

MINUTES
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
CITY COMMISSION ROOM
April 1, 2019 - 4:30 P.M.

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

Absent: Ms. Sue Maes, Ms. Elaine Johannes, and Mr. Mark Bachamp.

Employees present: Mr. Eddie Eastes, Director of Parks and Recreation; Mr. Randi Clifford, Recreation Director; Ms. Melissa Kirkwood, Community Relations Officer; Mr. Wyatt Thompson, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation; Mr. Scott Shoemaker, Sunset Zoo Director; Mr. Casey Smithson, Park Superintendent; Mr. Alfonso Leyva, Park Planner; and Mr. Ben Chmiel, Community Development.

MINUTES

Mr. Klimek called the meeting to order. It was moved by Mr. Schafer, seconded by Ms. Coleman, to approve the minutes of the meeting held on March 4, 2019. On vote, motion carried 4-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

DOUGLASS RECREATION CENTER

Mr. Eastes stated the City Commission will be considering the Douglass Center Advisory Board recommendation at their meeting on April 2, 2019. Mr. Eastes presented a PowerPoint that he will also be showing to the City Commission on April 2. He stated at the February 5, 2019 meeting the City Commission directed City Administration to reevaluate the design based on some comments that they received from the Douglass Center Advisory Board Chair.

Mr. Eastes stated that staff held two public meetings recently, and Bruce McMillan met with the Douglass Center Advisory Board twice and presented to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board last month. This input was used to develop a concept that the Douglass Center Advisory Board reviewed at the March 21, 2019 meeting. If the City Commission is in favor in moving forward, a contract amendment for final design with Bruce McMillan's team will be required. The City Commission would also have an opportunity before awarding contracts for construction to review bids and determine how they want to proceed.

Mr. Eastes presented potential funding scenarios to the board. A \$3.5-\$4 million project would require \$300-\$350 thousand annually. If a future sales tax is to occur and the vote is successful, approximately 10% of that sales tax could be used to retire that debt. Or if the project is property tax supported, it would require approximately 0.7 mills for 10 years or 0.36 mills for 20 years.

Mr. Eastes stated the facility that the Douglass Center Advisory Board recommends has an 84' basketball court, two volleyball courts, two side basketball courts that are smaller, two pickleball courts, and an elevated track. The base building is a 20,000 square foot building with an estimated cost of \$3.4 million. Alternate #1 includes an 884 square foot community room on the first floor and brings the estimate to \$3.7 million. Alternate #2 includes an 884 square foot fitness room on the second floor. The base building plus Alternate #1 and Alternate #2 brings it to 21,830 square feet and the estimate to just over \$4 million.

Mr. Klimek was concerned about the number of lanes on the elevated track and asked if there could be two lanes and not three. Mr. Eastes answered that Bruce is still in conceptual design and hopes to receive some direction from the City Commission. A three-lane track has been everybody's preference.

Mr. Schafer asked about restrooms if the Alternate #1 and #2 meeting areas are not included. Mr. Eastes stated there are restrooms on the base floor.

Mr. Klimek asked if this building was going to use the same wall material as the other two Recreation Centers to allow natural light into the building. Mr. Eastes answered that it has been in the discussion but they're not at that point in the design. Mr. Klimek asked if the operations of this building have been discussed and if it will take additional staff. Mr. Eastes answered that about \$75,000 annual in additional seasonal staff to be able to operate the facility. Mr. Klimek asked if we compared the cost for the City to build with reserve funds versus the cost to build without. Mr. Eastes stated our Finance Department certainly looked at that.

Mr. Schafer asked what the payment schedules on the bonds that would be issued if the bonds would be contingent on the passage of an additional sales tax that is being discussed. Mr. Eastes stated this is correct, and that the City Commission could dedicate whatever funding source they choose to support this.

SUNSET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Mr. Eastes introduced the item and stated Ben Chmiel from Community Development will be presenting to the board and has interacted with City Staff and the Historic Resource Board on this item.

Mr. Chmiel stated he is the Long Range Planner in the Community Development Department as well as the Staff Liaison for the Historic Resources Board (HRB). He mentioned this item came to the Board as a recommendation from the HRB. Mr. Chmiel will take the input from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the Cemetery Board, and the recommendation from the HRB, to the City Commission soon.

Mr. Chmiel stated this project started in 2017. Community Development received a grant from the State Historic Preservation Office to conduct an historic resources survey of the Sunset area. They identified a lot of City-owned historic resources in that area and conducted the survey to determine what could potentially be listed on the Historic Register or be designated as a Historic District. Mr. Chmiel stated that field work began in October of 2017 by historic preservation consultant, HRG from Lincoln, Nebraska. HRG compiled the research that was included in the agenda packet. The consultant prepared a PSIQ (Preliminary Site Information Questionnaire's) which was submitted to the State to determine if those resources can be eligible for the State or National Register. Community Development also received a final report that has a narrative history of the area. Mr. Chmiel stated information was submitted in August 2018 and taken to the Historic Resources Board who made a recommendation on what to do with that information.

