at Bill Cooke Park*)
  - Band Lineup
    - May 2 – TBD
    - June 6 – TBD
    - July 4 – TBD (*tentative*)
    - August 1 – TBD
  - Time: 7:00pm – 9:00pm
  - Location: Graham Regional Park • 1575 North Jim Minor Road, Haw River, NC 27258 (*tentative*)

- **Thursdays at Seven Concert Series**
  - Band Lineup
    - May 22 – TBD
    - June 26 – TBD
    - July 24 – TBD
    - August 28 – TBD
    - September 11 – TBD
    - September 25 – TBD
  - Time: 7:00pm – 9:00pm
  - Location: Downtown Graham • West Elm Street, Graham, NC 27253

## Volunteering

- NC State Extension Master Gardener Volunteer – help with workdays, outreach, and managing the social media account “Extension Master Gardener Volunteers of Alamance County”

## Social Media

Facebook Followers: 10,369 (increased 36)

Instagram Followers: 2,556 (increased 7)

Twitter Followers: 257 (decreased -12)

## Website

Top 10 Most Viewed City of Graham Website Pages for December 3, 2024 – January 1, 2025:

<b>Top Posts/Pages</b>	<b>Views</b>
1. (not set)	6,056
2. HOME - City of Graham, NC	4,125
3. Trash and Recycling - City of Graham, NC	2,351
4. Water & Sewer Billing - City of Graham, NC	2,001
5. Graham Christmas Parade - City of Graham, NC	1,831
6. GRPD Special Ice Skating Rink - City of Graham, NC	1,345
7. Recreation & Parks - City of Graham, NC	839
8. GRPD Special Christmas Tree Lighting - City of Graham, NC	537
9. Police - City of Graham, NC	509
10. Water & Sewer - City of Graham, NC	470

# Graham-Mebane Lake End-of-Year Report

## Graham Recreation and Parks Department

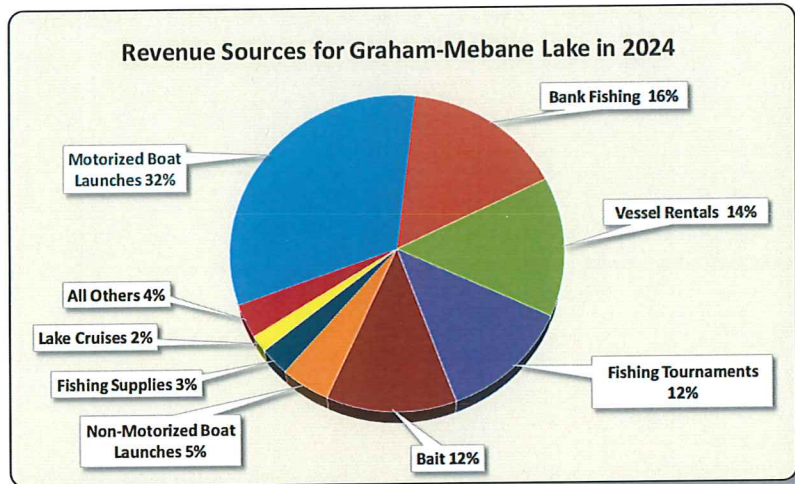
### Warden's Summary of 2024

The lake had another good year in 2024. Public use, measured by visitation and boat launches, remains at a high level. Fishing was above average for the main sought-after species and we continue to see an increase in non-traditional lake users.

We did the paperwork for the needed infrastructure improvements in the Fall. New launch ramps and docks, and a slip dock are expected to be constructed in Summer/Fall of 2025.

The lake hit a new high in revenue this year, but just barely - a 2% increase over 2023. Vessel rentals and bank fishing were up but all other sources were the same as last year.

Bass fishing remains very good at the lake, but crappie and catfish fishing are average.



