

MINUTES
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
CITY COMMISSION ROOM
February 1, 2016 - 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. Linda Teener, Ms. Pat Hudgins, Mr. Mark Bachamp, and Mr. Dave Schafer.

Absent: None.

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. Rozell, seconded by Ms. Teener to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on January 4, 2015. On vote, motion carried 5-0.

Ms. Pat Hudgins joined the meeting.

FACILITY FEASIBILITY STUDY STEERING COMMITTEE FINALIZATION

Mr. Eastes reported that the contract for Bruce McMillan AIA Architects, P.A. will be before the City Commission on February 16, 2016. He has heard back from the steering committee members and knows that one potentially two of the original steering committee members are not able to serve for the current study. Mr. Eastes will forward the recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board of steering committee members to the City Commission at that meeting with the request to award the contract to Bruce McMillan AIA Architects, P.A. Mr. Eastes requested names be forwarded to him prior to the February 8, 2016, City Commission memo deadline for the City Manager's Office.

Mr. Dave Schafer joined the meeting.

PARK AT LEE MILL HEIGHTS MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Wyatt Thompson, Senior Park Planner, shared information on the meetings that have occurred to date for the Lee Mill Heights Park Master Plan process to date. A public meeting was held on January 28, 2016. We plan to do some e-mails and surveys to the surrounding neighborhood residents. We have multiple community partners working with us on the process and are working with the National Park Service for the planning and design process. Mr. Thompson shared the goals and anticipated timeline for the project. The process will have a high level of community engagement as we engage our partners, USD383 and Kansas State University, to work with students at a local elementary school on a park planning process. We have developed a web site (www.mhkprd.com/leemillpark) to hold the history of this process and have information on upcoming public meetings. Mr. Thompson asked for questions. A gentlemen in the audience asked how much impact the park will have on the environment. Mr. Thompson indicated that the feedback from the public thus far was that the area would be a natural resource park. As part of the process, a land management strategy will be developed to maintain the prairie and wooded area. We anticipate having a light footprint on the area. Mr. Schafer asked about the prairie being burned as part of the process because that is part of the process of maintaining prairie land. Mr. Thompson indicated that burning of the prairie land is being discussed for the park area in light of being close to the urban edge of the development.

Mr. Thompson introduced Tim Kellams as the park planning intern. Mr. Kellams has been assisting with the Lee Mill Heights Park Master Plan. Mr. Kellams indicated that he is a native of Wichita, KS, and working on a Masters in Landscape Architecture at Kansas State University.

2017 PARKS AND RECREATION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Mr. Eastes presented the board with the 2016 City Budget Calendar for 2017 Budget and CIP. The budget calendar provides a March 4, 2016, deadline for 2017-2022 Citizen CIP requests. There is a form available on the web for Citizen CIP Requests. Mr. Eastes then shared the 2017 Parks and Recreation CIP Requests for the board. The board can submit their own CIP requests prior to the March 4, 2016, deadline. Mr. Eastes explained the prioritization of the projects by City Administration during the budget process. He explained that not all items listed currently will make it to the City Commission for approval with the budget approval process starting in May 2016. Mr. Eastes showed the board how the Warner Park Master Plan is part of the 2017 CIP process to get funding to provide a master plan for that park and the disc golf questions. He informed the board that all departmental CIP requests are not seen by the City Commission because they go through the prioritization by City Administration. All Citizen and Advisory Board requests are seen by the City Commission because they do not go through a prioritization process with City Administration.

Mr. Schafer asked about the difference between the cost and budget impact on the CIP report. Mr. Eastes explained it was directly related to how the item is funded. If an item is temp noted, the budget impact will only show the cost during 2017 budget year. Ms. Rozell asked about the parking garage item and inquired if that was the parking garage on 4th Street. Mr. Klimek asked about usage rate on the parking garage. Mr. Eastes indicated that since the garage is a free parking facility the City does not track usage. Mr. Klimek asked about the Peace Memorial Auditorium item on the CIP list. Mr. Eastes indicated that we have a responsibility to do some maintenance and upkeep to the auditorium. Mr. Klimek asked if the park offices at 1101 Fremont were part of the 2017 CIP process. Mr. Eastes explained that it was an item that would be submitted for the 2017 CIP process.

SWIMMING POOL ADMISSION FEE DISCUSSION

Mr. Eastes discussed the 2015 year end pool report that was shared with the board and the City Commission to ask the board for input on pricing for season pool passes. In 2015, season passes were priced with an anticipated 80-90 day season. We extended the season by approximately 20 days to keep City Pool open through Labor Day. In 2016, we are expecting to have an approximate 100 day season keeping City Pool open through Labor Day. We sell approximately 2,200 passes. Mr. Eastes indicated that we are responding to questions given by the City Commission. Commissioners would like to know if we need to review the price of the pass and price relative to the operating days of the pool. Mr. Eastes asked the board for input to determine if increase the price of season passes slightly. Mr. Eastes also discussed the group punch pass and defining a “group” for the pool. We had sales last year of the group discount pass to households that were purchasing it as a family pass. The intended rate was for large groups like Boys and Girls Club, church groups, etc. and it is working well for those entities. He indicated that at next month’s meeting staff would provide a recommendation to the board for how the recreation division defines a group for the sale of the group discount rate. Mr. Schafer asked how the passes are issued and if they have a shorter expiration date. Mr. Eastes indicated that he would like to have consistency between the divisions as similar group rates are offered at the Flint Hills Discovery Center and Sunset Zoo. Dr. Dzewaltowski expressed concern about access to groups that would not normally have access to the pool and wanted to be sure we could provide some type of access for the pools to those groups of individuals. Mr. Schafer would like a group pass to extend to large groups of individuals to enjoy the pool as well. Mr. Eastes explained that staff is working through different ways to allow access to the pools. Mr. Klimek if we still offer financial assistance to households that have limited income for the pool. Mr. Eastes explained that we still use scholarships for households for all recreation activities to include the pool. Mr. Beauchamp stated that a pool is an amenity for a community and isn’t

