

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
INTERIM MEETING  
Human Resources Training Room  
10<sup>th</sup> Floor City Hall  
Monday, September 11, 2006  
3:30 p.m.**

Present: Glen Dey, Doug Leeper, Janet Miller, Andy Solter, and Nalini Johnson\*

Absent: Dennis Brunner, Mick Tranbarger

Also Present: Doug Kupper, Larry Hoetmer, Tim Martz, Scott Wadle, Debbie Nguyen and Myca Bunch (staff)

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

**PUBLIC AGENDA**

No items.

Miller began by asking the Board members and the audience to observe a moment of silence in memory of the 5-year anniversary of the September 11, 2005, tragedy.

**REGULAR AGENDA**

**Item 1: Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**Motion 1: Andy Solter made the motion to approve the August 3, 2006, meeting minutes in their current status. Miller seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Motion 2: Solter motioned that the Board approve the August 14, 2006, meeting minutes with the changes to Item 7 that were recommended by Dey. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Item 2: Response to WAMPO Pathways Study**

Miller introduced to the Board an issue that was first discussed at the July 17, 2006, meeting concerning the Wichita Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WAMPO) and their pathways study that looks at regional paths and trails. The Board discussed providing a response to WAMPO with some thoughts about this subject. Johnson was

asked to draft a document for review to which Dey suggested edits that could be added to the proposal.

Johnson began by outlining that WAMPO is inviting input from community and will be holding different meetings around Wichita to give input on their plan. The plan relates to pathways around the city that creates a backbone pathway system around entire regions and could incorporate other cities. Johnson composed a document that outlined what might be the Park Board's role in the pathways process. She said that she feels that as a Board and Park and Recreation staff should be involved with the process quite extensively since it involves bike and hiking trails. In the eyes of WAMPO, it would connect to economic generators so that it would be a transportation system to give the public another mode of transportation besides cars. Johnson suggested the Board come up with a statement endorsed by the Park Board that would produce certain points that everyone could agree to. She said that she put the document together with three key points to discuss which can be fine-tuned later. She said the Board needed to add a strong opening statement that would show that they support the WAMPO pathway planning process.

Johnson's proposal, based on prior input from the Park Board, was broken down into three key bullets:

1. Request that the final WAMPO plan be presented to the Board for approval prior to adoption by WAMPO. After this approval, the plan would then continue on to be approved by City Council and other entities.
2. Gain input from all sectors of the community including current and potential users of the pathways system, recreation users and transportation-based users to minimize impacts caused by speed differentials. She added that WAMPO and the Park Board both need to ensure that the plan addresses all types of users.
3. Ask that the recreation destination points be added to the list of viable destination points analyzed by the planning staff. She said WAMPO stressed to the Park Board that the destination points would be related to areas that generate economic development activity. The Park Board would like to have WAMPO consider that recreation destination points be looked at in terms of economic growth as well.

Dey shared that he would endorse the major points proposed by Johnson, but would try to soften the language so that WAMPO did not perceive it as a demand, but rather more in terms of it being an invitation to have the two groups work together. He said the two groups could have a committee or an informal contact to communicate some of these issues.

Miller asked if any members of the audience wished to comment on the WAMPO pathways plan. No comments. The Board then proceeded to make a motion on the item.

**Motion 3. Miller motioned for Johnson and Dey to work together to finalize a letter along the lines that they have worked on so far and submit it to WAMPO. It was also recommended that copy of letter be copied to the head of the Planning Committee at WAMPO as well as John Schlegel, the Director of the Metropolitan Area Planning Department, so everyone will understand in that organization. Kupper also requested that a copy be sent to his office as well. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.**

\*Johnson left the meeting.

### **Item 3. Proposed Vietnamese War Memorial in Veterans' Park**

Miller reminded the audience that this item was a public hearing and that the Board would take no action on the topic today. She informed the audience that the Park Board had approved the Vietnamese Community Association request to build a memorial at the August 14, 2006, meeting. Following that meeting, the Board heard from a number of individuals in the community who wished to speak on the issue. The Park Board thus decided to hear public comment on the issue. She said that after hearing all comments that the Board would take the situation under advisement and would then determine whether or not to add the item to the next Park Board meeting agenda for actual discussion and a possible second vote. She added that the City Council does have final vote on the memorial and that she did not know for sure, but she suspected that the City Council would wait to hear the issue until the Park Board makes their final decision. She informed the audience that each speaker would be given two minutes speaking time. She also introduced Debbie Nguyen, a City of Wichita employee, who would act as a translator during the meeting.

