

Bill Ellis

Kinston, North Carolina

Bill Ellis is a highly respected parks and recreation professional with more than four decades of leadership and dedicated service to his community. A native of Georgia, Bill began his career in 1980 in Kinston, North Carolina, where he built a long and distinguished legacy in parks and recreation.

He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Parks and Recreation from East Carolina University and went on to serve the City of Kinston and Lenoir County for a total of 42 years. For 25 of those years, he served as Director of Parks and Recreation, leading transformative growth and development across the region.

During his tenure, Bill played a pivotal role in shaping the recreational landscape of Eastern North Carolina. His leadership contributed to the development and enhancement of numerous community assets, including Barnet Park and Athletic Complex, Pearson Park and Nature Park, Rotary Dog Park, nine county athletic parks, and Bill Fay Park. He also oversaw major improvements to historic Grainger Stadium, home to minor league affiliates of the Cleveland Indians and Texas Rangers.

Beyond his public service career, Bill has continued his impact through private enterprise and sports leadership. He has owned and operated a company specializing in the installation of parks and athletic facilities throughout North and South Carolina. He is currently a managing partner of the Down East Bird Dogs, a professional baseball team in the Frontier League.

Bill holds both national and state certification as a Leisure Professional and has accumulated more than 42 years of experience in recreation and related fields. His leadership extends into civic service as well—he is a longtime member and past president of both the Kinston Exchange Club and the Kinston Rotary Club. He also served as Interim City Manager for the City of Kinston on two separate occasions.

Throughout his career, Bill has received numerous awards and recognitions, including the East Carolina University Outstanding Alumni Award, the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Outstanding Service Award, the Governor's Award for AAU Athletics, and Lenoir County Citizen of the Year.

Bill Ellis's career is defined by his unwavering commitment to community development, youth athletics, and enhancing quality of life through parks and recreation. His leadership has left a lasting imprint across North Carolina, with hundreds of parks and facilities reflecting his vision, dedication, and impact.