#### By the Numbers (last year in parentheses)

Boat Launches	4,217 (4,554)	Customers	16,558 (15,984)
Motorized Boats:	3,579 (3,693)	All Boaters:	6,583 (7,186)
Ski Area Launches:	60 (90)	Motorized:	5,842 (6,050)
Non-motorized Boats:	578 (771)	Ski Area:	134 (312)
Seniors/Disability:	405 (493)	Non-Motorized:	607 (824)
Using Annual Permit:	1,923 (2,126)	Bank Anglers:	4,797 (4,198)
Vessels Rented:	787 (664)	Vessel Renters	1,021 (879)
		Programs & Events:	721 (773)
		Passive Visitors:	3,436 (2,948)

Other 2024 Highlights:

- NC Wildlife fisheries biologists performed largemouth bass surveys in April. We won't get a written report as in past years, but the biologist said we have a great fishery, one of the best in the region. I'll post more information as it becomes available.
- We weighed-in 19 Trophy Bass (over seven pounds); a very good number for a lake our size. Few anglers bring up crappie and catfish for weighing.
- Fishing pressure (by number of boat launches) has remained steady over the last 4 years.
- The lake water level stayed at full pool all year except for a few weeks in July where it dropped a foot.

In addition to the Lake Warden's 2,080 full-time hours worked, the Assistant Lake Wardens logged 1,000 hours, and Lake Attendants 3,100 hours, for a total of 6,200 hours worked. Lake Attendants working vessel rentals or paddle programs worked 360 hours. The Lake was open 231 days (~2,700 hours) this year.

Steve Hadden, CPRP  
Lake Warden, Graham-Mebane Lake  
Graham Recreation and Parks Department  
[shadden@cityofgraham.com](mailto:shadden@cityofgraham.com)

*"Don't put off for tomorrow what you can do today, because if you enjoy it today, you can do it again tomorrow."*

James A. Michener, writer, Pulitzer Prize winner

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## **2024 Programs and Events at Graham-Mebane Lake**

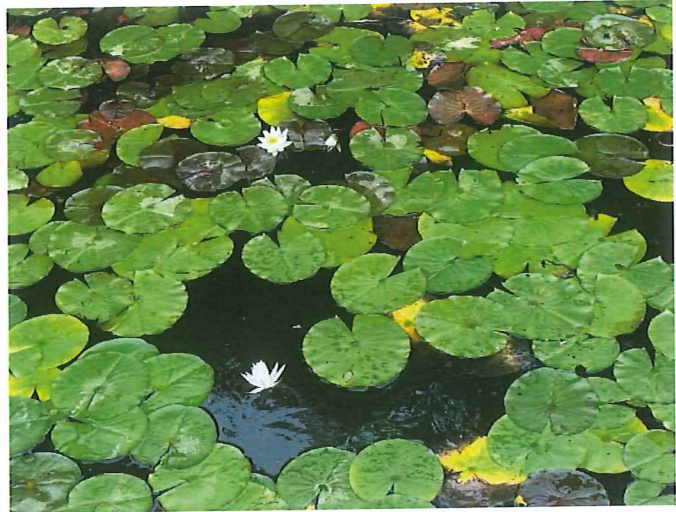
Our **Big Bass Tournament** (BBT) remains our premier event. The number of entrants (67) has remained steady as does the interest. Eight anglers competed in the Fish-Off in October with three of them splitting the \$1,250 prize money. All eight also receive an Annual Permit for the next year, which usually puts us in the red. But we address that in the next few paragraphs.

In the **Second Chance Tournament**, a subset of the BBT, we keep track of entrant's heaviest bass caught throughout the year that does not win a BBT month. The Top 8 leaders get their own tournament in early October. That tournament winner gets the chance to compete in the BBT Fish-Off for the prize money. The goals of this tournament are to provide a second path into the BBT Fish-Off for those who never win a month, raise interest in the BBT, and to generate revenue to help cover BBT costs.

Three-fourths of the BBT entrants entered Second Chance. Lake Staff donated new fishing tackle to give to the Top 8 as prizes – valued enough to cover their entry fee.

Second Chance netted \$490. Combining that with the BBT entry fees moved the BBT into the black. Of note, this year's Second Chance winner also won the BBT Fish-Off.

This is the second year of a partnership with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission on a Five-Year **Habitat Enhancement Program**. The objectives of this program are to enhance habitat for the fisheries of the lake, improve angler satisfaction, and stimulate the public to participate in habitat improvement projects. An additional objective (from my point of view) is to initiate a shoreline stabilization program that will decrease shoreline erosion and the resultant muddy water and lake sedimentation.