Thang Nong, 2205 S. Sunnybrook, as translated by Nguyen

We are Vietnamese community and we do not represent the communist. There is a saying within our community that we eat the fruit that we reap and sow. We are immigrants from the war and we are now members of this country. This memorial is to honor those that gave their life in the war. Everyone needs to know the sacrifice that these soldiers made.

Huong Thu Tran, 719 N. St. Paul

From all the Vietnamese people we are here to ask support for a memorial for American and Vietnamese soldiers who together fought for freedom and sacrificed together and they need to be remembered together so our coming generations will have a place to remember those heroes who gave up their lives for us. We also need to remember and honor with all of our hearts.

Luc Nguyen, 1927 S. Ida

When we fought the communist, the US and England and Switzerland and other allies sacrificed thousands of lives. I want to have a memorial park so our children will one day remember that the Vietnamese and American soldiers fought for something and we

spilled our blood for something. We will have a place for our people to go every year to remember all of our heroes who fought and died for freedom.

Oris E. Serpan, 7800 North 167th Street West

I was a participant in SE Asia War Games, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place. Vietnam was a country that wanted to be free, or at least as free as the CIA would allow it. Many Americans went there just to go, some believed in freedom and some did not. Some killed communists and some didn't, some were wounded and some weren't. They were our allies, and we went there under Kennedy to protect their way of life and help them stop the communist from taking over, which they did. The Americans took second place and the Vietnamese took third place so I believe we should have memorial here for them and for the Americans with them. There is talk about when will this quit if we allow them to have their memorial. I believe it will quit when we no longer have wars. But as long as we are fighting to help others we will have this. I think we have lost track of what is going on. I volunteered and I believed that we could help stop communism and I believe they have every right to have a memorial here.

Lan Lee, 2304 S. Cypress

The American armed forces fought two wars, one in Korea and one in Vietnam. We owe soldiers and we are lucky that there are still survivors today and we never forget the old people who have come here. We would like to build a monument to the Vietnamese and American soldiers together so we do not forget. The older are dying and this way every year we can come and celebrate those that have died. People will come to this memorial to remember what has happened in the past. These older soldiers deserve to have a location to remember.

Kenny Nguyen, 1836 S. Shiloh Street

I'm 25 but I do not know anything about my country and the war. I came here in 1992 with my parents to find freedom and find my future. I grew up here and graduated here and I made some new friends who are American. I became the president of the Vietnamese Association at Wichita State University in 2005-2006. I am here as a young Vietnamese-American individual to ask the community to support and approve the idea of the memorial in Veterans Park.

Hoa Bui, 4929 N. Harborside

I am here to show my support for the memorial and I believe that the Vietnamese people deserve this little space to show our love and respect and gratitude that we have for the American and other people that died for freedom. We want a place we can go every year to pay our respects to those who died for our freedom. So that my kids and their kids can go there and remember everything that they did in the name of freedom.

ThienVu, 10118 Kincaid Circle

Vice President of Vietnamese Community in Wichita, also the former president of Vietnamese Student Association at WSU. I would like to ask Wichita to grant us some land in Veterans' Park to build our memorial. The conflict was between the North and

South communist and the Americans were our strongest allies. We wanted to live under a government of the people, for the people and by the people. After the communist invasion the whole country fell into bloodshed. Now Vietnamese are exiled all over the world. For many in Wichita, we are fortunate enough to have American opportunities and freedom for which we cherish. The fight for freedom and democracy in Vietnam has claimed 2.5 million lives and we want to have a memorial for both American and Vietnamese soldiers who sacrificed their lives.

Philip Blake, 1632 W. 20<sup>th</sup> St.

I am a WWII Veteran but never served in Vietnam. The Vietnamese community I have met in Wichita are good workers and honest people. I, too, think that there should be a monument and that they richly deserve it, but not in the Veterans' Park. The park was dedicated as a park that would be built to honor America's veterans who have fought in defense of America. The Chamber of Commerce magazine published after that shows a flag array and says that it was built to honor veterans of all American wars. It does not honor veterans of other nations. There are many other American veterans that have not yet been honored in the park as of yet. Among those are the women veterans of the U.S. and the Coast Guard or WWI or WWII; they are honored elsewhere. Our purpose of this park can be maintained and I offer a suggestion that Woodland Park would make a good location for the Vietnamese Monument. I believe this would be fair to everyone.

