

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
City Hall, 11th Floor
Park Conference Room
455 N. Main
July 14, 2014
3pm**

Present: Bryan Frye, Cindy Claycomb, Steve Hieger, Tom Roth

Absent: Hoyt Hillman, Ron Allen, Chris Highfill

Also Present: Marty Miller, Interim Director of Park and Recreation, Elizabeth Harlenske, City Assistant Attorney, Christina Butler, Clerk, David McGuire, Scott Wadle, Mark Chamberlin, Jennifer Matney, Wayne Matney, Heather Denker, Brent Thomas, Merry Murray, Ben Jennings, Greg Ferris, Charlie Fear, Bill Norton, Cindy Menard, Nancy Lane, Citizens.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 3:00pm.

PUBLIC AGENDA

Jennifer Matney (1725 N. McComas) stated she would like to address changing the segregation of the dogs at Meridian Dog Park. They are currently separated by weight – under/over 77 lbs. She has a petition with 72 signatures of people who wish to change the rule to personality instead of size. She also asked for an update on the construction of the cooling system at the park. She stated there had been some work done and she hoped that it gets moved forward.

Frye stated he is aware of the petition and has reviewed the comments.

David McGuire stated that his staff was to the point of getting the cooling system installed until the rain hit. They moved their focus to Chapin Park regarding standing water there. They hoped to get the cooling station up this week, but with impending rain it could affect pouring the concrete. Their goal is to have it up by end of the week. The cooling station was provided by the Fido 5k donated funds through the Wichita Parks Foundation.

Frye stated it would be difficult to determine a dog's temperament and to know if a dog is spirited or shy.

McGuire stated they had looked at other dog park rules and adopted those for the dog parks. They also used the Murfin Dog Park rules since it was already an established dog park.

Frye asked if staff had consulted with the Kansas Humane Society about segregation recommendations.

McGuire responded that he thought they have them segregated by size, but he was not sure.

Matney stated that the Hutchinson Dog Park has the dogs segregated by temperament not size.

Frye asked how long the dog parks have been open.

McGuire responded that Chapin had been open 4-5 years and Meridian had been open 2 -3 years approximately.

Matney stated she had research from a veterinarian and a modern dog publication that says dogs should be segregated by temperament rather than size.

Claycomb asked if the usage numbers were known.

Matney responded there are over 200 members on her Facebook page.

Miller stated in his opinion it is difficult to determine the temperament of a dog. They will be different sometimes and there may be a reaction to a dog that will cause a chain reaction with the others.

Frye stated they want to continue to err on the side of caution and defer to staff that have done their due diligence on the issue. It has been working for 5 years at Chapin. He suggested maybe there is something going on at Meridian that needs to be looked at.

Frye then read a statement from a citizen who was unable to attend the meeting who was of the opinion that the dogs should continue to be segregated by size.

McGuire stated that he and staff are willing to open discussion with the interested parties.

REGULAR AGENDA

Item 1: Approval of Minutes

Motion by Frye, second by Roth, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to approve, sign, and file the minutes of the June 9, 2014 Board of Park Commissioners Regular Meeting (4-0).

Item 2A: Stryker Complex Usage Request (FC Wichita/Terese Johnson)

Frye noted that no one was present for this agenda item.

Item 2B: K-96 Path Wayfinding System Proposal (Scott Wadle/Wichita Together 2014)

Wadle introduced himself as a City of Wichita employee in the Planning Department. He stated that based on comments and emails, they know that the K96 path is the most confusing. He introduced Heather Denker from Wichita Together 2014.

Denker (1422 E Cedar Tree Street, Park City) stated that a goal of Wichita Together is to build community pride and this can be done by bettering the bike paths. Many have requested wayfinding signage such as "How many miles to the Keeper of the Plains". She introduced Mark Chamberlin of Armstrong Chamberlin Strategic Marketing to review the design concepts for wayfinding signage.

Chamberlin (7450 S. Seneca) stated they were charged with coming up with concepts for wayfinding signage. He noted that these are concepts only and does not know costs. He stated the designer, Leslie Steiner, came up with four concepts. The first concept is Wichita Wheat. The second concept is Sunflower Spokes. The third concept is Bicycle Junction – going with the "dot" concept and using the color scheme and typeface per government requirements. The fourth concept is Solar Sign with 7-8 feet

tall signs that fold slightly over. They are up out of the way making it difficult to be damaged by vandalism and graffiti. Solar panels on top will add light elements to the signs with bands that can be lit or reflective. The benefit of the Solar Sign is that they are up higher with less chance for destruction. The pole is robust. The solar panel could be applied to all designs. They could offer co-branding with a sponsor or could find underwriting down the road. They know that it is a process and are looking forward to working with the City and the Wichita Together 2014 organization.

