

MINUTES  
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD  
CITY COMMISSION ROOM  
November 2, 2015 - 4:30 P.M.

Present were the following members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Mr. Ed Klimek, Dr. David Dzewaltowski, Ms. Marcia Rozell, Ms. Pat Hudgins, Mr. Mark Bachamp, and Mr. Dave Schafer.

Absent: Ms. Linda Teener.

Employees present: Mr. Eddie Eastes, Director of Parks and Recreation; Mr. Randi Clifford, Recreation Director; Mr. Scott Shoemaker, Zoo Director; Mr. Casey Smithson, Park Superintendent; Mr. Wyatt Thompson, Senior Park Planner; and Ms. Angie Sutton, Community Relations Director.

MINUTES

Mr. Klimek called the meeting to order. It was moved by Ms. Hudgins, seconded by Ms. Rozell to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on October 5, 2015. On vote, motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Dave Schafer and Mr. Mark Bachamp joined the meeting.

TIGER/SLOTH BEAR/AMUR LEOPARD EXHIBIT DESIGN

Mr. Shoemaker presented the conceptual design for the Tiger/Sloth Bear/Amur Leopard Exhibit. The tiger and sloth bear yards will have a cat walk to allow the zoo to move animals between exhibits. They will be able to move animals during hours when the zoo is open to the public. It also has a training wall for the leopards to allow the zoo staff to train animals to present themselves for inspection. The current Amur Leopard exhibit will get an ADA accessible walkway as part of the design. The new exhibits are being designed as breeding facilities. The zoo currently does not have any facilities that are built to house cubs and promote that environment, so it will be a great addition. During the construction of the new facility, zoo staff is working to preserve the original 1934 stone columns that are part of the current Amur Leopard exhibit. The zoo will also be adding some educational signage to the area to talk about the original zoo design and the changes being made due to the difference in caring for animals from 1934 to 2015. Design phase is about 75% complete. The project will feature three of the most endangered species in Asia; the Malaysian tiger, Amur leopard, and Sloth bear. The Amur Leopard is the most endangered cat in the world. There are only 27 Amur Leopards left in the wild and 72 in captivity.

The project has a 2 million dollar estimate. It is being designed in phases. The project will be donor funded. The zoo has \$500,000 in donations already and will be starting a public campaign in December to raise the funds to complete the project. Mr. Dzewaltowski asked about a picnic area that was part of the area prior to the zoo. Mr. Shoemaker indicated that there are still stone picnic tables in the area outside of the fence. Mr. Schafer asked about breeding the sloth bears. Mr. Shoemaker indicated that zoos use multiple methods to promote breeding for the animals and artificial incrimination as a last alternative. Mr. Shoemaker answers questions regarding financial responsibilities for maintenance, commissary items and labor expenses from Mr. Klimek and Mr. Schafer. Mr. Klimek asked about maintaining the WPA stone wall in the exhibit. Mr. Shoemaker indicated that they are planning to preserve as much of the WPA structures in the zoo as possible while still maintaining modern zoological standards.

MANHATTAN PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY FEASIBILITY STUDY REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

Mr. Eastes indicated that Mr. Thompson is here to provide language for the recommendation of selection committee members to the City Commission for the RFQ. The City Commission will be represented by

Commissioner Dodson and Commissioner Reddi. Jason Hilgers, Deputy City Manager, and Rob Ott, Director of Public Works, will also be members of the selection committee for the RFQ project. The action item tonight will be selection of member or members that will represent the PRAB on the selection committee.

Mr. Thompson presented the information that has been made available on the City's website for the Facilities Feasibility Study RFQ. He also presented a anticipated timeline for the selection process. The committee would be meeting on November 16 or 17 to review submittals for the project.

Mr. Klimek indicated that he felt it would be important for one of the two school board members because of the partnerships that would likely evolve from the discussions. He also thought it would be important for at least one more individual from PRAB represent the board for the selection committee.

Ms. Rozell motioned for Pat Hudgins and Dr. Dzewaltowski to represent the PRAB on the selection committee. No further discussion. Motion carried on 6-0 vote.