*Photo credit: Brandy McCandless*

This year another 21 plant enclosures were built and over 2,400 native plants were planted. Of these, 400 went into enclosures and 2,000 planted strategically around the lake. On our September survey, we found the planted enclosures are doing well, but the individual plants are not. Deer ate many of them and others did not get established. We meet with NC Wildlife in February to plan next year's plantings.

Our single-day **Graham-Mebane Lake Bass Tournament** is held on the last Saturday in March. Its objectives are to provide a tournament experience for anglers who usually are unable to fish in one, and to bring in revenue to cover the BBT costs. We had 20 boats this year and a prize total of \$1,500. The Lake's Admin fee was \$500.



The Lake held four evening **Catfish Tournaments** this summer. We averaged 64 entrants per tournament, which is a perfect amount for our fishing area and resources. These tournaments remain quite popular for families as well as the more hard-core anglers. Labor costs were \$225 while our total revenue was \$525; keeping the program profitable for the fifth year in a row.

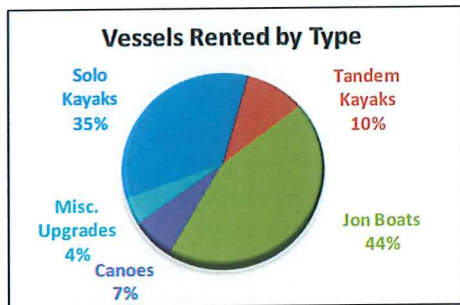
The **Youth Fishing Day** is a free fishing event for kids ages 4 to 15. Its goal is to interest youth (and parents) in fishing. We give t-shirts, a SnoBall, and a fishing-oriented goody bag to the attendees and raffle off 15 fishing rods. Attendance was over 100. The assistance of the Marketing and Programs Divisions (Brandy and Emma) on this program is much appreciated.

For the past few years, we have blended **Alamance Creek Week** into our Youth Fishing Day event. Danica Heflin, the Environmental Programs Coordinator for Stormwater SMART, talked with participants about how water quality affects the animals that live in it. Hands-on with the turtles (gently) was a huge success.

### Our Vessel Rental Program

continues to grow. We rented about 20% more vessels than last year. This is the second year with having two lake attendants working weekend rentals and it is working as hoped. Vessels stayed cleaner and were put back in service quicker after needing repairs.

Year	Vessel Rentals			Profit/Loss
	Rentals	Income	Expenses	
2016-21	967	\$12,733.00	\$14,413.87	-\$1,680.87
2022	604	\$7,589.00	4,814.81	\$2,774.19
2023	661	\$7,734.00	531.67	\$7,202.33
2024	787	\$9,619.00	170.61	\$9,448.39
Totals:	3,019	\$37,675.00	\$19,930.96	\$17,744.04



Vessel tie-up and dock space was again an issue, but we did receive the CIP funding for a slip dock this year, and it is scheduled for installation next Summer.

Kayak rentals surged a bit to tie jonboats in numbers rented, but we were down to three jonboats for most of the summer as one was in the shop with a leaky bottom. Canoe rentals doubled over last year (23 to 53) and we are unsure why.

In our **Paddle Program**, we led eleven Paddle Tours of the lake and taught an Introduction to Paddling class. We had thirty-two customers and though we ended \$240 in the red, we continue to gain program knowledge and are looking forward to applying it next year.

We started our **Lake Cruises** in September this year. We ran 18 cruises, taking 111 customers out for 45-minute tours of the lake. We received many positive comments on the cruises and Steve had a blast piloting them. An issue did arise with the boat motor not switching into reverse gear – the gears would not line up correctly. We had a gear replacement kit installed, but it did not fix the situation. Turns out Mercury was aware of this problem and only used this gearing for one year; they have no fix for it.

Graham-Mebane Lake participates in the NC Wildlife Resources Commission’s **Community Fishing Program**. The Commission provides four solar-powered fish feeders to attract fish to the bank fishing area. The Lake purchases the fish food and maintains the feeders. We also participate in the Commission’s **Tackle Loaner Program**. Beginning anglers of all ages may borrow a rod and reel while they fish at the lake.