Frye asked how long the K96 path is.

Wadle responded that it is about 9 miles long. There would be large signs at the entry points and smaller signs along the trail throughout the corridor.

McGuire suggested that narrower signs will be better for security reasons.

Frye asked if there was public comment.

Charlie Fear (2110 Chisholm Creek) stated that he hoped the signs would not only be placed at the beginning and end points of the 9 miles because the biggest issue is going east on the path.

Wadle added that the current signs are unclear as to where the biker is really going.

Frye noted there was no further public comment and brought it back to the Board. He stated he likes the idea and it could be implemented on other bike paths. He has been down this road before with regard to pedestrian signs. He asked if it has to be put back to staff or go to Design Council.

Claycomb stated she would like to go ahead with Design Council.

Frye asked what kind of action Wadle is looking for the Board to take.

Wadle responded that it would be helpful to see which design the Board preferred.

Miller asked if the Design Council will want the wayfinding signs to reflect the pedestrian signs.

Wadle stated they are constrained by federal regulations with green signs and white type face. They are fairly consistent and are what METCD recommends. If they use a design that does not follow these regulations, then they cannot apply for federal funds.

Claycomb stated that the current signs look horrible due to vandalism and they need something that is graffiti resistant.

Hieger suggested a graffiti resistant paint.

Claycomb stated that she liked all of the designs.

Frye stated he liked the look of the Solar Sign concept.

Claycomb stated that bicyclists may complain about them being higher up, but they must have them higher up to prevent vandalism.

Wadle stated this gives them an opportunity to try the designs and if they work, they can implement them throughout the bike path system.

Motion by Frye, second by Hieger, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to direct staff to work with the committee and the Design Review Committee to come up with solid plans and designs for an MOU (4-0).

Wadle added that the deadline is 2014.

Chamberlin added that Wichita Together 2014 is considering purchasing bikes for hotels to rent in the future.

Item 2C: Ordinance 9.03.470 Amendment (Elizabeth Harlenske)

Harlenske asked that Butler email a copy of the delineated version of the ordinance to the Board. She read the current ordinance and noted that as of July 1, 2014, the Kansas legislature took away municipalities' option to regulate firearms. The Legal Department found this ordinance had not been amended. The proposed would be amended to be unlawful to possess or discharge slingshots.

McGuire asked about bow fishing because they will discharge archery equipment. Archery can occur in designated areas only.

Harlenske stated that bow fishing is considered fishing, not hunting or archery. So it is legal. She stated that she and Doug Kupper (former Director of Park and Recreation) had discussed this previously and Kupper wanted to look into creating an ordinance regarding bow fishing.

Frye asked if there was public comment and there was none.

Motion by Hieger, second by Frye, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to adopt and approve the ordinance change as per Harlenske's recommendation (4-0).

Item 3A: Clapp Golf Course Update (Troy Hendricks)

Frye stated they had recently completed a round of community meetings with the Meadowlark and Grandview Heights Neighborhood Associations and the golf community at Boston Recreation Center. He noted that he had made a mistake when discussing the Golf Advisory Committee's recommendation. They did not recommend the driving range for Clapp. He asked Greg Ferris, a member of the Golf Advisory Committee, to confirm.

Ferris confirmed this to be correct.

Frye stated he had learned of another neighborhood association that would like to see the presentation. The Mt. Vernon Neighborhood Association is adjacent to the golf course.

Hendricks stated that they want the presentation in August.

Frye stated it was suggested that Clapp may have been acquired in the 1950s with the stipulation of it only being a golf course. Property Management is researching this.

Bill Norton (Royal Road) stated that this is very drastic to the terrain and the market. He is concerned about the feasibility of doing this kind of thing. He asked what would happen if it fails and what has

been done to tell the public that this has a high probability of success and that it won't fail.

Frye responded that the Golf Advisory Committee worked hard to keep it as an 18-hole golf course. It will not get irrigated, mowed and maintained as it is now if it is not a golf course.

Norton asked if any marketing research or feasibility studies had been done to show that this will probably work.

Frye responded they had not had a specific study done.

Hendricks stated that he had asked Rich Richardson, the National Player Development Director for the PGA of America from Dallas, if this has been done elsewhere. Nashville had been underperforming. They have redeveloped the course and added a development range and have seen a huge increase with an upturn. The same has been done in Baton Rouge and Salt Lake City.