expected to generate revenue. Mr. Eastes indicated that he agrees that it would be difficult to operate the pools without a deficit, but it is the responsibility of the department to narrow the operating expense and revenue gap.

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Goss reported that the Kansas Day Celebration had a good attendance of mostly pre-school age children. How People Make Things is setup and lets visitors create items from raw goods to finished product. The View from Space is also setup on the mezzanine level courtesy of the Planning Department. The department provided some posters with views of the Flint Hills from space. The Discovery Center is finalizing a water feature exhibit from a local artist at the beginning of April. The new website is launching today for the Flint Hills Discovery Center.

Mr. Shoemaker reported that the Sunset Zoo had 86,987 in gate attendance and 32,250 attendees to education programming. The zoo was awarded a Quarter Century Accreditation Plaque from the AZA. Sunset Zoo is one of only 120 of 250 zoos that have been accredited for 25 years or more. Work continues on the design of the tiger sloth bear leopard exhibit and the zoo has partnered with Channel 13 WIBW to Give 13. As of last week, the program has generated approximately \$13,000 in donations. The zoo is preparing for summer programming and the concession stand.

Ms. Sutton shared information regarding the work of the Community Relations team. The team did a lot planning and preparation for the office move. We continue to assist with cleaning out the space and preparing it for a future use. The customer service staff has served approximately the same number of people as we did last year, so the public is finding our new offices. Community Relations has been communicating with the public regarding the projects for our department. The ice rink implemented a strategic marketing plan and has seen an increase of 15% in attendance over last year. The ice rink employees have done a great job of working with customers and keeping the ice prepared for use. Summer activities did open with the winter/spring activities guide. The camp guide will come out on March 28 and that will have all the summer camps for the discovery center, recreation and zoo. The Little Apple Day Camp and the Sunset Zoo camps are both licensed day camp facilities. Pool passes will go on sale April 1, 2016, if we can get the pricing structure designed. We are preparing to hire a couple hundred people to work with our park staff and our recreation staff for the summer. We are completing implementation of the Adopt-A-Friend for the animal shelter staff. The entire department is preparing for the upgrading of our current registration product, RecTrac, to the web based version of RecTrac.

Mr. Thompson indicated that the south entrance to City Park was opened last Friday. The remainder of the project is still underway and work will continue in the park and is moving towards the north end of the park. Douglass Center has some exterior improvements to include new roof, siding, repairs and painting. We anticipate being at the City Commission in March for an award of that project which is funded with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Linear trail, near the Wildcat Creek Lift Station, is having work completing as part of a stream bed stabilization project. That area of the trail will be opened up this weekend. The remainder of the project will work around that area. We are hoping to have the Big Blue River Trail connect to Linear Trail through a 2016 CIP project. The project is grant dependent and we hope to fund 50% of the trail improvement from the Sunflower Trails Grant Program.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Charlie Pottorf from Wildcat Tree Service in Manhattan, Kansas, came to address the board. His business is on Cumberland Road where the proposed Linear Trail extension is proposed to be designed. He has concerns about potentially expanding the trail system across his property. He moves heavy loads and heavy machinery across that area frequently and believes the concrete trail would be degraded by his business use of the property. Mr. Eastes indicated that the project was a Public Works project and that the Public Works department was still exploring additional areas for trail expansion along West Anderson.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Eastes explained that future intergovernmental visits are being planned. We are working with the consultant to have an update on the Facility Feasibility Study for the City Commission and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board at the April 26, 2016, meeting. The PRAB typically has a joint meeting with the County Park Board. The County is involved in their budget process right now and would prefer to meet in early June. We have potential for changes at CiCo Park with the upcoming study and will need to interact with the County for those items. Mr. Klimek has requested that we provide an update to the Chamber Board on March 22, 2016.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Klimek asked if a master plan had been completed for Warner Park. Mr. Thompson indicated that there is a dated master plan for Warner Park. The last comprehensive plan was completed prior to the current nine hole disc-golf course being installed. Mr. Thompson will be sharing the plan with the board either at a future meeting or electronically. Mr. Klimek asked about the cost of a master plan. Mr. Thompson indicated that the cost proposed in the 2017 CIP item for Warner Park is to cover the cost of a consultant. If we were able to complete the process in house, we would not have to incur the expense. Dr. Dzewaltowski asked about getting the most recent version of park plans published on the web site so they could be accessible to the public and not just the PRAB. Mr. Thompson shared the park project link with the board.

Meeting adjourned.