**Fishing clubs** hold day tournaments at the Lake in spring and fall. We had sixteen tournaments in 2024, totaling 184 boats. Nine of those tournaments had a winning bag (total weight of 5 bass) of over 20 pounds – a very nice metric for us. Due to parking issues, we restrict the number of tournament boats to 20 per day. Clubs must schedule their tournaments and pay our normal user fees. Tournaments are not held in June, July, and August to prevent fish loss in live wells.

The Lake has partnered with several local entities as an **Emergency Training location**. The Dive Team from the Alamance Co. Rescue Unit and the Alamance Co. Emergency Management agency use the lake for realistic, hands-on training. Most of these training sessions occur when we are closed, but for the most realistic experience for them, our

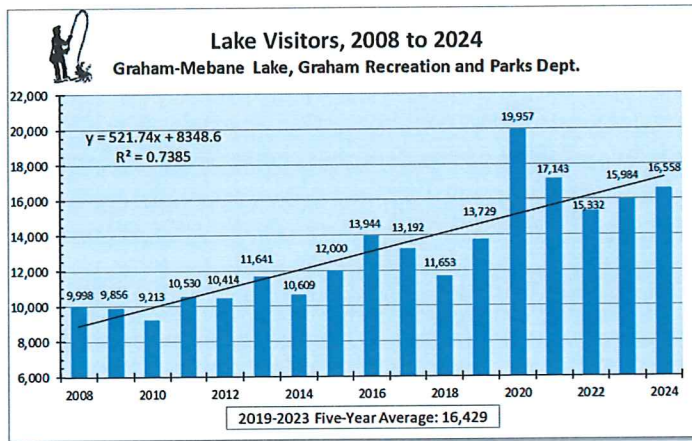
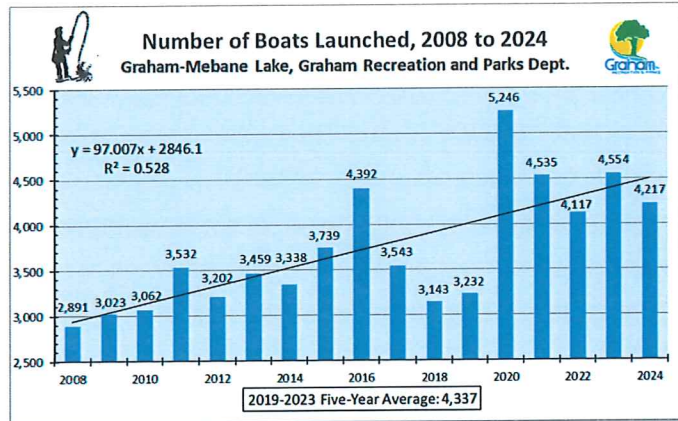


customers, and lake staff, we occasionally allow them to train on weekends – lake staff and our customers need to be able to adapt when actual emergencies occur.

## Charts, Tables, and Graphs

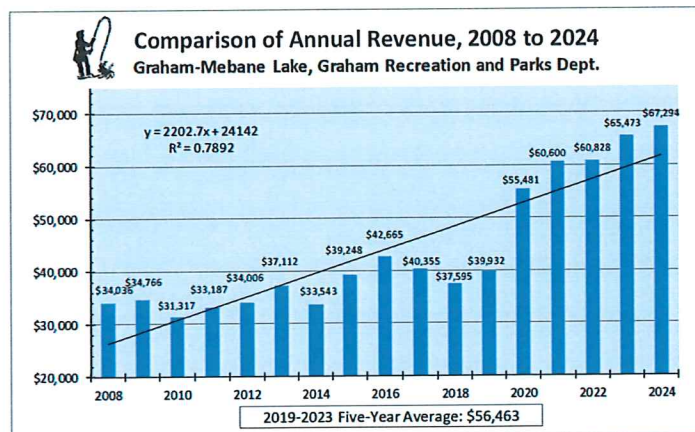
Boat launches, visitation, and revenue are the three metrics we use to check growth and see how “busy” we are.

Boat launches were down 300 from last year, but the trend continues to be about 100 more launches a year since 2008.



Lake visits increased over last year, up 574 visitors. Bank anglers, vessel renters, and passive visitors led the increase. We continue the growth rate of over 500 visitors per year since 2008.

