

MINUTES
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
CITY COMMISSION ROOM
December 3, 2018 - 4:30 P.M.

Present were the following members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Mr. Ed Klimek, Mr. Dave Schafer, Mr. Darell Edie, Ms. Sue Maes, Ms. Elaine Johannes, Ms. Jurdene Coleman and Mr. Mark Bachamp.

Absent: None.

Employees present: Mr. Eddie Eastes, Director of Parks and Recreation; Mr. Randi Clifford, Recreation Director; Mr. Scott Shoemaker, Sunset Zoo Director; Ms. Susan Adams, Flint Hills Discovery Center Director; Mr. Wyatt Thompson, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation; Mr. Alfonso Leyva, Park Planner.

MINUTES

Mr. Klimek called the meeting to order. It was moved by Ms. Johannes, seconded by Mr. Schafer, to approve the minutes of the meeting held on November 5, 2018. On vote, motion carried 6-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

COMMUNITY HOUSE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Mr. Eastes introduced this item and stated that several years ago the City Commission had looked at the Community House to potentially repurpose it. There was some discussion in potentially offering Social Services to utilize that building and had gone through a planning study to see how the building could be used. Mr. Eastes also mention it is on the Historic Register. He stated Bruce McMillan did a walk-through of the building to determine how many offices could be held and how ADA could be improved for the facility. He mentioned that Parks and Recreation uses it heavily on a very regular basis with our programs and it has some challenges with ADA accessibility.

Mr. Eastes stated here recently the City was approached by a private individual about potentially repurposing the building for some of the uses as well. Since that occurred, the City Manager's Office felt a request for proposals from outside entities needs to be advertised so if there are people in the community that have ideas or thoughts on how the facility could be used they wanted everybody to have that opportunity. He stated this Request for Proposals (RFP) does not mean that something is going to happen with the facility, it's simply an opportunity to hear from the community on what some potential proposals for use of the facility could be.

Mr. Eastes mentioned The City Manager's Office has been working with Community Development who had conducted a study with Bruce McMillan a few years ago and have fashioned up an RFP. The City Commission will consider the opportunity to advertise the RFP at the December 4 2018 meeting. The City Manager's Office spoke with the Historic Resource Board last week for their input in regards to repurposing the Community House. Mr. Eastes stated the City Manager's Office would like to see someone from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board sit on the RFP Review Committee and that committee will make a recommendation to the City Commission once they've reviewed proposals. He also stated that if the Community House was to go away, we've looked at repurposing the old offices in City Park which could accommodate some of our programs.

Ms. Maes stated she is not clear on what all activities currently happen in the Community House and asked if we redesign the park space would we still be able to accommodate those activities or would we lose that space. Mr. Clifford responded saying we would be able to address that through the repurposing of the old offices in City Park in combination with the Round House. He stated that we have classes for our Special Populations and Arts and Pottery held there on a regular basis. Mr. Clifford also mentioned we cannot really afford to lose a gym until we have the new gyms up and running however, the ability to replace the gym would not be the bigger part of the issue, it would be the general classroom space for our other programs.

Mr. Klimek asked what's the effect of the City Park Master Plan with the parking area with Arts in the Park and having that accessible and now adding these other classes, are we going to be able to accommodate the people that go to these classes. Mr. Leyva stated the parking area in the proposed document would be able to handle that increase. Mr. Klimek asked if they had taken the attendance in these classes into account for the parking. Mr. Leyva stated not in that much detail, but we are increasing the parking by quite a bit for what's currently there.

Ms. Maes said it would be helpful to her as a member to have a more yes or no answer, at this moment it's a little vague.

Ms. Johannes asked what the difference between an RFQ and an RFP was. Mr. Eastes stated the RFP is a Request for Proposals and is strictly potential uses of the facility that someone in the community can respond with leasing or renting it and using it for whatever purposed they intend. An RFQ is a Request for Qualifications. This would be if we are securing some type of architectural or engineering consulting work for someone to come in and do a specific type of work that the City is needing.

Ms. Coleman asked if the January meetings were set in stone for the person who volunteers to sit on the RFP Review Committee. Mr. Eastes stated those meeting dates will be discussed at the December 4, 2018 City Commission meeting, at this time they are not set in stone.

