

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
Park and Recreation Department
11th Floor City Hall
Monday, February 12, 2007
3:30 p.m.**

Present: Glen Dey, Janet Miller, Dennis Brunner and Doug Leeper,
Nalini Johnson*, Andy Solter, Mick Tranbarger

Absent: Dennis Brunner

Also Present: Doug Kupper, Karen Walker and Myca Bunch (staff)

President Miller called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

PUBLIC AGENDA

No Items.

REGULAR AGENDA

Item 1: Approval of Minutes

Motion 1: On motion by Solter, second by Miller, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED that the Board approve the January 12, 2007, regular meeting minutes with the recommended edits suggested by Miller.

Motion 2: On motion by Miller, second by Dey, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED that the Board postpone items 2A and 2B until the individuals representing those topics arrive.

*Nalini Johnson joined the meeting.

Item 2C: USD 259 Request to cancel lease at Evergreen Recreation Center

Kupper reviewed for the Board that USD 259 and the City of Wichita has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) currently in place granting USD 259 the use of Evergreen Recreation Center for a Pre-Kindergarten program. Kupper said that USD 259 has used some of their own funding to make improvements to the Center. They have now informed the Park Department that they were unable to obtain the proper licensing required to run the Pre-K program at the Recreation Center. In light of this development,

USD 259 is now requesting that they be let out of their agreement and they will donate the \$40,000 in improvements that they made to the City of Wichita.

Miller asked if there were any audience members who had comments on the issue. No one spoke and the item was returned to the Board.

Leeper asked if the School Board was planning to use the facility at any time in the future. Kupper said that they have not come back to him requesting that and that they are currently looking at the situation from the State level to determine what can be done about the problems concerning the licensing. Leeper asked if any of the improvements made would hinder the Park Departments use of the facility. Kupper said no and that it may actually allow the Park Department to start their own Pre-K program there next year.

Solter said he has seen a lot of these situations happen and he feels that it is in the Board's best interest to dissolve the MOU.

Motion 3: On motion by Solter, second by Johnson, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED that the Board recommend that the City Council terminate the lease between USD 259 and the City of Wichita for use of Evergreen Recreation Center for a Pre-Kindergarten program.

Item 2B: Land Donation by Jay Russell

Miller mentioned that the land donation by Jay Russell was discussed in the Executive Session of the January meeting and that there was a newspaper article about the donation in *The Wichita Eagle* newspaper recently. Kupper informed the Board that Jay Russell was currently creating new subdivisions between 47th St. South and 63rd St. South (between K-15 and the River). He said the first portion of land that was platted was between Clifton and K-15. In their discussions with the Planning Department and in guidance with the zoning regulations around McConnell AFB, Mr. Russell felt that it was in the best interest of the community to preserve the area as open space to create a buffer between the Air Force Base and nearby residents. Mr. Russell carved out the 105 acres and donated it with no restrictions attached to the City. In his conveyance, he has offered it to the City for public purposes, not specifically as Park purposes. Kupper said he would like for the Board members to look at the proposal and recommend to the City Council that the donated land be used, either in whole or a portion of, be used as a park property.

Solter asked if there was any downside to the donation. Kupper said that an environmental study needed to be done to ensure that it was not contaminated in any way. Kupper said that the area has great access to Derby and could serve both communities well. He said he could see the opportunity to partner with the Derby Recreation Commission or the City of Derby in developing the land into active park amenities. Leeper asked what type of maintenance cost would be associated with developing and maintaining the park. Kupper replied the Park Department would most likely enter into a farming agreement as most of the land is currently being farmed. He said that there is a tree line against the K-15 right of way that they would also need to protect. He said that the money made from the farming would be put into the City's general fund until a time when they could create something more out of it.

Johnson said that she drove out and viewed the area and was wondering what the large pit on the land was being used for. Kupper said they would have to look at it and that a fishing pond would not be out of question if state grants could be acquired. He said that the County is planning a drainage program for the K-15 area and he is not sure if it will impact the property. Kupper said that he doubts the area is being used as a storm water retention area. Johnson remarked that the area in question has a lot of activity related to the Air Base and there is a risk of contamination in any storm water run-off from jet fuel. Kupper said that Southeast Blvd and K-15 contributes to a decent amount of surface water run-off that comes to this property. He said there are several opportunities to stop the storm water runoff before it gets to the property. Johnson said that before she gives a recommendation she would like to know why the pit is on the property. Kupper said that if they did move forward and create the area as a fishing pond they would create it as a 1 to 6 type of slope and would create it as an asset rather than a liability.

