

MINUTES
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
CITY COMMISSION ROOM
May 6, 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, Ms. Sue Maes, and Mr. Darell Edie.

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

Employees present: Mr. Eddie Eastes, Director of Parks and Recreation; 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.

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 April 1, 2019. On vote, motion carried 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

DOUGLASS RECREATION CENTER

Mr. Eastes stated Bruce McMillan will be delivering this presentation to the City Commission at their meeting on May 7, 2019. He stated the City Commission tabled this item at the April 2 meeting and asked City Administration to develop a design that represents what the Douglass Center Advisory Board wants to see in regards to the elevated walking track.

Mr. Eastes gave a brief overview of the available options, alternatives, and pricing of the proposed Douglass Recreation Center. He mentioned that adding in a three-lane track it increased the square footage by 5,800 therefore bringing the estimated project total to \$5.1 million for Option 1. Mr. Eastes stated a three-lane track was preferred so he presented the new option, Option 3. This option has the same gymnasium space and a three-lane walking track, bringing the estimated project total to \$4.5 million for Option 3. Refer to previous meeting minutes for the specifics on prices, number of courts, and square footage for the different options.

Mr. Eastes stated the City Commission will have to take several actions at their meeting on May 7, and they will be talking about the utilities that are overhead in that park. The building can't be constructed if those utility lines are overhead, they'll need to put those underground.

Mr. Klimek asked if the \$347,000 for the fitness room includes the cost of the equipment. Mr. Eastes responded no, that's for the construction for the square footage of that space. Mr. Klimek asked how we get the equipment and where that money comes from. Mr. Eastes answered there's an FF&E allowance that would be within the budget and we have a lot of equipment in the existing center now that we would like to move to the new center so we could fully utilize the Annex and the kitchen space.

Ms. Maes asked how the scheduling of this facility would work with it being open to the public. Mr. Eastes stated if someone wanted exclusive use of the facility, there is a charge for that. We intend these facilities to be drop in, we haven't talked about having a daily fee. The intent is to create additional indoor space to alleviate some of the competition so there is more space for people to come and utilize.

Mr. Edie asked if there are any outdoor basketball courts near the Douglass Center besides at the Douglass Center. Mr. Eastes answered there are outdoor basketball courts in City Park, Douglass Park, and Truth Park. The only one that has lights are at Douglass Park. Mr. Thompson stated the outdoor basketball courts at Douglass will stay, so Douglass will have indoor and outdoor courts.

Mr. Klimek asked what our anticipated hours of operation were going to be. Mr. Eastes stated the Douglass Center now is open from 8am-noon, and 3-8pm weekdays, Saturdays until 4pm and closed on Sundays. He anticipates expanded hours with this new facility especially with the walking track.

Mr. Klimek asked where the money is coming from. Mr. Eastes stated that was something the City Commission will have to determine at the meeting on May 7. This presentation to the City Commission in a Work Session a couple weeks ago was for this facility to be funded with a future potential 0.3 sales tax increase, this was one of the projects promoted for that funding source.

Ms. Coleman wanted to clarify that our recommendation is to suggest this proposal with only one of the alternatives. Mr. Klimek stated we wouldn't recommend one alternative over the other, we just need to be more cost conscious so it could be realistic.

Mr. Edie suggested to table the item until we find out the funding source. Mr. Eastes stated the City Commission didn't direct this back to the Advisory Board for additional info; they directed City Administration to develop a third lane. His intent was to show the board what is being shown to the City Commission at the meeting on May 7. He mentioned he could carry those comments that the board is supportive of the third lane but are concerned with the price and funding.

Mr. Eastes shared the timeline for design would take 60 days or more. If the Commission would determine to move to final design, they're looking at August for final design and bidding. It will take a while for bids to be developed for plans to be evaluated.

TRAIL TALKS UPDATE

Mr. Thompson stated we have hosted three trail talk meetings with about 60 people in attendance at those meetings. Two of the trails we've received a lot of feedback on were Anneberg Park and Linear Trail, both of which were impacted by the flood last Fall. There were portions of the trail at Anneberg Park that were impacted much longer and all of Anneberg is open now thanks to Casey and his crew.

Linear Trail was impacted in the Pecan Circle, Rosencutter, and Fort Riley Boulevard area. Wildcat Creek has a substantial log jam and we've been working with our partners to get that removed hopefully later this month. There will be closures of Linear Trail during that time and we may try to relocate portions of the trail to get it further away from that eroding bank. Portions of Linear Trail on the east side of town were impacted by the Corps of Engineers crews that were on the levee doing testing and survey work for the upcoming levee project. They were on the trail when it was wet and it caused rutting so Public Works and Parks crews have smoothed that out but it's still rough. We're waiting on materials so we can spread limestone screenings back on those sections to get it fully repaired. We will also be repairing Northeast Park, as it has rutting issues as well.