Mr. Klimek made note that other PRAB members will be able to be part of the steering committee once a consultant has been selected. Mr. Klimek did voice his interest in serving on the steering committee and pointed out to the PRAB that the scope of services will continue to be a fluid item. Ms. Rozell asked Mr. Klimek for clarification. Mr. Klimek feels the PRAB needs to identify highest priorities to the consultant. Ms. Rozell indicated that utilizing the priorities identified in the SFIP would be key to the success of this project moving forward. Mr. Klimek did indicate that he felt there wasn't a strong recommendation from the consultant on the priorities other than the indoor recreation facilities. Mr. Klimek also felt we should consider funding sources because we will be competing with other requests for tax dollars.

#### STAFF REPORTS

Randi Clifford reported that the ice rink would be opening November 16, 2015. Staff are working on hiring and training staff for the facility. Ice rink operates daily through February 28<sup>th</sup> with the exception of closing for a few holidays. Mr. Clifford expressed gratitude for the Park staff providing assistance with getting the facility ready for operations. The recreation division is wrapping up programming for fall and has some winter/spring programs that are starting. The division is offering a new Start Smart program for soccer and basketball for ages 3-6. Little Apple Glow Paddle event will be November 7, 2105. First Day Hike is upcoming on January 1, 2015. Mr. Klimek asked how the position was going for Mr. Clifford. Mr. Clifford indicated that things are progressing well and plans are being made to assist with staffing.

Wyatt Thompson reported that work is progressing at Anneberg Park for the field conversion. They are working on all four infields at Twin Oaks complex. Turf installation will be expected to begin in the next month or so at Twin Oaks. A retaining wall is being constructed on the soccer field to bring the field up to grade. Construction is ongoing at City Park Pool parking lot. The construction company is completing work North to South and working their way out of the park. They have been working on storm water improvements and will begin walking sidewalks and trails on the west side to promote that activity in the park as well. We received an award letter for the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program with the National Park Service to help design the Park at Lee Mill Heights. Mr. Thompson looks forward to getting the process started. Mr. Klimek asked if storm sewer improvements are part of the City Park parking project. Mr. Thompson indicated that it was a part of the project. The improvements would eliminate the standing water in the park and ease maintenance for the park staff.

Angie Sutton indicated that she shares an office with Randi Clifford. They have opportunities to collaborate on activities offered by the department. They can both review surveys for programs and make adjustments as needed based on survey results. Ms. Sutton is also working with Mr. Thompson to notify

the public about all the construction/improvements happening and provide timelines for projects. We want to ensure that the public has information available to provide answers to questions about any disruption in expected service on our website. Ms. Sutton also presented information that the Parks and Recreation Department will be launching a new website in December 2015. The Ice Rink will also be open early (1pm) on early release days for USD 383.

Casey Smithson indicated that parks crews are working on many projects around the city. They are removing leaves at the Cemetery. They are working on restoring turf on the fields at Norvell to upgrade similar to CiCo Park. The parks department hopes to make it through half the fields with improvements this year. Anneberg playground is still in full swing and will likely continue through the end of the year. Blue Earth Plaza has an electrical project ongoing. The lighting group will likely start installing lights next week with a tree lighting ceremony on black Friday. Mayor's Holiday Parade is accepting entries for the parade on December 4, 2015, with a tree lighting ceremony to follow in Triangle Park. The Parks department recently finished up an electrical project at Triangle Park.

Scott Shoemaker notified the board that the zoo was successful in renewing their AZA Sunset Zoo accreditation. The cycle for accreditation is five years and it is a rigorous inspection. The zoo had a celebration and AZA President, Chris Spears, Executive Director; was on site to present the certificate. Military Appreciation Day is November 11, 2015, and the zoo is free to everyone. Winter hours started on November 1, 2015, and hours are now 12-5. Spooktacular had over 7,800 people in attendance. The zoo has now had 81,000 people through the gates and has broken their 80,000 attendance goal for the year. Mr. Klimek asked how the zoo handles 7,800 visitors. Mr. Shoemaker indicated that the real challenge was parking.

#### 2016 Capital Improvements Project

Mr. Eastes provided information on the PRAB interaction with the CIP process. He wanted the board to see the items sooner to provide more time for consideration. He will be presenting items to the board next month that are the five year items and other requests.