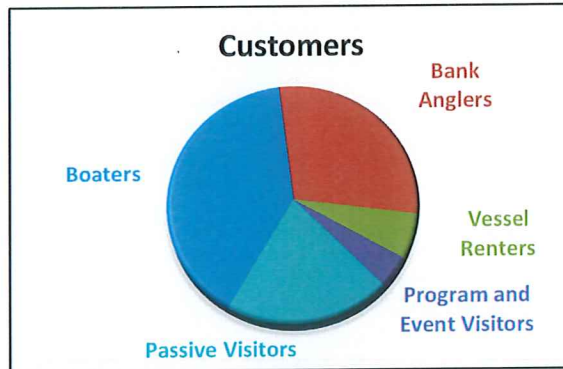
Lake Revenue peaked again this year, though it was a modest \$1,800. This increase was in vessel rentals and bank fishing, all others stayed relatively the same.



**Identifying our Customers:**

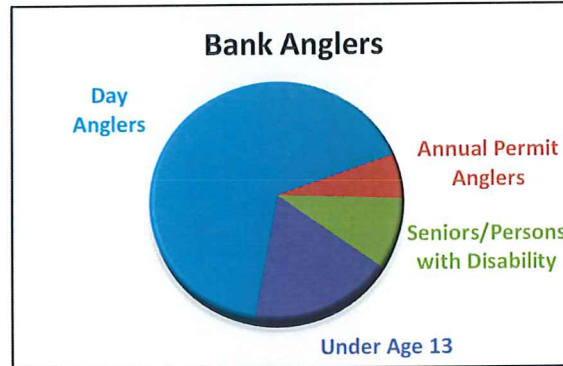
**Customers**

Boaters	6,583	40%
Bank Anglers	4,797	29%
Vessel Renters	1,021	6%
Program and Event Visitors	721	4%
Passive Visitors	3,436	21%
	16,558	



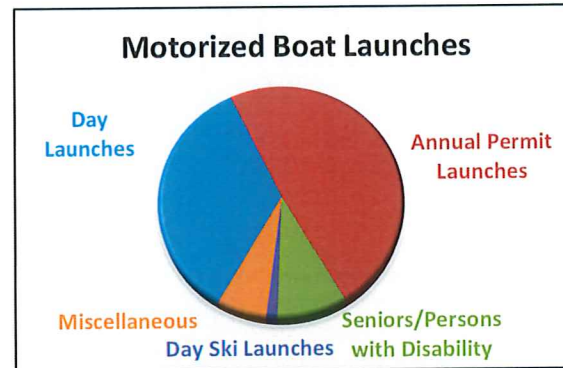
**Bank Anglers**

Day Anglers, Age 13-64	3,198	67%
Annual Permit Anglers	292	6%
Seniors/Persons with Disability	456	10%
Under Age 13	851	18%
	4,797	



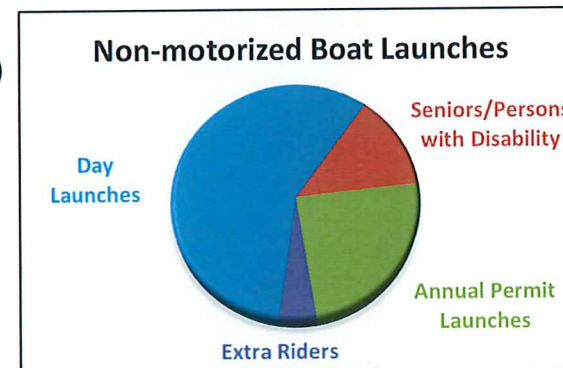
**Motorized Boat Launches**

Day Launches	1,256	35%
Annual Permit Launches	1,776	49%
Seniors/Persons with Disability	324	9%
Day Ski Launches	55	2%
Miscellaneous	228	6%
	3,639	



**Non-Motorized Boat Launches (plus Customers)**

Day Launches	350	58%
Seniors/Persons with Disability	81	13%
Annual Permit Launches	147	24%
Extra Riders	29	5%
	607	