Mr. Klimek asked what the options are for the Community House; are there certain restrictions placed on it for any kind of repurposing and can the building be taken down or are there restrictions against that. Mr. Eastes responding saying that there are certain restrictions on the building in regards to it being on the Historic Register. If we wanted to stay on the register, any improvements or alterations have to be reviewed by the SHPO (State Historic Preservation Office) and approved. If we do not follow their guidelines we would be taken off of their Historic Register. Mr. Klimek stated a private entity could come in and purchase the building from the City, and tear it down. Mr. Eastes stated there is that potential but the City could also make stipulations on future use and in the City's perspective, it is important to stay on the Historic Register.

Mr. Schafer stated he like the process being proposed if it's not costing a lot of money. He asked how much more money would the City entertain if it were to be sold; the buyer may not want to go with the plans that Bruce McMillan has put together for the building. Mr. Eastes stated there is a good expense from that several year old evaluation of the facility. He stated that right now, we are struggling with it because there is a lift in there but it's in disrepair and we have a \$30,000 estimate to replace it for that facility to be ADA compliant. Currently as it sits there today, it is not because that lift does not work so you can't get access to the basement or restrooms ADA wise. Mr. Eastes stated it does present some challenges but those can be overcome, it just takes some money to do so.

Mr. Schafer asked if there was a prospective person or organization interested if we are going to do all of this. Mr. Eastes stated he did not have all of that information; a different office is handling the RFP. He mentioned it is important for the Park Board to have a representative on that committee to review the RFP's.

Ms. Coleman volunteered herself to be on that committee but would like some flexibility on that timeline if possible. Mr. Eastes stated he could request some flexibility if that's what the Park board would like to do.

Ms. Maes asked what would we like to see as a good recreational center that could be come and go with those activities that we've had to give up in the past due to not having the available space. Mr. Clifford stated there would need to be further analysis before we could make that decision about what we can effectively transfer to a new location if we were to renovate the old offices.

Mr. Klimek commented that the Community House has a rich history in Manhattan and it has a lot of functions in the building. In his observance over the years the City is not interesting in pouring a lot of money into the Community House and it's something that needs to be addressed whether the City should attempt to bring that up to standards.

Ms. Coleman asked if the Board has made a recommendation about the Community House in the past as far as long-term use or if there is a plan to be moving more towards using the City Park building since this issue with the Community House has risen. Mr. Eastes stated the gym space is a necessary space because we have an inadequate number of gym spaces in the community for us to use. As we increase the number of gym spaces we have, there is less need for the space of the Community House. He mentioned again that we struggle with the ADA aspect and we currently can only use a portion of the building. There are several rooms upstairs that we cannot use because they are not ADA accessible.

Mr. Eastes stated we had our Strategic Facility Improvement Plan look at the Community House and determine it had around \$900,000 worth of improvements to be able to bring that facility into compliance for a more modern use. Bruce McMillan's study also recognized a couple million dollars of improvements that would need to occur that included configurations in business office style spaces. He mentioned our current annual budget of Capital Improvements for the last several years has been less than \$200,000 annually and we do not foresee in the next couple of years funding being available to address the Community House with the amount of dollars we are speaking of.

Mr. Eastes stated we've looked at the old offices because it's ADA accessible, it's in a nice location and is a useful facility. We had a consultant review that facility and came up with a concept that would be able to accommodate everything we currently do in the Community House with the exception of the gymnasium space. He stated it becomes a budgeting aspect as to where could we accommodate our programs. We have an excess of 40 buildings that we manage and operate throughout Parks and Recreation so if there are some opportunities to consolidate and gain some efficiencies with our programs as well as our management of facilities, we always need to look at that. Looking at the old offices versus the Community House, which one would increase those efficiencies and potentially decrease the operational cost.

Ms. Coleman asked since the Community House is a Historical Registered site, that it's eligible for State funding, is that money that could be used for renovations or for improvements. Mr. Eastes stated that 25% of the cost of the improvement or construction, those tax credits could be sold and that money would be returned to the City, then it would be the City Commission or City Manager's determination of how those funds would be used.

Mr. Schafer moved to approve Ms. Coleman sit on the RFP Review Committee. Ms. Maes seconded. On vote, motion carried 7-0.

WARNER PARK

Mr. Klimek introduced the item and stated the City Commission held a work session regarding Warner Park after the Park Board did so we should get a report back on that.

Mr. Eastes stated there were three main points that the City Commission asked staff to explore further. They asked City Staff to explore disc golf being limited just to the east side of the park or if there were other park lands that could accommodate disc golf. The Commission asked staff to develop additional concepts for parking and access and to reengage the community with these concepts as well as to further explore an archeological investigation of the park.