Norton asked if they have consulted with our demographics.

Hendricks responded that Sierra Hills is a par 59 golf course and is doing well.

Norton asked if there is a business model. He also stated that this does not address the water issue.

Ferris stated that Concept A is not a dramatic change in the golf course. It will be a par 70, but it improves the golf course. The Golf Advisory Committee looked at this to see if an RFP would come up with someone who would want to purchase the corner and use the funding for a practice area at no cost to the City because you have proceeds from the sale to make the improvements. There is no money in the golf system to make these types of improvements. They felt they do not need a marketing study to know this because it is already a par 70 golf course. They had a golf course designer look at it and they thought it made sense. There was no problem with Concept B, but there was not enough information for this concept and it would take 6-9 months to do an RFP.

Cindy Menard (Royal Road) understood that the big cost for Clapp is the water, yet none of the presentations have addressed the water.

Frye stated that the committee understands the concern on the cost of water, but the focus was on increasing rounds and improving the players' experience. If you do not have rounds, water does not matter. However there are new water solutions that the committee is learning about.

Menard asked if the bottom line is to make Clapp profitable.

Frye responded that they look at the entire golf enterprise.

Menard stated she thought the decline at Clapp has been smaller because of the loyal client base. She felt the golf course is special and historic.

Frye stated the course has the most opportunity and the pitch and play area is lacking.

Menard stated that it has two practice greens.

Frye responded that it is not monetized enough.

Menard asked if they have to sell off the corner to do that.

Frye responded that they are looking at all options and if there is another idea out there, they want to hear it.

Menard asked if they will address the water issue.

Frye responded yes, it is an ongoing issue. They have a smaller water issue at MacDonald as well. There are no wells there like they have at Tex Consolver, Auburn Hills and Sim and there is no potential to add retention ponds.

Nancy Lane (South Oliver) stated she had attended the other meetings and there have been suggestions to increase rounds through tournaments and reaching out to McConnell Air Force Base. She asked if those suggestions are being pursued.

Frye responded yes.

Hendricks stated that when the Base Commander at McConnell decided to close the course, they met with the Mayor and Don Harrison (previous Golf Division Manager). At that time military rates were only offered at Clapp Golf Course and they asked if military rates could be expanded to include all City golf courses. The Golf Division agreed to this and they can play for ½ price at all five courses. There is also a retired military discount.

Hendricks also stated that there are tournaments being played at all five courses. They are looking at expanding corporate events, but the clubhouse at Clapp can only hold 60 people, therefore it is limited. Most tournaments have 120-140 players and the only one that could accommodate them is Auburn Hills. The other courses rent carts for the tournaments pay a \$75 fuel charge and \$35 per cart. High school tournaments cannot be accommodated because there is no storm shelter.

Frye asked if there was further public comment and there was none. He brought the discussion back to board. He stated it was Councilman Clendenin's wish to present to the other neighborhood association.

Claycomb asked if Clapp waters with City water.

Frye responded yes.

Hendricks added that the Superintendent looked into it and they would have to put in 30-50 wells to get what they need.

Roth asked what the attitude was at the first neighborhood meeting.

Frye stated that he felt they appreciated keeping the course open, but they want it kept whole. They did not want to lose the two acres and want to figure out other ways to fund it. The Golf Advisory Committee met after the last Park Board meeting and it is their recommendation to move forward with Concept A. Property Management is researching if that can still happen per the deed.

Hendricks noted that Philbrick stated the property could be claimed as being underutilized and they could create an RFP. There would be nothing binding.

Frye asked the Board if they should wait until they get answers from Property Management.

All those present said yes.

Frye suggested they defer any action until next month's meeting. He added that the Golf Advisory Committee has a meeting scheduled for next week.

Item 4A: Recreation Update (Karen Holmes/Mickey Lara)

Mickey Lara, Athletics Director, presented information on Combating Concussions. In February 2014, he attended a conference with Heads Up Football which was sponsored by USA Football and the NFL. These organizations want all program administrators to be on the same page for concussions and make the game safer for youth. The Greater Wichita Junior Football League (GWJFL) is an official member of Heads Up Football. On July 19, Lara and other Wichita football organization leaders will go to an educational camp in Tulsa, OK to learn correct fundamentals and proper tackling techniques. The NFL funded this because they are adamant that players be taught correct fundamentals from the beginning of their football playing careers. They stressed the importance of quality coaching. Those who attend the camp will hold mandatory training courses for all coaches in the GWJFL.