### All Year Records

Full Year	Days Open	Boats	Visitors	User Fees	Bait	FS	Vessel Rental	Shelter Rental	Fishing Tourns.	Paddle Programs	Lake Cruises	All Others	Total Receipts	Boats /Day	Visitors /Day	User Fees /Day	Receipts /Day
2008	218	2,891	9,998	\$25,959.00	\$5,473.50	\$1,181.05			\$1,300.00			\$122.00	\$34,035.55	13.3	45.9	\$119.08	\$156.13
2009	227	3,023	9,856	\$26,721.00	\$4,581.25	\$1,099.30			\$1,790.00			\$574.85	\$34,766.40	13.3	43.4	\$117.71	\$153.16
2010	226	3,062	9,213	\$24,311.50	\$3,620.00	\$654.80			\$1,905.00			\$825.50	\$31,316.80	13.5	40.8	\$107.57	\$138.57
2011	225	3,532	10,530	\$26,292.00	\$4,014.50	\$959.00			\$1,615.00			\$663.25	\$33,543.75	15.7	46.8	\$116.85	\$149.08
2012	226	3,202	10,414	\$25,654.50	\$5,033.25	\$1,277.75			\$1,785.00			\$255.00	\$34,005.50	14.2	46.1	\$113.52	\$150.47
2013	227	3,459	11,641	\$26,937.00	\$4,843.75	\$1,605.75		\$175.00	\$2,575.00			\$975.00	\$37,111.50	15.2	51.3	\$118.67	\$163.49
2014	223	3,338	10,609	\$25,254.50	\$3,945.00	\$1,481.25		\$100.00	\$2,435.00			\$327.50	\$33,543.25	15.0	47.6	\$113.25	\$150.42
2015	227	3,739	12,000	\$29,872.50	\$4,621.00	\$1,294.75		\$375.00	\$2,850.00			\$235.00	\$39,248.25	16.5	52.9	\$131.60	\$172.90
2016	225	4,392	13,944	\$32,882.00	\$4,568.50	\$1,339.50	\$575.00	\$150.00	\$3,100.00			\$50.00	\$42,665.00	19.5	62.0	\$146.14	\$189.62
2017	222	3,543	13,192	\$27,999.00	\$4,418.25	\$1,006.00	\$1,972.00	\$575.00	\$4,385.00			\$0.00	\$40,355.25	16.0	59.4	\$126.12	\$181.78
2018	223	3,143	11,653	\$25,661.50	\$4,150.75	\$1,179.00	\$1,721.00	\$400.00	\$4,085.00			\$397.90	\$37,595.15	14.1	52.3	\$115.07	\$168.59
2019	227	3,232	13,729	\$26,628.50	\$4,113.75	\$1,234.00	\$2,153.00	\$325.00	\$4,290.00			\$1,188.00	\$39,932.25	14.2	60.5	\$117.31	\$175.91
2020	232	5,246	19,957	\$43,485.00	\$8,003.25	\$2,367.50	\$203.00		\$1,075.00			\$346.75	\$55,480.50	22.6	86.0	\$187.44	\$239.14
2021	230	4,535	17,085	\$36,621.00	\$6,783.00	\$1,624.25	\$6,097.00	\$250.00	\$8,130.00			\$1,094.80	\$60,600.05	19.7	74.3	\$159.22	\$263.48
2022	230	4,117	15,332	\$33,376.50	\$6,594.50	\$1,954.25	\$7,589.00	\$450.00	\$7,130.00		\$1,890.00	\$1,843.59	\$60,827.84	17.9	66.7	\$145.12	\$264.47
2023	230	4,554	15,984	\$35,891.00	\$9,059.25	\$1,911.75	\$7,734.00	\$475.00	\$8,478.50	\$731.00	\$1,080.00	\$112.50	\$65,473.00	19.8	69.5	\$156.05	\$284.67
2024	231	4,234	16,551	\$36,110.00	\$8,272.75	\$1,912.50	\$9,565.00	\$675.00	\$8,333.00	\$574.00	\$1,140.00	\$547.40	\$67,129.65	18.3	71.6	\$156.32	\$290.60
15 Year Avg.	226.1	3,688	12,821	\$29,596.66	\$5,238.97	\$1,385.62	\$3,505.50	\$327.50	\$3,558.03	\$731.00	\$1,485.00	\$563.23	\$42,531.25	16.3	56.6	\$130.67	\$187.62
2024 % of 15 Year Avg.	102.2%	114.8%	129.1%	122.0%	157.9%	138.0%	272.9%	206.1%	234.2%	78.5%	76.8%	97.2%	157.8%	121.6%	122.8%	119.4%	151.7%