Dey asked at what point in the acquisition process the environmental study would occur. Kupper said it would have to be done as they move forward. He said it was donated land and there is no environmental study issue at the current time. Dey said his concern was that if a problem occurred who would be responsible for the cost. Kupper said that they would apply for EPA Brownfield Grants to clean up the damage.

Johnson said that she also noticed some improvement work being done on the property at present time and that she would like to know what that is and how it will affect the land.

Leeper said that in 1994, McConnell AFB was cleaning their ponds with the assistance of the EPA. He said he does not feel that the water contamination should be a big worry. Both Johnson and Leeper said that the area being donated is a great parcel of land and would make great parkland. Leeper then asked if there were any bike paths in the area to which Kupper replied that there was not, but that they would like to develop a path along the river corridor area.

Kupper informed the Board that the land was not inside the Wichita City limits but that it was permissible for the City to own property outside of its annexed area. Miller told the Board that she was very excited about the idea of more parkland, but that she felt that the environmental aspects of the property did need to be checked into.

Miller asked if any members of the audience had comments on the donation of the land.

M.S. Mitchell, 1215 Forrest

He said that the area was platted and approved for use as a residential subdivision prior to the time that the ACUZ study was completed. It was then decided that as a community, Derby, Wichita and Sedgwick County, should do everything they could to let that space be used at its maximum potential. He said that one time they drew back on the zones and then they increased them later. Mr. Russell decided he did not want to take a chance of doing something that would jeopardize the future of McConnell. He said that the runoff comes through a large pond on the Boeing property from the Air Force, North of 47th, before it ever gets to the donated land.

Miller returned the discussion to the Board for further comments. She then proposed a motion to recommend to the City Council that the land be set-aside for Park use and that it be further examined for possible future liability issues, including drainage mitigation, environmental clean-up, water quality, etc.

Motion 4: On motion by Miller, second by Johnson, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED that the Board recommend to the City Council that they accept the 105 acres of land within 30-days, subject to due diligence review by City Staff to include Planning, Public Works and Environmental Services, and that any leases that the Park Department enters into for farming be specifically earmarked for future park development.

Item 2A: Request from Grace Medical

Kupper reminded the Board members that Grace Medical was currently operating a clinic at Evergreen Recreation Center rent free through the end of 2006. He said the stipulation on their lease said that if they did not continue operations in 2007, that they would have to back pay all of the rent for 2006. Kupper informed the Board that they have chosen to stay at the facility, but that several of the grants they were hoping for fell through and that they are again asking for the City to waive the rent for 2007. Kupper said he met with Councilwoman Fearey for her input and she recommended that the Board give Grace Medical a six-month waiver, as they should hear on the status of a grant by July 1, 2007 and will be able to afford the rent after that. Kupper said that he agreed with that proposal rather than giving Grace Medical a 50% break on their monthly rent. He said they also talked about possible new signage for the center and he would like to work with Grace Medical, at their expense, to put more permanent signage on the Park property. As it is now, it is hard for citizens to locate the facility and the new signage would help by placing new signs on Arkansas and 21st streets. He said that removal of the signage would be written into the agreement to be at Grace Medical's expense if they ever vacate the location. He said that Grace Medical also asked for the Park Department to fund a new security system for the facility. Kupper said that the department could not afford to do that.

Leeper asked if the Board should consider making Grace Medical back pay the rent if they are approved for the Grant. Solter said that he felt the organization is good for the community and he would rather see the rent waived instead of making them re-pay it.

Motion 5: On motion by Leeper, second by Solter, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED that Grace Medical Evergreen Children's Clinic remain rent free at the Parks facility until June 30, 2007. Should any permanent signage be added to the park property during this time, the Park Department must be consulted first and any additional cost for the signage will be the responsibility of Grace Medical.

