

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
City Hall, 11th Floor
Park Conference Room
455 N. Main
February 13, 2012
3:00 p.m.**

Present: Bryan Frye, Tom Roth, Cynthia Landers, Cindy Claycomb, Andy Solter, Randy Brown

Absent: Jennifer O'Connor

Also Present: Doug Kupper, Director of Park and Recreation, Christina Butler, Clerk, Don Harrison, Golf Division Manager, Elizabeth Harlenske, Assistant City Attorney, Robert Layton, City Manager, Karen Holmes, Bob Gress, Larry Dennis, Lisa Klaassen, Barbara McGuire, various Recreation Staff, Misty Bruckner, Taggart Wall, Tim Hamlin, Jerry Warren, Eric Commer, Jeanne Commer, Mel Gregory, Susan Ellis, Dung Kimble, Kit Lambertz, Pat O'Donnell, John Gardner, Greg Ferris, Citizens

President Frye called the meeting to order at approximately 3:00p.m.

PUBLIC AGENDA

Item 1A: Dogs in Public Parks – Eric Commer (2724 N. Rushwood Court, 67226)

Commer thanked the City of Wichita for Chisholm Creek Park because it was a unique wildlife park inside the city limits. He stated the location was at K96 & 29th Street between Oliver & Woodlawn and has both wetlands & prairieland in it. He also noted that one mile to the west of the park at Hillside is the Murfin Animal Shelter and a dog park. He noted he would like the Park Board to take more steps to protect the wildlife in Chisholm Creek Park because dogs are being allowed in the park in violation of the rules of the park and some think it is damaging the wildlife. He stated he walks in the park regularly and alerts dog walkers that dogs are not allowed in the park. He also stated that his wife was recently walking alone and came upon a person who had two unleashed dogs who was unsuccessfully trying to keep them in control and another man and his daughter with their dog off the leash. She approached both parties and both were indignant with her and did not leave the park. They are concerned with the safety of the wildlife. He presented studies that have shown the negative affect that dogs have on wildlife stating that there could be a 35% bird reduction in wildlife by allowing dogs in the reserve. He stated that he has noticed considerably less deer in the park this past winter. He reviewed the rules that are posted at the dog parks and stated that there is nothing like that in Chisholm Creek Park nor any mention of a phone number to call for violations of the rules. He also stated that signage is confusing near the bike path at Chisholm Creek Park. He requested improved signage at the park near the parking lots with information kiosks explaining the wildlife purpose of the park and the danger that dogs bring by being in the wildlife area. He also requested an amendment to the city ordinance on wildlife parks similar to that of the dog parks and would like to coordinate police education on those rules. He would like to seek Boy/Girl Scout troop volunteers to inform patrons of the rules and pick up trash around the park.

Frye asked if the Board had any questions. There were none. He then asked if there were questions or comments from the public.

Mel Gregory (2221 N. Bramblewood, 67226) stated that he was not a dog hater, but he did not take them to Chisholm Creek Park. He stated that he is a photographer and has spent years at the nature center, but it is not as good as it used to be. He stated he had previously photographed deer, herons and egrets but has noticed over the past 5-10 years that the bird population is harder to find and photograph. He believes the problem is that while dogs are not inherently bad or dangerous, they are bad for the wildlife in Chisholm Creek Park.

Susan Ellis (6904 Stonegate, 67206) noted that she has mentioned to people that dogs are not allowed in the park and has been given a rude reception by several people with dogs. She would like to see someone with authority advising patrons that they cannot have dogs in the park. She stated that she agreed with Mr. Commer that it has changed.

Brown stated that he agreed that policing was needed, but he felt that peer pressure was powerful as well. He asked Bob Gress (director of Great Plains Nature Center) if there are numbers to support the personal observations of Commer.

Gress stated that there were fluctuations in the wildlife population over time, but the annual deer population was stable and the turkey population was up. He stated that the dog situation had been a problem for several years, but staff reminds people of the rules and usually people will comply if staff is in uniform. He stated that the biggest problem with dogs is that it can be disruptive to the wildlife and the wildlife will react to dogs whether or not they are on a leash.

Frye asked if there were any questions from the Board.

Kupper stated that he liked the suggestions received and would look into it further. He stated that whatever was done at Chisholm Creek Park would have to be done at all similar locations and there had been similar complaints at Swanson Park.

Brown added that he thought improved signage could help with a clear message and a phone number.

Frye stated he would ask staff to look into the situation and see what kind of solutions could be offered and report back at the May meeting with alternatives.

Solter asked that the alternatives from staff include costs for the signage.