Mr. Thompson stated we hosted trail talks last Fall and had an opportunity to participate in the Sunflower State Trails Appreciation Day. We've also had the Kansas Trails Council here to train our staff in development and maintenance of natural surface single track hiking trails. We are also conducting our third round of trail counts that we do annually with the Flint Hills Metropolitan Planning Organization.

In 2018 we opened four new trails that are all getting substantial use and are in the current round of trail counts; Jorgensen Park Trail, Denison Avenue Trail, Old Blue River Trail and West Anderson Trail.

We have a few upcoming projects this Summer and Fall that we wanted to provide input to the community that have an impact on trails and bicycle/pedestrian movements around the city. Kimball Avenue from Vanesta Drive to Tuttle Creek Boulevard will mostly be under roadway construction this Summer. During that construction from Hudson Trail to Vanesta Drive intersection we will be adding a 10' wide multiuse path on the north side of Kimball which will connect Hudson Trail to the Grand Mere Vanesta trails. This is part of a long term strategy to connect this part of the community south on Kimball to Anderson Avenue. At the east side of Kimball where it meets Tuttle Creek Boulevard, there's a KDOT funded project to construct a new pedestrian crossing as well as new sidewalk and multi-use path down Ewing.

Another project will be at North Manhattan near Baker's Way and AIB. There's also a project for the Kansas Department of Ag that will impact the trail. This project doesn't add any new trail but it will force the closure of that portion of the North Manhattan Trail for a period of time while that construction occurs. On College and Dickens a pedestrian signal will be installed. The Sidewalk Gap Project has been ongoing throughout the community building new sidewalks and repairing damaged sidewalks. We hope to complete new trails and a new trail head at Roger Shultz Park. Coming this Fall we will be bidding a project for the next phase of safe routes to schools which will develop 8 new sidewalks around the elementary schools in the community.

Mr. Thompson presented the next phase of projects after 2019. Some are funded and others are pending approval by the City Commission. He stated the biggest project is the plan to raise the levee which would close portions of Linear Trail during that time starting in late 2020. The first piece of this project would be at Casement and Hayes where there is a flood control structure that will need to be rebuilt as part of the Levee System Improvements Project that will also impact the Old Blue River Trail. Another project for 2020 is the Fort Riley Boulevard Wildcat Creek bridge. This KDOT project replaces the bridge and builds a sidewalk from Westwood to Richards. Final project for 2020 is on Kimball from College to Sunnymeade that builds a multiuse path along the north side of Kimball.

Mr. Thompson showed the board a map of the City with one scenario of a city loop that goes all the way around the community that could occur. He stated the loop is 18 miles long and 12 miles are already built.

We hosted five trail talk meetings in Summer 2018 and heard 90 different projects from the community. From those we evaluated the following criteria; population impacted, the destination where it would connect people to, if there was existing sidewalk, how long the trail was, if it would fill any gaps, intersection improvements and safety, and whether or not we would have public support. We also look at construction feasibility and cost.

Mr. Thompson presented the top 20 projects that came from the community that were evaluated and asked the board if they had any feedback or questions on how they ranked. Ms. Maes asked if he could explain the Wildcat Creek Trails project. Mr. Thompson stated a lot of it was on private property and the goal is to connect hiking paths from the Zoo trails to Linear Trail and then from Linear to Anneberg or Miller Parkway.

Mr. Schafer asked if we were running into trail areas that more than one person is significantly against what is proposed. Mr. Thompson stated we haven't had anyone come to us and say they don't want that route there, it's been more questions about why didn't this project score well in our rankings.

Mr. Klimek asked if we had looked at connecting trails to bus hubs. Mr. Thompson stated our project didn't take that into account, the next step is to integrate with the Bicycle Pedestrian Systems Plan (BPSP). Due to our funding source, we only looked at trail and sidewalk gaps; we didn't look at on street infrastructure.

Mr. Edie commented there is an increase in foot and bike traffic on Marlatt and over by Eisenhower where there is nothing on the side of the road to walk or bike on. Mr. Thompson stated he has heard from people who walk/bike that road that came to the meetings to tell us we need to do something along this corridor.

Mr. Thompson presented the potential costs to build and took average costs for the type of trail that we could be building. If we were to build a 10' wide concrete trail, which is the standard if we were to accept federal funding, at the cost would be \$500,000 per mile, so we could do up to four miles of 10' wide concrete trail. If we partner with Public Works on a street or utility project, the cost drops by about 25%.

If we built the top 10 multi-use paths, which includes a couple pedestrian bridges, we are in the \$5-7.5 million range. If we built the top 10 sidewalk connections, we are at \$1.2 million. The top 5 hiking trails would require a \$300,000 investment. We showed those to give the community a scale of what we're talking about and then asked them to help us prioritize \$2 million in trail funding.