The study area included Girl Scout Park, Sunset Cemetery, Sunset Zoo, Sunset Neighborhood Park, and portions of Wildcat Creek Linear Park. The consultant's recommendation was to establish a Historic District for all the City owned property in the area. Mr. Chmiel showed a map identifying places within the boundary that contribute to the historic integrity of the proposed district. The Historic Resources Board recommended reducing the size of the district to remove the Zoo, given the Zoo Master Plan and un-concentrated nature of the historic resources in that area. The Historic Resources Board recommendation was to include the Cemetery, the Sexton's House, and the Landmark Water Tower.

Mr. Chmiel mentioned there are benefits to establishing a Historic District, including community pride and tourism. There are also financing opportunities through grants and tax credits at the State level. He stated anything in a Historic District or listed individually must be reviewed if the work requires a permit. Mr. Chmiel stated the structures that would be eligible for tax credit and grants were they included in a district. Four individual structures would also be eligible based on the IRS guidelines: the Girl Scout Little House, Sexton's House, Paslay Tower and the Sertoma Picnic Shelter in the Zoo.

Ms. Coleman stated she agrees with leaving the Sunset Zoo out of the district due to their Master Plan as she feels it could really limit what we could do.

Mr. Klimek stated that the zoo is a living place and this may limit what we can do and what we have planned. Mr. Klimek asked Mr. Shoemaker to comment. Mr. Shoemaker stated he agrees with concerns about potential restrictions that would hinder zoo development. He stated some of the plans in the new Master Plan preserve some of the historic components, but they would prefer not to be in the district.

Mr. Chmiel stated he intends to go to the City Commission with this in May. Historic Districts require property owner consent to be established, and since it's all City owned property it just takes permission from the City Commission to establish that and submit a nomination.

Mr. Klimek stated in summary the Board is in favor of the Historic District for the static buildings proposed but would exclude the Sunset Zoo due to the limitations and difficulties for the Zoo.

JANUARY 24 PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD SPECIAL MEETING

Mr. Eastes introduced this item and stated Ms. Maes and Mr. Bachamp who are on the special committee were not able to attend the meeting. Mr. Eastes stated he met with Mr. Bachamp and Ms. Maes a couple weeks ago and they felt the topics could be broken into four categories: community driven initiatives, park improvements, City Staff initiatives, and Parks and Recreation mission. There is no prioritization with any of this, it is simply a list of items.

Mr. Eastes stated that community driven initiatives were large initiatives that involved more than just the Parks and Recreation Department. Park Improvements would include Master Plan recommendations to serve as guidelines to help budget and plan for identified improvements. City Staff initiatives are items that City Staff work on a regular basis, things that we will be able to communicate back to the Board at the monthly meetings through staff reports. Mr. Eastes stated our mission is very important to understand, it is to provide and create affordable recreational, cultural, educational, and leisure opportunities to benefit and enhance the lives of all citizens in the Manhattan community. Mr. Eastes stated he agrees completely whether it's non-resident fees or any fees that we have need to be continually looked at and evaluated so we understand our revenues and expenses and the development of appropriate fees that we do charge the community to participate in our programs. He also stated that Mr. Bachamp and Ms. Maes felt the item to improve accessibility to the Parks and Recreation Office at City Hall would be a challenge to accomplish because of the security aspects in place. It was something they felt like couldn't be changed but could certainly keep it on the list to call note as we have discussions with City Administration. Mr. Eastes stated the intent of this list is to provide it to City Administration so it could then be made available to the City Commission.

FUTURE BUSINESS

Mr. Klimek stated we have talked about the Community House Request for Proposals and asked Ms. Coleman to give an update since she's on that special committee. Ms. Coleman stated they reviewed one proposal and the group consensus was that they supported the decision to have further discussions with that particular group to clarify details of the proposal. The window for accepting proposals has closed.

Mr. Eastes stated he believes the private individual for the Arts in the Park Improvements Juried Design Project has engaged a local architect to take a look at the students' projects and the site, and intends to meet with City Staff to see what the potential improvements for the area are. Whether or not it will turn into a project is yet to be known, but any proposals would come back to this Board.

Mr. Eastes stated Advisory Board Bylaws would continue to be put on as future business because it's something this Board will have to take action on at some time. The goal is to get all City Advisory Boards to have a consistent public input process.

Mr. Eastes stated the Board has considered land donations in the past, and there is a need to review the process to evaluate those properties.

Mr. Eastes stated the Parks Foundation was something Mr. Klimek suggested for potential with new facilities. The Zoo and the Discovery Center have foundations, and both are very beneficial to support those facilities.

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Shoemaker noted that Mallory Morris, who is a Zoo Sprouts Educator, was at the Special Olympics and won a bronze medal in the 100 meter dash. The Zoo hosted Community Appreciation Day on March 16. They offered free admission for everyone in the community and had approximately 4,000 people attend the event. The Zoo has moved to Summer hours that started on March 9. The Zoo's Adventure Camps were held over Spring Break and they were sold out the entire week. There was a Science on Tap event on March 20 and had about 75 people in attendance. The Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), and 2019 is an accreditation year for them that happens every five years. The Zoo has submitted an application for accreditation and will hopefully be undergoing an inspection this Summer.