Claycomb asked about the signage near the bike trails in Chisholm Creek Park.

Kupper stated the bike trails are multiple-use and that a person could travel through the bike trails with pets.

REGULAR AGENDA

Item 1A: Approval of Minutes

Motion by Roth, second by Claycomb, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the regular meeting minutes of the January 9, 2012 Board of Park Commissioners' Meeting (6-0).

Item 2A: Property Request with Sisters of St. Joseph

Solter introduced Mr. Pat O'Donnell, Director of Mission Advancement for Sisters of St. Joseph Dear Neighbor Ministries, Kit Lambert, and Dung Kimble.

O'Donnell stated that their organization had worked with the community police out of the Harry Street Mall and with the Hilltop community. He stated they had an apartment building with six residences for transitional housing for survivors of domestic violence. He wanted to see if there was a possibility of starting a dialogue with the Park Board regarding the use of the lot on the west side of Bluffview stating that they need more space for their domestic violence cases because they are out of space in their offices and could put the lot to good use.

Kit Lambert stated that the organization currently owns 15 residences in total and the other nine residences are located throughout the city. She stated that women do better if they are closer together in proximity to one another.

O'Donnell stated that he was aware there were plans to renovate Hilltop and that there was new Mennonite housing put in on a block of the neighborhood.

Solter stated that this was a challenged area with many broken families and abundant poverty. He stated that O'Donnell approached him regarding the land after City Council member James Clendenin had reviewed the idea. He stated that the land in question had been vacant for a long time and that Friendship Park was to the east of it with a small playground. He stated he would like to see something positive done with the open space and that he had mentioned to O'Donnell about possibly partnering with the City for Friendship Park. He stated that there would be no cost to the Park Board and that it could be a greater use of the property. He asked O'Donnell if what was being proposed was to first look at the possibility of using the property and not commit to anything.

O'Donnell replied that was correct. He stated he had met with his Board to receive permission to approach the Park Board and depending on the meeting's outcome, they would move forward accordingly.

Landers stated that she would be interested in seeing something positive in this area.

Kupper stated that this area was 4.8 acres.

Frye asked if there was an easement on the property.

Kupper stated there was drainage, but no easement.

Frye asked how the Park Board acquired the land.

Claycomb stated that in 1981 it was purchased from USD 259. It was the old Munger School.

Kupper stated that there was vacant real estate on the property that the Sisters of St. Joseph already owned and asked why the Park Board would want to take away open space instead of asking the Sisters of St. Joseph to use the vacant space on their land.

Lambert stated that part of their land was used as a helicopter landing for Eagle Med for Via Christi St. Joseph Hospital so that space was not available. She also noted that many of their clients walked to their site and it could be a hike for them.

Landers stated she would like to see a partnership developed with Park and Recreation and the organization to have the women and children involved in recreation activities.

Frye asked for public comment and there was none. He then brought the issue back to the Board. He stated the Board should know the value of land from John Philbrick's office.

Motion by Solter to investigate the options of using the land with a partnership between the Park Board and the Sisters of St. Joseph & O'Donnell having O'Donnell and staff submit pros & cons of the issue.

Frye asked if there were designs for this section of land.

Kupper replied that the open space gets soccer play and some pick-up games on the four acres of land and is valuable open space for the neighborhood plans. He stated that the park was key to the re-development of the area and that the Park Board had been benevolent by offering an acre in the front for the drive.

Frye noted that there is not a lot of open space in the area, nor any other place to play.

Brown suggested that perhaps the Sisters of St. Joseph would consider offering their land for open space and recreation if the Board decided to proceed with the plan.

O'Donnell stated that they had a community garden with 55 plots.

Solter stated that he liked the idea that Landers suggested to create a partnership between Park and Recreation and the Sisters of St. Joseph Dear Neighbor program. He also noted that Hilltop was created for recreation.

Kupper stated that Park and Recreation had offered summer camps at Hilltop in the past.

Motion by Solter, second by Claycomb, to table the previous motion for the time being and allow the Sisters of St. Joseph Dear Neighbor Program to bring a more concrete proposal for the Park Board to consider at a date of their choosing.

Solter asked O'Donnell if they had a proposal to present to the Board.

O'Donnell stated that they did not and they had simply wanted an opportunity to bring it to the Board to see if it could be a possibility.

Roth asked if a motion was needed.

Kupper stated that it would give more validity to the staff so they can move forward. He suggested that if the goal was for the Park Board to work with the organization on a partnership, then a vote should probably be taken.

Frye asked for public comment and there was none.

The motion passed UNANIMOUSLY (6-0).