Three funding scenarios were developed and shared with the community. Scenario 1 is a signature project that would put all the money into a big project such as completing 3 of the 6 miles of the city loop, building a downtown pedestrian bridge or contributing to regional trails. Scenario 2 allocates 3-4 miles to the city loop, sets aside a small amount of money for sidewalk gaps, maintenance and amenities, and a couple miles of hiking path. Scenario 3 puts in about 2 miles to the city loop and leaves quite a bit more to be invested in sidewalk gaps, maintenance and amenities, and 4-6 miles of hiking trail.

Mr. Schafer asked how much of Marlatt would be the County's responsibility. Mr. Thompson answered that most of Marlatt is in the County and Public Works is in communication with them about the Marlatt corridor and how they might be a potential partner with the City on another phase of that trail project to upgrade Marlatt.

Mr. Thompson presented the feedback from the community and that most supported some scenario similar to 2 or 3. There was discussion about how much money we set aside for maintenance or amenities. There was a lot of support for new hiking trails both to satisfy local users as well as tourists. People didn't want a lot of money going into sidewalk gaps or trail amenities like benches. The Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee reviewed this information and they preferred Scenario 2 and noted that sidewalks and smaller maintenance projects could be completed with other funding sources.

Mr. Thompson presented the next steps. We are going to put our information into the BPS. On May 14, Community Development will present an update to the City Commission on that planning process and will receive feedback. They will then develop that plan through the Summer and have it for review in the Fall and take it to the City Commission to adopt by the end of the year.

FUTURE BUSINESS

Mr. Eastes commented on the Community House Request for Proposals for the board to anticipate a presentation in June.

Mr. Eastes commented that the Arts in the Park Improvements Juried Design Project has a real potential for improvements in that area. Mr. Klimek stated they are looking at the seating and environment that would be conducive for people coming to Arts in the Park. Anderson Knight Architects is putting together some conceptual designs. He mentioned this would be a community-driven project.

Mr. Eastes stated we are waiting on the Legal department to complete our by-laws with the public input process.

Mr. Eastes stated to anticipate a future discussion as this board considers acceptance of land donations or purchases of lands.

Mr. Eastes stated he hopes to get additional information to the board on Park Foundation in the upcoming months.

Mr. Eastes wanted to remind the board that July is the annual month for Election of Officers.

Mr. Eastes stated the Indoor Rec Center Update is an item that should occur on a monthly basis. Right now, we are waiting for McCownGordon to deliver back a guaranteed maximum price to City Administration. We anticipate that to happen in June.

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Leyva stated the irrigation project at the Zoo has been completed. May 13 is when the contractors will be starting on the playground resurfacing. We will have a new intern over the Summer, Spencer Sanders, starting in a couple weeks. He will be working on the Loma Ridge entrance at Roger Schultz Park as well as helping to complete the Warner Park Master Plan this year.

Mr. Smithson shared he is very short on staffing and plenty of projects to work on. City Park is having the playground resurfaced, the bathroom floors repaired, and the splash park repainted. City Waterpark will have water put in this week and all three waterparks will have a soft opening on the Friday before Memorial Day for two hours.

Mr. Shoemaker stated the Zoo hosted a Community Appreciation day on March 16 and had over 4,000 people attend. The Zoo hosted a neighborhood meeting on March 29 to discuss the Zoo's Master Plan. Will continue to have meetings with the community to update them on projects that occur. We hosted the annual Kansas Association of Environmental Educators meeting on April 5. The Zoo had their Earth Day Party for the Planet on April 27 with 600 in attendance. We hosted a legislative coffee on March 30, collaborating with the Chamber of Commerce. The Zoo and volunteers will be planting pollinator plants in the new parking lot islands on May 11. On June 1, we have our Wine in the Wild annual fundraiser event.

Ms. Kirkwood reported we've had over 4,600 people register for summer programs so far. Waterpark passes went on sale April 15 and anticipate a rush once school gets out. May 6 was our day to be on KMAN and we had several staff members there to talk about their upcoming programs and events. The Waterparks will have a soft opening on May 24 from 6-8pm for \$1 at all three of our facilities; they will then open on the 25th for their regular season hours. We have had a very busy spring with our special events. Our Easter Family Fun Day was on April 20 in City Park and had close to 4,500 in attendance. Our Youth Outdoor Adventure Challenge continues to grow and had about 200 kids participate. Social media continues to increase and we are at 8,600 of our 10,000 "likes" goal.

Mr. Thompson reported we have been working on preliminary design for the Linear Trail railroad crossings at South Manhattan and Pecan Circle. Working with the UP Railroad to understand potential cost impacts and issues. ADA improvements at City Pool were completed that was a request from a citizen. Recently submitted a grant through the Metropolitan Planning Organization to fund pedestrian improvements up the north edge of City Park. Started working with a consultant and the developers of the Stonehaven Properties.

Meeting Adjourned.