Item 2D: Partnerships with private and non-profit recreational entities.

Miller said that several recent partnership opportunities made her aware that there was not a policy in place to determine whether or not the opportunity was something the Board should consider. Kupper said that the Parks Department works with the YMCA

and the Boys and Girls Club and that they have also partnered with many other non-profit organizations. He said if it were going to be a money making project he would bring it before the Board prior to making a decision. He said that the Park Department will partner with any non-profit that makes sense as well as those that they can logically partner with to provide additional opportunities to the citizens of Wichita. He said that the recurring cost to have staff providing these activities would be daunting when it came time to get those types of tax resources and that is why they look for partnerships that will broaden the ability to provide for the citizens.

Miller asked about the senior services at the recreation centers and if they pay rent or if it is a partnership. Kupper said they do not charge for the lunch programs but for the senior services they do pay rent. He said they currently have a few partnerships with the School District and that there are many more opportunities for the future.

Item 3A: Review of Criteria for Evaluating/Prioritizing Park and Playground Requests

Walker reviewed for the Board the Criteria for Evaluating and Prioritizing Park and Playground requests. Walker said that she had now incorporated the original two documents, which were given to the Board in November into one document and returned that document to the Board last month. She said she had not received any feedback on the new document. Kupper replied that the new Criteria contained trigger points. He said that staff would take the request and look at the map and see where in the city that neighborhood was that was making the request and evaluate existing assets. He said it is a step-by-step process that would eventually end up in front of the Park Board for further recommendation.

Miller said that she thinks it is a great document and accomplishes what they need to look at for all formal requests. She said she also hopes that the PROS Plan contractor can also look at this criterion and provide ideas as to where to plan for future park development. She asked that the Board review the document once again and be ready to discuss it at the March Park Board meeting.

Item 5: Updates from the Director and President

Kupper passed out the Park Department's Annual Report outlining what the department had accomplished in 2006.

Miller added that staff had also drafted an Annual Report containing a summary of motions and key events discussed by the Board during 2006. Miller said that both of these documents combined are exactly what she envisioned when she asked staff to put together an Annual Report. She said that for the remainder of her tenure on the Board she would like to see these documents produced at the end of each calendar year. Miller asked that all Board members read the reports prior to the March Park Board meeting.

Miller said that during the current week the Technical Advisory Group and the Citizen Advisory Committee, which are 2 entities that will be part of the PROS Plan development, would hold their first meetings. She informed the Board that citizens would play a large role in the development of the plan. She said that Wadle had been

working with the Maintenance staff to do an inventory of all Park assets and will be plotted into the City's GIS System and a future regional web site being planned by the Visioneering Recreation Alliance. She said that there is currently a sub-group that is applying for funding to keep to develop and maintain that new web site.

Miller then introduced Sally McIntyre from Moore, Iacofano and Moore (MIG). McIntyre addressed the Board and said that her role as the PROS Plan consultant is an exciting one and she said her and her team look forward to working with the Department. She said that the PROS Plan is a lifetime opportunity for the people in Wichita to look at how it will build community through people, parks and programs for the next 20 years. She passed out a flyer that outlined the planning process that MIG would be following while working with the City of Wichita.

Item 3B. WAMPO PowerPoint Presentation (Benefits of Trails and Pathways)

Miller showed slides from the WAMPO Pathways Plan. She pointed out several key issues that the Visioneering Committee said was important for the community. She said that PROS resources or lack thereof might affect many of these aspects. She said that citizens across the world are looking more at their community surroundings and not at the job aspect of a community when they chose to move to a new city or neighborhood.

Item 6. Issues on the Horizon

Solter said he met with Randy Bane who is a director of a Veteran's group. He said the Veteran's group and their family members would like to put together the funding for a bronze statue of American Veterans in Veterans' Park. Kupper replied that there are not many sites left in Veterans Park. Solter asked if there was space at the airport to which Kupper replied that Mr. Bane would have to speak with the airport director, Victor White.

Item 7: Adjourn

Miller asked if there were any further items for discussion. No items.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:50 p.m.

Janet L. Miller, President

ATTEST:

Myca J. Bunch, Recording Secretary