Item 2B: Kansas Gas Service Request for Easement

Kupper stated that the land was adjacent to Dr. Glen Dey Park in District I.

John Gardner of KGS stated that new gas lines for heating and cooling were needed and they were seeking approval for the proposed route for Heartland Preparedness Center. He stated that the red line on the handout was the proposed route and it would be running through a 50 foot drainage dedication for 870 feet and up through Reserve A for approximately 530 feet across another drainage ditch. He stated this was the best alternative and the most cost effective.

Kupper pointed out the bike path from Dr. Dey Park on the handout and that KGS would be staying away

from the newly installed bike path. He also stated that the Park Board retained the first 50 feet off of Chisholm Creek Park.

Landers asked on behalf of City Council member Williams if there would be anything permanently visible above ground.

Kupper stated that it would all be subterranean.

Gardner confirmed that it would be 48" below ground and that nothing would be visible above ground.

Frye asked if there were any trees there and if so, what kind of trees they were.

Gardner said they could move slightly east and still get across the ditch if there were trees involved.

Frye asked if there was public comment and there was none. The issue was brought back to board.

Motion by Frye, second by Landers, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the request and to the move the line slightly if trees were involved (6-0).

Item 3A: Golf Sustainability Final Review

Frye stated that this item would be on the City Council agenda the following day (February 20). He noted that all DAB meetings were complete and votes were taken at four of the meetings approving the recommendation of the Park Board and two of the meetings voted to receive and file the recommendation.

Landers thanked Frye for presenting at her District I DAB meeting. She stated that someone had mentioned needing to update the signs at the golf courses.

Kupper stated that had been brought up at the public meetings as well. He also stated that many citizens were not aware that the City golf courses had PGA pros on staff.

Frye stated that the citizen at the District I DAB meeting was referring to the outdated tee marker signs.

Claycomb stated she had a golfer present at her DAB meeting that was thankful for the job that had been done by the Park Board. She thought it was nice to hear someone who appreciated the work that was put into the golf course issue.

Frye noted that after the City Council meeting the following day, there would have been 16 meetings on the golf course issue.

Solter stated that at his District III DAB Meeting there was appreciation for the Park Board's work on keeping up with Clapp Golf Course.

Kupper stated that the green sheet was going to City Council the following day with the five points recommended by the Park Board and also stipulated that the Park Board would continue to review and analyze the golf sustainability by working with the committees that may be created. He invited the Park Board members to attend the City Council meeting.

Frye asked if there were any comments or questions from the public.

Greg Ferris (PO Box 573, 67201) stated that he had not been able to speak at the District IV DAB meeting, but wanted to say that he had started playing City golf courses and felt the City had

phenomenal courses. He stated that the economy was the worst in Wichita than it had been in years and he felt a green fee increase would be detrimental at this point. He thought the Park Board should proceed with the other recommendations presented and then increase the green fees only after reviewing the revenue increases based on those changes. He stated that golf is the only entity being requested to pay back 100% of the debt and he thinks in three to five years the economy will come back and they can possibly pay it back then. He stated he felt it was okay to subsidize part of the debt because everything else done in the City is 100% subsidized by taxpayers.

Landers thanked Ferris for his comments and noted that other fees such as recreational activities had increases as well.

Ferris stated that the courses last year brought in more revenue than they needed to operate.

Brown added that they made a profit.

Ferris re-stated that the Park Board should adopt all the recommended proposals and see if the revenue is increased through the marketing campaign, then ask the City to wait one year and evaluate the new programs and revenues at that time.

Frye asked if there were any questions and there were none. He brought the issue back to the Board. He asked if scenarios were run without raising green fees.

Kupper replied yes.

Brown added that the scenario was run without raising green fees and the Golf Division would lose money after 2014. He stated that he did agree with Ferris on some points, but supported the Park Board's recommendations. He noted he was baffled that the Golf Division had to report a profit while all other areas were subsidized.

Landers asked if it was true that all other services were not enterprise funds.

Kupper confirmed that Golf was the only enterprise fund.

Layton stated that the Golf Division was in trouble and that they were following the rules for the Golf enterprise fund. He stated that this was common for City owned golf courses.

Brown stated that it was not uncommon for Golf courses to be run the other way.

Layton replied that it was more uncommon than common.

Frye stated that they would be reporting back to the City Council with the recommendations of the Park Board. He stated they would commit to monitoring revenue and would work with the City Council appointed advisory committee to study outsourcing and would ask for approval of five items.

Frye stated there was no action needed on this issue.

Item 3B: Recreation Division Strategic Plan Presentation

Kupper stated that changes were made to staffing in January 2011 and Hugo Wall began working with City staff to create a more sustainable plan for the Recreation Division. He introduced Misty Bruckner from Wichita State University and Karen Holmes, Superintendent of Recreation.