Ms. Maes asked if we are keeping the parking and restroom issues on the table and what are we doing with those two items. Mr. Eastes stated the Commission wanted to be respectful of the Parks and Rec Advisory Board's recommendations of enhancing trails and looking at expanded parking and restrooms on the east side. They didn't indicate doing anything different than what the Parks and Rec Advisory Board has recommended.

Mr. Klimek commented on the park access; if you don't have the access you have very little opportunity to put things in a park because no one can get to them. He stated those decisions need to be made on if we allow people to get into the park and if not then it needs to stay as a natural park.

Mr. Eastes stated as of now, the City Commission did not request this item to come back to the Park board, but asked us to collect additional information on these points. That's what we will do and then we'll bring it back to the Commission.

JANUARY DATE FOR PRAB MEETING

Mr. Eastes introduced this item and stated we have a Steering Committee meeting that will be happening on January 7, 2019. He mentioned the Steering Committee and Parks and Rec Advisory Board meetings are on the same day and about an hour and a half apart. Mr. Klimek is on the Steering Committee and City Staff usually attends all of those meetings. Mr. Eastes asked if everyone was okay with the time frames, we could leave Parks Board where it's at, however it might press those who attend the Steering Committee meetings. He stated if that's the case, we need to consider moving it to the following Monday January 14, 2019.

STAFF REPORTS

Ms. Adams shared they've been very busy. They just celebrated National Bison Day on November 3, and it ties in very well with their new Bison exhibit. Also celebrated a partnership with UFM and did a Celebrate '68 event and it was a great success. The Discovery Center also partnered with the Sunset Zoo and Kansas State University for Science Communication week and were lucky enough to host Daniel Stone, the author of a book called the Food Explorer. The Discovery Center also celebrated Veteran's Day and hosted families with a military background to come in for free for one day and it was a sponsored event so there was funding for those guests that were able to attend. The Festival of Lights started the day after Thanksgiving and it had a very nice turnout, around 500 people came in to the Center and viewed the lights from the upper floors. They had their first Breakfast with Santa event on December 1 and will host a second one on December 8; both events have been sold out for weeks. Next big event for the Discovery Center is the New Year's Eve Family event.

Mr. Clifford shared that the Fall dance class had their Showcase event in the City Auditorium after renovations were complete and was a nicely attended event on November 17. The Ice Rink opened for the season on November 12 and has been picking up as the weather has turned. All of the Winter sports are up and running and youth basketball is getting ready to start games after the first of the year so gyms are going to get much busier as practices get underway. They had their first annual Pickleball Tournament on November 3 and had a good turnout with 14 teams. They did a partnership event with Fort Riley; an ATV ride back in November and had a good response and folks enjoyed themselves. On December 1 they had their annual Holiday Harvest event out at Roger Schultz Park and had a great turnout with around 300 people and 125 trees taken out of the park. Mr. Clifford mentioned they have a Women's Pickleball Clinic

coming up on December 7. Another partner event with No Stone Unturned called Holiday Extravaganza coming up on December 14 in the City Auditorium.

Mr. Shoemaker shared the Zoo hosted a Science on Tap event in November and had almost 80 people. The Zoo hosted their first Luminary Walk on December 1 and 2 with over 400 in attendance and hopes it becomes an annual event. The Zoo was closed on Thanksgiving Day and the day after. The Zoo is now in their winter hours; open at 12pm and close at 5pm. The Zoo also hosted a Military Appreciation Day on November 11 where admission was free to everyone. On October 23, the City Commission approved the Zoo Master Plan and Expedition Asia so they are all excited for that to start.

Mr. Thompson shared an update on the grant applications that were submitted to KDOT. Mr. Thompson has been finalizing the Trail Prioritization and putting finishing touches on maps. Wrapping up design on Linear trail crossings of the railroad tracks at S. Manhattan by Griffith Park and how we can get people safely across those to connect to the trailhead as well as the crossing at Pecan Circle. Also wrapping up design on the rock pile at Schultz Park in moving it from the south side of Miller Parkway to the north side to finish the development of that ledgestone sight. That project will be going to bid shortly after the first of the year. Mr. Thompson mentioned that we hosted a ribbon cutting for the Old Blue River Trail and it had great attendance from the community.