#### Other Business/Public Comments

Jeremy LeCrone is representing the club, Disc Fanatics of Kansas. Kelsey LeCrone, Chad Shaffer and Mark Kewley were also present to support the expansion of disc golf at Little Warner Park. Disc Fanatics of Kansas have been actively participating in the SFIP. They would like to expand the course from nine to 18 holes. They presented in 2008 and were asked to return after 2012 because of the highway expansion near the park. Disc golfers represent over 3,000 households according to the SFIP and the group expects the age range to be high school to college age. They are asking for permission to use additional land in Big Warner Park to create another nine holes for the existing course. The current nine hole disc golf course is ranked in the Top 10 in the Nation as a nine-hole course. The group believes expanding to an eighteen-hole course could expand the use for not only local participants, but it could also draw disc golfers from across the nation.

Mr. Bachamp asks how this would interfere with the cross country events that are held. Mr. LeCrone indicated that the cross country course would not be interrupted by disc golfers any differently than other courses. Mr. Schafer asked if the request was supported if the group would anticipate planned events at the space and how these might conflict with other events that happen at the park currently. The group would like to have a third championship level course. They anticipate that having three courses would bring in groups for two or three day events. Mr. LeCrone indicated that potential tournaments could bring as many as 900 disc golfers to the area similar to the event in Emporia, Kansas. Ms. Rozell indicated that her counterpart in Emporia shared with her that they are having a positive economic impact on the area. The disc golf community has a positive low impact on the community. They are respectful to the environment and the neighboring park communities. Mr. Schafer indicated that he had heard the two

previous presentations. He feels that the park would be well served by having an additional nine holes. Mr. Schafer asked what the group felt would be required from a financial standpoint and where the funding would be provided from. The first nine holes were completed for less than \$10,000. Half of the funding was raised by the Disc Fanatics of Kansas and they are prepared to raise the funds through the group. Estimates from the SFIP would be close to \$15,000; Mr. LeCrone felt that was a high estimate. The group is environmentally sensitive and would want to do something that celebrates the land and not destroy the ecosystem. Mr. Smithson indicated that the group is willing to help and has been helping with maintenance on the course. Mr. Schafer indicated that the neighbors in the area might have some issues with the park area being converted to additional holes for the course. Mr. Schafer was also concerned about the Eagle Scout project that is being completed at the park. Mr. Eastes indicated that the property was donated with a specific intent for the park land. Mr. Eastes also indicated that the project would have to pass through various neighborhood meetings and further city meetings. There will be some sensitivity with the property owners that have property adjacent to the park. Mr. Schafer indicated that the natural state of the park needed to be reviewed. Mr. Eastes indicated that drainage would be an issue for the park as well. The parking is an issue and there needs to be some improvements to the original course.

Mr. Klimek asked if the PRAB would like city staff to pursue opportunities for the park and to attend public meetings to check into the feasibility of the expansion. Ms. Rozell indicated that she would like to check on a partnership opportunity with Target for parking. Mr. LeCrone asked about a timeline. Mr. Eastes indicated that we would put the item on a future PRAB agenda to discuss with City Administration.

Mr. Klimek asked about the Columbia, Missouri, intergovernmental visit. He had heard comments regarding the partnerships the city has with the county and community. Mr. Eastes indicated that we have tremendous partnerships with the school district. A majority of the recreation division activities occur in school facilities and vice versa. The city has a memorandum of understanding with USD 383 and we have a tremendous amount of cooperation that occurs. Eisenhower fields are a great example. The city provides all the maintenance and upkeep on the fields, but they are strictly programmed for school sports. Mr. Klimek felt there could be some county and private-sector partnerships that might be missed. Mr. Eastes agreed to provide some further information to Mr. Klimek on the current partnerships. Mr. Bachamp indicated that he felt it was a sales tax initiative driven process in Columbia. Ms. Rozell indicated that we need to do more future planning. Columbia built larger gyms for schools to facilitate tournament use. Mr. Klimek feels we need to look at new innovative ideas for our future planning.

Meeting adjourned.