Bruckner showed a Powerpoint presentation that reviewed results from where the Division was last year. She stated that it was a difficult time for everyone in the Recreation Division, but she had happy

news to share with the Park Board. She stated that the Recreation staff would present the strategic plan and commended them on the tremendous effort and progress that had been made. She reviewed the 10 recommendations from WSU that resulted from the 2011 study. She reviewed the cost recovery numbers stating that during 2009 - 2010 there was a cost recovery of 29% and for 2011 cost recovery was up to 42% and revenue had increased by \$100,000. She stated that the number of classes had increased by over 300 classes compared to 2009 and 2010 with an additional 1,700 new registrants. She then reviewed numbers for each of the recreation centers stating that most had shown increases in both registrations and cost recovery, although Colvin continued to be a challenge. She then thanked the Recreation staff for their continued dedication to the turnaround.

Holmes then moved on to the Strategic Plan presentation stating there were six goals for the Division. She introduced Larry Dennis (Evergreen and McAdams Recreation Center Director), Barbara McGuire (Program Coordinator) and Lisa Klaassen (Linwood, Stanley, Aley and Colvin Recreation Center Director) to discuss the goals.

Dennis started with *Goal #1 Marketing: Increase visibility and awareness of recreation service for the community.* He stated that they were able to build diverse recreational programs based on customer surveys that had been administered. He stated that marketing efforts would vary for the different communities and there was an effort to develop brand marketing so Recreation would become easily recognizable throughout the community. This brand marketing would also allow the community to learn what the Recreation Division had to offer.

McGuire reviewed *Goal #2 Partnerships: Identify, develop and maintain partnerships that will enhance service to the community.* She stated that they were able to identify partners throughout the community and developed mutually beneficial relationships with them. They had also been successful when using shared resources and expertise and were able to reach the underserved. Staff had been challenged to find new partners and by summer 2011 Accent Interiors, JP Weigand, Gander Mountain, and the Wichita Rowing Association had offered classes through the Recreation Division at no cost to the division. She stated that they were working on creating an evaluation process for the partners to ensure that the partnership continued to be mutually beneficial. She stated that staff was constantly identifying internal and external partners and future growth could be expected.

Dennis reviewed *Goal #3 Infrastructure: Ensure appropriate resources that sustain and enhance access, outreach, programming, and support of recreation services.* He stated that information technology was part of the basic framework for successful programming and stressed the need to keep up with technology. He stated that all centers should be visible, clean, accessible and secure. He stated that there is no security for most of the centers. He stated that they would create a Capital Improvement Plan relative to customer needs to address programming needs.

McGuire reviewed *Goal #4 Programming: Provide diverse and unique programs that meet the needs and desires of the community.* She stated that they had listened to the community and engaged them in the process to create programming they wanted and needed. They sought information from those currently using centers and also those who didn't currently use the centers. They had gone to churches and other groups to see what they needed instead of having those organizations come to them. They had researched new teaching methods, industry trends, and sought to continue to improve programming quality. The staff continued to improve themselves by attending conferences and classes.

Klaassen reviewed *Goal #5 Human Resources: Develop qualified staff with a commitment to excellence in quality customer service.* She stated that the staff had been challenged to grow classes and programs and, in turn, had to increase staff. She also noted that they developed relationships for future instructors and staff through local businesses, YMCA, and colleges. She stated that the new staff would go through a formal training program and follow-up with regular evaluations through job performance assessments and customer surveys. They had set a benchmark of 85% customer satisfaction and would

like to recognize good performers with an award program. They have also utilized staff to service multiple centers as needed. She stated that they would develop a building capacity plan to achieve maximum center usage and to have programming in every room at every operating hour.

Klaassen reviewed *Goal #6 Financial Policy: Achieve financial sustainability while balancing public recreation purpose*. She stated they would have to identify additional funding sources such as grants, CSBG, volunteers, and partners who might do programming at no cost to the Park and Recreation Department. They also had to develop a revenue policy for non-profit organizations and create MOUs for neighborhood associations and Golden Age Groups. She noted that they had a software program RFP out to bid and would like to have a tracking program that would track every aspect of programming. She noted that a sponsorship program was being developed by Stacey Hamm to sponsor various programs and scholarships. She stated that grants were essential to offer at-risk programming and noted that staff would take on grant research. They would also develop a cost recovery model for the specialized programs such as Watson Park, Riverside Tennis Center and the swimming pools.