Mr. Leyva shared that he is looking at wrapping up the City Park Master Plan and will be sent to City Commission for approval on December 18, 2018. Going to be moving forward with the items for Warner Park. Looking to start the irrigation design for the Zoo out at the parking lot and are wanting to have it installed by mid to late March. He mentioned him and Casey are looking at the irrigation out at Northeast Park but are still going through the numbers on it to see if it would be something they could do in 2019 themselves or if they need to contract that out. The shade structures out at Twin Oaks dugouts in Anneberg Park is something they want to get done before Twin Oaks starts to get extensively used in the Spring.

FUTURE BUSINESS

Mr. Eastes stated the City Legal office has requested that all Advisory Boards make the necessary changes to their public comment process so they are consistent with all Advisory Boards.

Mr. Eastes stated item two and three on the agenda, the land donations and goal setting, go hand in hand and would like to have a visioning session in January to discuss these items in more detail. He mentioned there was some criteria that had been developed for consideration of parkland back in 1999 and it needs to be revisited. Mr. Eastes stated the Parks and Rec Advisory Board is being asked to make recommendations to the City Commission on developing criteria for land donations. Mr. Klimek commented that the intent is not for the City to present to the Board but for the Board to present to the City on what we see as priority or opportunities in the future and encouraged everyone to come to that meeting with some thoughts and direction on what needs to be done and what could be done in the future. Mr. Schafer commented it would be nice to have a set of guidelines from 1999 for referral if there were any.

Mr. Eastes stated in 2017 the City of Manhattan was awarded a historic preservation fund grant to hire a consultant to conduct intensive historic research of the Sunset area which includes Sunset Zoo, Sunset Cemetery, Sunset Neighborhood Park, Girl Scout Park and portions of Wildcat Linear Park. The project was to evaluate the historic aspects of those spaces to potentially become a historic district. He stated the consultant has conducted that survey and that information has been presented to the Historic Resource Board. The item was tabled due to the Park Board's question on what is the impact on those areas if they are made a historic district. The Historic Resource Board needs to do more research before they present it back to the Parks and Rec Advisory Board. Mr. Klimek asked if this would affect the High School since the area they are talking about for the historic district is right next to the school. Mr. Eastes ensured it would not affect the High School in any way.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Eastes stated the Douglass Recreation Center will be a discussion item with the City Commission on December 4, 2018. The funding source for this facility was Community Development Block Grant funds (CDBG) in which the community receives a certain amount each year. We were attempting to use a Section 108 loan which is a loan through HUD and we use our CDBG funds to pay back that loan. Our discussions with HUD, they were okay with us pledging the full faith in credit of the City and the Commission took action. Mr. Eastes mentioned as we progressed with the process, HUD does not serve as the loan holder, they just allow the CDBG funds to be used to pay back. There is a secondary lender that HUD uses that supplies the loan and they would not accept the full faith in credit of the City. Our options at this point, if we were to use the Section 108 loan and use the CDBG to pay back the loan, the City would be required to set aside \$5.5 million for the length of the loan which is 20 years. The other option is what other funding methods could be used to construct the facility.

Ms. Coleman asked if we had a sense of where the Douglass Community Center lies on the City Commission's list of priorities. Mr. Eastes stated he believes the Commission was under the impression that the funding was in place to construct this facility. We went through a Strategic Facility Improvement Plan that identified a need for additional gymnasium space geographically located around the community.

Ms. Morris, City Commissioner, stated the City had made a commitment to build three community centers and thought they had funding through CDBG for the Douglass Community Center therefore they went forth with the sales tax to fund the other two community centers. She believes they are still committed in building it, they just have to find the funding for it.

Mr. Schafer asked if the level of City debt had anything to do with the secondary source turning us down in funding the new facility. Ms. Morris commented that she didn't know about the secondary lender behind HUD.

Mr. Eastes brought up a previously seen item and stated the Bluemont Hill Project with Kiwanis is progressing. Mr. Thompson commented he is waiting on the contractor to respond with necessary contract documents and the snow has slowed down the start of construction.

Mr. Eastes shared the Johnny Kaw project is getting ready to be started. McCown Gordon is completing their documents and securing contractors that all funding is in place.

Mr. Eastes also shared the Peace Memorial Auditorium project is wrapping up and should be able to close that project soon. Mr. Schafer asked if the private group for Peace Memorial reached their goal for funding. Mr. Eastes stated they did and they would've had to have reached it before construction was started.

Mr. Bachamp asked what the status on the VMI Tract was and if it has transferred. Mr. Eastes stated it has not, they are still working on some legal descriptions.

Meeting Adjourned.