Green = Highest      Light Green = 2nd Highest      Red = Lowest

## Program Cost Recovery Analysis

Graham-Mebane Lake

All Lake Programs	Revenue	Expenditures	Balance of All Programs	Balance of Pay Programs Only	Program Cost Recovery %
GML Bass Tournament	\$2,010.00	\$1,652.47	\$357.53	\$357.53	122%
Youth Fishing Day	\$0.00	\$1,434.53	(\$1,434.53)		0%
Catfish Tournaments	\$4,321.50	\$3,046.05	\$1,275.45	\$1,275.45	142%
Lake Cruises	\$1,150.00	\$2,835.48	(\$1,685.48)	(\$1,685.48)	41%
Paddle Programs	\$574.00	\$804.75	(\$230.75)	(\$230.75)	71%
Second Chance Tournament	\$490.00	\$140.44	\$349.56	\$349.56	349%
Big Bass Tournament	\$1,675.00	\$1,863.58	(\$188.58)	(\$188.58)	90%
	\$10,220.50	\$11,777.30	(\$1,556.80)	(\$122.27)	86.8%

	All Programs	Pay Programs
<b>2024 Cost Recovery:</b>	86.8%	98.8%
2023 Cost Recovery:	69.8%	86.6%
2022 Cost Recovery:	86.8%	107.8%

# **PARKS & ATHLETIC FACILITIES**

**December 2024**



**“A vision without a strategy remains an illusion.” – Lee Bolman**

## **Bill Cooke Park**

***Athletic Fields** – Removed leaves from infields and outfields.*

***General Maintenance** – Monthly playground inspections were completed with no issues found.*

*Finished removing tree that had fallen over the summer.*

*Horse rockers have been removed from the playground to be repainted.*

## **South Graham Park**

***General Maintenance** – Monthly playground inspections were completed with no issues found.*

*Pressure washed bathrooms and shelter A.*

*Replaced the roof on the Little Free Library.*

## **Graham Regional Park**

***General Maintenance** – Monthly playground inspections were completed with no issues found.*

*Planted two memorial trees and installed memorial signs.*

*Replaced missing bolts on play panel in the inclusive playground.*

*Pruned rose bushes at entry signs,*

*Removed two of the arborvitaes at the entry signs.*

*Pressure washed bathrooms at the inclusive playground.*

## **Apollo/Goley**

***Apollo** – Mulched leaves.*

***Goley** – Mulched leaves.*

## **Johnson Ave**

***General Maintenance** – Mulched leaves.*

## **Lake**

**General Maintenance** – *Removed the kayak launch from the lake.*

## **Neighborhood Parks & Playgrounds**

**Greenway** – *Cut muscadine vines that were growing in the trees.*

**Harmon Park** – *Cleaned up branches, wood pile, and cut back dead limbs on the trees.*

**Civic Center** – *No report.*

**Marshall St** – *No report.*

**Recreation Center** – *Sprayed weeds in playground and landscape areas,*

*Reseeded where the two trees were removed to thicken turf stand.*

**Oakley St.** – *Removed branch piles.*

*Built a ditch along Oak St to help divert water from washing out walking track.*

*Sprayed weeds in the playground.*

**Maple St.** – *Removed toilets in the bathrooms so the new floor could be installed.*

**Hwy 54 Access** – *No report.*

**200 N. Main** – *No report.*

**Museum** – *Removed leaves from courtyard area.*

## **Miscellaneous**

*Assisted with moving the skate hut back to Maple st.*

*Helped with breaking down the ice rink.*

*Helped public works blow leaves from the parade route.*

*Dropped off and picked up skid loader for an issue with the wiring harness.*

*James and Tel worked the tree lighting ceremony.*

## **Continued Education & Community Involvement**

*The team assisted participated in the fire extinguisher training.*