Frye stated the coaches' clinic would be good public engagement for the media. He thinks they will find a welcome reception from parents and the media. He suggested having the Marketing Department work on it.

Claycomb noted it could be good PR for what the City is doing.

Frye asked how many kids are in the GWJFL.

Lara responded over 1700 kids.

Hieger asked if the high schools are doing something similar.

Lara responded they are not doing it through Heads Up Football, but through the KSHAA.

Frye stated they should get it out to the community.

Item 4B: Golf Update (Troy Hendricks)

Hendricks stated that rounds year to date through the end of June are up 3% and revenue is up 3%. Expenditures and encumbrances are down 8%. Current promos are down 48% because they did not start them in May this year as they had in the previous two years. He stated that per the PGA Performancetrak, four of the five courses are ahead of the state average of 8,220 rounds. Clapp is under this average by approximately 500 rounds. Rounds are down for June due to the 10.5" of rain recorded in Wichita.

Claycomb asked if the decrease in promos was purposeful.

Hendricks responded yes and they have only had one complaint.

Frye asked for an update on the private carts at Auburn Hills.

Harlenske responded that they are waiting on her.

Frye stated he played at MacDonald and it was in fantastic shape. He stated the fence looks fantastic also.

Roth stated he played at MacDonald in May and it looked good.

Item 4C: Updates

Miller stated that as part of the budget reduction process they were to amend the MOU with Great Plains Nature Center (GPNC). Since Bob Gress retired and another position was vacated, the budget was reduced. We have one City employee in the building. We have agreed to pay \$120,000 for Friends of GPNC and continue to have one employee there. The agreement has pretty much been finalized with all parties. They are trying to retain the partnership and staying within the City Manager's wishes.

Frye asked how long the commitment will be.

Miller responded he believes it is through 2016 when the original MOU expires and they will look at it then.

Miller stated that at the May Park Board meeting the subject of encroachment of land in Riverside was discussed. The minutes reflect that the request to purchase the land was denied based on the information the Board had at the time of the meeting. There was no offer made for the land, simply a general information letter. In the meantime, the Board has received a request regarding the Beard property at 1103 N. Pearce. They have offered \$13,700 cash payable within 7-10 days of acceptance of the letter.

Claycomb asked if the Board could take action.

Harlenske responded that it has to be on the agenda.

Frye stated the offer should be placed on the next agenda.

Harlenske stated she had directed them to go to Property Management.

Frye stated they should direct staff to advise the attorney to take the offer to Property Management. Property Management should evaluate it and bring it back to the board for the August meeting.

Hieger stated it makes it difficult to look at an offer when they have further encroached into Park property.

Harlenske suggested the Board may want to develop a consistent policy for all encroachments.

Frye noted there are a lot of encroachments out there.

Frye asked if they need a follow up on the dog park issue or if they need to take further action.

Miller responded that his staff is on it and can bring an update to the Board next month.

Frye stated that there are over 90 applicants for the Director of Park and Recreation position. They have narrowed the candidate list to nine and will have the first round of interviews on July 31 via Skype. The interview panel consists of City Manager Layton, Assistant City Manager Holdeman, Cynthia Berner-Harris, Chris Bezruki, and Alan King.

Frye stated that he had met with Councilman Jeff Longwell to review the designs for Buffalo Park. They are applying for a grant for the traffic review because there was concern regarding the amount of traffic for the park. They are working through solutions and the grant will help with that. The plans are neat and stake holders like the plans too.

Miller advised the Board of an overall park issue regarding mowing. He stated his staff is doing the best they can to keep up with the mowing. The issues started with 10.5 inches of rain and then a contractor got over capacity and fell behind. City staff has been engaged to catch up using overtime hours. They received permission to work seven days a week. Normal rainfall in June is 4 inches and we had 10.5 inches this year. It is a challenge.

Frye asked how many contractors mow City property.

Miller responded there are five contractors. The goal is to get everything mowed. The areas will not be edged and finished. They will simply be cut down. This is a hot issue and they are working to rectify it.

Claycomb asked how she could get a copy of the MOU with Sunflower Title Signs that Scott Wadle mentioned. She asked if David McGuire might have it.

Harlenske responded that if it was a donation, it would have gone through City Council and the City Clerk could get a copy of it.

Claycomb stated that if there is an MOU then the signs should be maintained. She stated that some of the signs are leaned over where vandals have tried to pull the signs off of the poles.

Frye noted that the next Park Board meeting is August 11.

Item 5: Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20pm.

Bryan Frye, President

Christina Butler, Clerk