Holmes commended her staff for continuing to do a great job and implementing many of the items in the plan already. She noted that this would be a fluid plan that would be continually updated. She also thanked her staff and Misty Bruckner and Taggart Wall for their work on this project.

Bruckner asked the Board to take note of the objectives of the strategic plan because each of the objectives had measurable goals. She offered some things for the Park Board to consider...although there had been an investment for equipment, the Board needed to advocate for the remaining needs of the Division. The Division also needed the help of the Board to build partnerships. And in regards to the Human Resources goal of the Strategic Plan, the Board would need to support a long range plan in order for the Division to continue to grow.

Bruckner continued with review of the Methodology of the Strategic Plan stating that the Division needed efficiencies and cost recovery while maintaining a balance and they used the Green Play Model. This model creates balance between public good and what could be paid for out of the general fund. When services are provided for an individual, then the individual should pay for the service. However programs such as Play Day or A Night with Santa will not cost recover because the programs are serving at-risk youth and there is a community benefit. Programs that introduce healthy lifestyles for youth would also present a community benefit. With these ideas in mind, the Division cannot simply say that an individual class is required to have 150% cost recovery. In order to apply the methodology, the Division must create a system for all to use. Staff would have to look at expenditures divided by the number of participants for a program or class. She stated that the Recreation Team had set a goal to increase cost recovery by 5% each year and has projected a 5% increase in revenue and number of participants.

Brown noted that it appeared that the formulas or numbers on the handout may be incorrect.

Bruckner reviewed the numbers and noted there did appear to be some errors and they would be corrected. She noted that the formula would review cost recovery and the target number and the difference it would take to meet goal. She then reviewed a slide showing projected cost recovery from 2009 to 2014 and stated that the gap would continue to decline.

Landers asked if the new software that the Division was looking at would track this type of information.

Bruckner replied that it should.

Solter noted that there were some innovative new programs and asked if staff had sought community input prior to creating these.

McGuire stated that staff was currently doing a little of that, but typically instructors would approach staff with their ideas and qualifications for a class. She noted that staff was working on summer programming and take information from the summer programs to create fall programming.

Solter asked for summer programming to be shared with the Board as soon as it became available.

Holmes stated that the programming information would be shared and that if the Board had programming ideas they should pass them on to her or the recreation staff.

Frye asked if there were other questions and there were none. He thanked the staff for their effort on the strategic plan. He stated he knew it began that it was going to be difficult and he asked staff to keep up the good work.

Kupper commended the Recreation staff for doing a great job on the strategic plan and the presentation and thanked Misty Bruckner for hanging with the group. He noted that the group had been professional throughout the process and had stepped up to the plate and created a plan of which they could be proud. He also stated that the City Manager recognized that there was great enthusiasm in the Recreation staff.

Frye stated he would like to see a shorter presentation to be shared at the DAB meetings showing where the Recreation Division is, what they have done and what they have planned going forward.

Bruckner added that last year that was a media following on the Recreation Division issue and it would be great to provide an update on the status of the Division.

Motion by Claycomb, second by Solter, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO ENDORSE the Recreation Division Strategic Plan (6-0).

Solter thanked the Recreation staff for their efforts.

Alan Taber (Director, Edgemoor and Lynette Woodard Recreation Centers) thanked the Park Board for their support of the Recreation Division.

Holmes stated that staff would pare down the presentation for the DAB meetings.

Item 4: Updates from the Director and President

Frye noted that he had seen cinderblocks at Westside Athletic Field/KS Hall of Fame Fields and asked what was going on there.

Kupper replied that Friends University was expanding the dugouts there.

Frye noted that Friends had done some good improvements at the fields and had saved taxpayers approximately \$20,000 in improvements.

Kupper stated that the CIP had gone to the DABs and that City Council would hopefully approve it in March.

Kupper noted that Country Acres and Edgemoor pools may have to close due to structural problems. He stated that Edgemoor's pool was losing 10-13% of its water daily. He stated that a bonding amendment would go before City Council to hire a structural engineer to review the condition of the pools and hopefully City Council would approve the amendment. If approved, the engineer could start on

Wednesday after the City Council meeting. He stated that the Board may have to put money back into the CIP or they may have to make a decision to close a pool(s) depending on the results of the engineer's findings.

Frye reminded the Board of the City Council meeting the following day for the Golf presentation.

Brown reminded the Board of the City Council Workshop on Tuesday, 2/28, where the Recreation Strategic Plan would be presented.

Frye noted that the next meeting would be on Monday, 3/19.

Item 5: Issues on the Horizon

None.

Item 6: Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:45pm.

Bryan Frye, President

Christina Butler, Clerk