Mr. Smithson reminded everyone that Spring cleanup was first week of April. He thanked Public Works for helping work on the levy and dressing up the trail at Anneberg. Parks Division staff members attended a half day training session with the Kansas Trails Council. Other maintenance projects going on with flooring repairs and restrooms in some of the parks. Parks staff will also paint the Splash Park in City Park before it opens this Spring and repair City Park playground surfacing. Flood repairs are still ongoing but nothing more to report at this time.

Mr. Leyva stated he has a couple projects in construction and some in design. Irrigation is being installed in the parking lot islands at the Zoo and looking to wrap that up in a week or two. Zoo staff will install landscaping when the irrigation is complete. Ledgestone Park grading is still under construction and scheduled to wrap up by May 15. The Playground Resurfacing Project at Goodnow, Northeast, and Northview Park playgrounds will be awarded to ForeverLawn from Wichita. He stated they have also recommended that they replace the surfacing at Anneberg Park that was affected by the flood. Playground construction should be complete by the end of May. Shade structures at Twin Oaks will be bid this Summer and start construction in the Fall. Warner Park Master Plan will start again this Summer and hope to complete by the end of the year. The first phase of the Loma Ridge entrance at Roger Shultz Community Park is in design and anticipate bidding this Fall.

Mr. Thompson stated he started the next round of trail counts. This is a partnership with the Flint Hills Metropolitan Planning Organization who provide us counters that counts bikes and pedestrians on our trail systems. This is our third year partnering with them. We're building up a good amount of data now across the community and we'll be able to use that in planning for future improvements and discuss the need for additional improvements or trail miles. The hope is to eventually have enough data that we can produce with the MPO's help a traffic model for bicycles and pedestrians like we do for vehicles on our roadways. Spring Trail Talks are scheduled for April 18, April 25, and May 2. These public meetings are opportunities for us to share with the community an initial list of proposed trail projects. An RFQ for Expedition Asia exhibit at the Zoo is out for review. This is a two-step process to prequalify and select a general contractor. Contractors need to demonstrate that they have experience with Zoo exhibit construction. Once we have a pre-qualified list, those bidders will be able to submit a price for that work. That process is underway now and we hope to have a contractor known by May and start construction this Summer. We received the Quit

Claim Deed from KDOT for the VMI Tract. Staff will begin maintenance and planning for demolition and access to make the land usable for the public. Long-term this is a significant trail connection for that part of the community.

Mr. Klimek wanted to note that Ms. Kirkwood was nominated for a Community Foundation Award for Volunteer of the Year and there were about 500 people in attendance at the banquet. She was one of three nominees for that award.

Ms. Kirkwood stated it's great to be part of a community that is very volunteer oriented. Ms. Kirkwood handed out our Summer Activity Guide and stated it is also available on our website. We have made it more user friendly where people can go online and see registration activities and special events. March 25 was our first day of Summer registration where we registered 403 people in our office and about 494 people registered online so it was quite busy. On April 15 our aquatic season passes will go on sale. On KMAN this morning Ms. Kirkwood talked about the Trail Talks, Mr. Ryan McKee talked about all of the Springtime special events, and the new Discovery Center Volunteer Coordinator, Jurina Watts, joined as well. Next week is Volunteer Appreciation Week and our staff extends to about 700 volunteers annually. We put together a social media calendar of our postings and have been orchestrated in how we are sharing information with the community about our programs and events. We have a goal of having 10,000 people "like" us on social media by the end of the year and we're at about 8,550 today.

Mr. Clifford stated we are in pretty good shape at this point with our aquatics staffing but still need more to be at optimal staffing levels. We are less than 8 weeks away from opening day of waterpark season. It's a big effort to gear up each year and Casey and his staff have a major role in that they're the ones that make things work and get them up and running. We have all of our entertainer's lined up for Arts in the Park this Summer and contracts are being finalized. To go along with Summer registration our Little Apple Day Camp program filled within a couple days with 160 spots. Spring soccer is underway for our youth and some adults sports are still going on and getting ready to start the next season in the Summer. This year we are extending our free practice time at the Twin Oaks facility so we have four weeks of practice times that people can schedule on the turf fields. We are in the middle of our Little Apple Core Challenge which this is the third year for that event and we have 10 businesses participating this year. They go through a variety of team and individual sports and activities over a three week period and have an award ceremony and BBQ at the end. Our Bike Swap event had a really good turnout with about 120 plus families and we partnered with Pathfinder. Later this month we have our second annual Youth Outdoor Adventure Challenge and anticipate a good response. We have our Easter Family Fun Day on April 20 in City Park. Tournament schedule is starting the second week in April out at Twin Oaks.

Meeting Adjourned.