

MINUTES  
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD  
CITY COMMISSION ROOM  
November 2, 2020 - 4:30 P.M.

Present were the following members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Mr. Ed Klimek, Ms. Katrina Lewison, Ms. Marcia Rozell, Mr. Darell Edie, Ms. Sue Maes, and Mr. Dave Schafer.

Absent: Mr. Mark Bachamp.

Employees present: Mr. Eddie Eastes, Director of Parks and Recreation; Mr. Wyatt Thompson, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation; Mr. Randi Clifford, Recreation Director; Mr. Casey Smithson, Park Superintendent; Mr. Alfonso Leyva, Park Planner; Mr. Scott Shoemaker, Sunset Zoo Director; Jared Wasinger, Assistant to the City Manager; Mr. Vern Henricks, President and CEO of the Greater Manhattan Community Foundation; Greg Kramos and Laura Mendenhall with US Fish and Wildlife.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

MINUTES

Mr. Klimek called the meeting to order. It was moved by Ms. Rozell, seconded by Mr. Edie, to approve the minutes of the meeting held on October 5, 2020. On vote, motion carried 6-0.

AGGIEVILLE PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mr. Eastes stated the Board provided input back in February 2020 on the Parking Management Plan and this plan has been further refined. He commented Mr. Jared Wasinger, Assistant to the City Manager, will present the plan as it stands today.

Mr. Wasinger presented Phase 1 of the Aggieville Parking Management Plan in anticipation for approval of construction of the parking garage in the City owned parking lot south of Rally House. Approval for the parking garage construction is being presented to City Commission on December 1, 2020. Upon approval, construction will begin in January 2021 and will take approximately one year to complete. During that time, 150 parking stalls in Aggieville will not be accessible so Phase 1 is to get through the construction period to help adjacent areas in Aggieville to increase turnover within the district. All of the on-street parking as well as two parking lots within Aggieville will be a 3-hour limit Monday-Friday and no overnight parking. Due to these limits, there will most likely be an increased amount of people parking in City Park which currently has no parking limits. The City created a new fuchsia parking zone that will last the duration of the parking garage construction. Starting mid-January 2021, the parking lot along North Park Road and parking along the street on Central Park Road will have a 3-hour parking limit. The Pavilion/Ice Rink and Waterpark parking lots will also have a 3-hour parking limit unless someone is a resident in the specific Aggieville area in which they may park in the fuchsia parking zone. Other areas within the park will be unlimited, however, there will be no overnight parking allowed in any areas of City Park with the exception of the fuchsia parking zone for Aggieville area residents. The 3-hour limit areas will also be at the discretion of MPRD Staff to determine in case a large event occurs.

Mr. Klimek asked if signs were going to be put up in City Park so people know all the new restrictions. Mr. Wasinger answered yes, the public will be made aware of where to park or not park through signage.

PARKS AND RECREATION FOUNDATION

Mr. Eastes received public comment on this item from a Ms. Ann Kosh that he read to the Board. Ms. Kosh commented her interests are historic preservation and neighborhood as it relates to her neighborhood park,

and specifically the Goodnow Park cabin and Bluemont Youth cabin. Just as a sponsorship naming opportunity is specific, her interest is specific to a property and to specific needs of that property and her intent is to support structural maintenance. She stated it seems that establishing a new foundation duplicates services already found at the Greater Manhattan Community Foundation.

Mr. Eastes stated the 1999 Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan recommended a Parks and Recreation Foundation. At that time the Greater Manhattan Community Foundation (GMCF) was just being formed and the 1999 Strategic Plan recognized that and needed further evaluation of a Parks and Recreation Foundation based on the formation of the GMCF.

Mr. Eastes asked Vern Henricks, President and CEO of GMCF, to attend this meeting to get his perspective on how GMCF could also support Parks and Recreation or a Parks and Recreation Foundation.

Mr. Henricks commented people want to give money to identified recipients and not just an overall general project. The benefits of working with a community foundation is that any individual or group can make a decision on starting a fund for a specific purpose that can be as general or broad as needed. If a project gets taken down or no longer exists, the funds are able to be moved to something else of their choosing. He stated people do not typically want to give to a City managed fund due to already having to pay taxes. If the City has a fund that is dedicated to the purpose of improving the community or a specific interest, having a fund in any Foundation assures the public that there is a body at large that will make sure those funds will be used appropriately. Mr. Henricks shared his view that if the City's interest in attracting donations from private citizens, he strongly suggests using the GMCF model for that.

Mr. Schafer asked who would be establishing the fund and making the decisions. Mr. Henricks commented anyone could start a fund for any particular project or reason and start accepting donations. As for the decision making, it would depend on the project and what the money is for. If the project was for a City facility or park, it would be in the best interest to involve the City or Parks and Recreation in the decision making process to determine where those funds would go. Mr. Eastes commented that Parks and Recreation has utilized GMCF on several occasions. Mr. Shoemaker shared the Sunset Zoo has a fund in GMCF specifically for the Zoo so when someone wants to donate, it can easily be done.

Mr. Klimek shared he feels there needs to be an active group to solicit and get people to want to donate. Mr. Edie commented getting volunteers to oversee a brand new Foundation would be more difficult than getting a committee to be a part of GMCF. Mr. Klimek agreed, GMCF would be more of a home base.

#### POLLINATOR PROJECT

Mr. Eastes shared that Mr. Leyva and Mr. Smithson have been working to promote pollinators within the area and have reduced mowing in some parks. He commented Mr. Leyva has been working with the community and developed a survey that went out to the public and will share those results with the Board as well as future plans.

Mr. Leyva commented that Greg Kramos and Laura Mendenhall with the US Fish and Wildlife joined the meeting on Zoom and they both helped start this initiative off. Mr. Leyva shared the goals for this project are to increase pollinator species, decrease invasive species, and increase ecological awareness with proactive learning through community engagement. A postcard was sent to the neighborhoods surrounding Pioneer and Girl Scout Park that mentioned the initiative and the survey. A letter was also sent with a follow up and an invitation to participate in this initiative as it was being presented to this Board during the November meeting.

Mr. Leyva presented some background on the project and mentioned it started about a year ago with discussions and exploring parks within Manhattan for implementation. This initiative was given the name

Pollinator Pockets and plans began to incorporate an educational aspect. In Summer 2020, park locations were finalized for the first phase of implementing native vegetation on 18 acres in Girl Scout and Pioneer Parks. Moving forward, this project will be implemented for the foreseeable future and will continue to identify areas within the park system to further support local pollinators.

Mr. Leyva presented the results from the survey that was sent out. Of the 395 people who answered, 82% completely agree that communities should make special efforts to create designated areas where plants support the health and growth of pollinators, and only 22% are confident in knowing what actions to take to help the conservation of pollinators.

Mr. Leyva showed a map to the Board of where the existing native vegetation areas are on public property as well as the potential areas being proposed in the first phase of the initiative. He also presented a concept of a potential sign to be strategically placed in the larger pollinator pockets to explain what this initiative is all about and to educate the community.

Ms. Jill Hocus, Director of Education at Konza Prairie, stated she is in full support of this initiative for several reasons and is here to offer her support. She shared that Manhattan is a major migratory thoroughfare for migrating monarch butterflies and this is an opportunity for the community to share that with the rest of the world and have people come to Manhattan to see them.

Other members of the community attended the meeting to show their support of the Pollinator Pockets initiative. Mr. Rozell and Mr. Edie also showed their support of the project and shared it was a great opportunity for the community.

Ms. Lewison shared her thoughts and stated it would be a great idea to partner with the School District as this initiative is to educate the public. She also commented this would also be an opportunity for some programming and to have classes or lessons to educate people and then to potentially take those lessons home to use in their own backyard.

Mr. Eastes wanted to share with the Board and congratulate Mr. Alfonso Leyva on completing all of the requirements to be a licensed Landscape Architect.

#### FUTURE BUSINESS

Mr. Eastes commented the Naming/Renaming Brochure, Parks and Recreation Fees Resolution, and the Stonehaven Master Plan will continue to be on future business until these items are ready so the Board is aware of what is to come. Staff continues to work with the Legal Department on the Fees Resolution.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Eastes shared updates on the progress of the construction on the Douglass, Anthony, and Eisenhower Recreation Centers. Updated pictures were provided. The progress is still on schedule for the Douglass Recreation Center to open around the beginning of next year. A beam signing for the Eisenhower Recreation Center is scheduled for December 4.

#### STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Thompson has been overseeing the Recreation Center projects and answers questions about the small details. He mentioned he is involved in the design for the new trail on Hayes Drive. This is in anticipation of Linear Trail and Blue River Trails being closed for a couple years while the City builds on the levee. Working on trails at Stonehaven Park. Mr. Thompson shared some updates for Ms. Mueller and stated she has been working on signage for the Ice Rink to open later this month as well as selecting photos for murals at the new Recreation Centers. Ms. Mueller has also been doing several posts and updates on the website and social media.

Mr. Shoemaker shared the Zoo continues to be open to the public 7 days and week and on November 1<sup>st</sup> the Zoo transferred to their Winter hours of 12-4pm. Zoo hosted Spooktacular in a different format this year which ran for 6 nights for two hours each with a max attendance of 240 per night. Construction has started on Expedition Asia. Zoo continues to offer virtual programming and birthday parties. The Zoo has cancelled the annual Luminary Walk due to COVID-19.

Mr. Smithson commented his crews are wrapping up Fall projects and putting things away for Winter. Training will need to occur for snow removal and also prepare for reduced staff. Staff is prepping for Christmas light install and planning for the Holiday Parade on December 4. Staff has also been working to get the Ice Rink set up.

Mr. Clifford stated Recreation was able to get a few modified activities up and running again for youth and adults. Youth Volleyball Clinic started in October and Staff is partnering with Manhattan Basketball Association on a Youth Basketball Clinic. Little Apple Glow Paddle occurred on October 17<sup>th</sup> at the River Pond with around 60 participants. Red Cedar Holiday Harvest is scheduled for December 5<sup>th</sup> and the First Day Hike on January 1, 2021. Ice Rink is scheduled to open on November 20<sup>th</sup> with some modifications. The Rink will be open Friday-Sunday and USD383 holidays and breaks as well as limiting the number of people in the Rink at a time by pre-selling tickets in two-hour intervals.

Mr. Leyva commented the Pollinator Pockets has been the biggest project to work on the last couple weeks. Working on finalizing the Stonehaven Master Plan document to bring back to this Board in December or January. Had a walk with representatives from the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism to discuss the grant from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Started a conversation with a local engineer for plans at Anneberg Park and using FEMA Funds to replace the gravel parking lot with concrete. Working with Mr. Shoemaker to be the point of contact for the Expedition Asia project.

Meeting Adjourned.