Randy Bane, 1821 Burns St.

I deal with many Veterans organization both locally and nationwide that support veterans and their families. My concern is that the memorial is not a list of names or a stroll through the park but it is sacred ground. It is the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 9/11 and our sons and daughters are right now dying for freedom. I am worried that we do not have a place to honor them with a memorial in the future. That is my major concern. I also want to add that I am sick to death of segregation and anger and hatred and of communities not coming together. I vote that we seriously look at the proposal for the park. If it can bring a community and neighbors together, then we need to seriously consider the Memorial.

John Wilson, 4309 Soder

I am a member of various American Legion and Vietnam Veterans Memorials. I believe that the Vietnamese Community deserves a memorial, but not in Veterans' Park. The park was promised to the American Veterans. This is nothing against the Vietnamese community, but we believe the park should be reserved for only military veterans of the United States.

Cha Tran, 2268 S. Hiram, as translated by Debbie Nguyen

I was in the Vietnam War and was a prisoner of war for ten year. The memorial is for the next generation so that they can remember those that died and that is what Veterans' Park is for. If the monument is not built there, the next generation will not remember.

Kathy Dittmer, 823 Litchfield

I believe the Vietnamese Community has worked long and hard to find the funds to build this memorial. I understand that the American servicemen's concern over the lack of

space in the park. There seems to me that there has to be a way to resolve these issues. I believe everyone can end up a winner with this memorial.

Curt Lewis, 15401 E. 71st St South

I became aware of this issue today and I am in favor of this memorial being built in the Park. My family has a long line of veterans and I see no reason why they cannot have their memorial.

Tom Peterson, 3940 S. 215th, Goddard, KS

I do not support this memorial being built in Veterans' Park. It is for American veterans and should be left that way.

Tu Vu, 1945 S. Stacy

I work at Sprit and I was an officer in South Vietnam. I fought from 1972-75 and my brother was also soldier who died in the war. We fought side by side with the American soldiers. My family came to America because we had no place to live in Vietnam. We pay taxes in this American city now and we just ask why we cannot build a memorial in the park now. I think we have plenty of land in the park and we can build our memorial and then we can build the memorials of all of the other wars. Please do put our memorial some place else.

Jim Dennison, 9015 W. Central Park St.

I am a member of various Veterans and POW organizations. I have worked along side the Vietnamese-American people and have seen them raise their families and pay their taxes. They have worked hard for what they have. These people have their American citizenship and they have given up their citizenship of Vietnam and have grown with us. Their sons and daughters have put on American uniforms and have fought in Afghanistan and Iraq. They have paid their dues. The war is over and these people deserve a place in that park. So many people lost their lives, it's the least we can do to give them a place in that park.

Khanh Nguyen, 1129 N. Pinecrest

My history classes in Vietnam and the classes I have taken in America were very different. I know that the Kennedy government had a big impact on many Americans. I support the memorial so I can show my friends a part of our history. All we want is just a piece of land. We all died together.

Chin Nguyen, 1129 N. Pinecrest

We would like to have a place to build. We want to remember our heroes who died in Vietnam. We respect the Americans and love them. Eight thousand people in Wichita need a place for our young children to remind them always of respect to their heroes. If you accept the memorial we will build it and pay for it. We hope you will help us remember our American heroes.

Mike Harter, 2224 S. Waco

Member of various Marine Corp Leagues and American Vietnam Veterans Organizations. I am here to represent a large number of veterans and organizations that express their objection to placing a Vietnamese Memorial in Veterans Park. Wichita veterans came and asked for this park and were granted this land to memorialize American veterans. There never has never nor will there ever be an intent to memorialize soldiers of other governments in this park. Doing so would open a floodgate of requests from our past allies. I have no doubt that there would be a great outcry from the community if this memorial were granted. Ten years ago the Vietnamese Community again tried to have a memorial built in Veterans' Park and was confronted by many veterans who told them they would give them any piece of city land except in Veterans Park for their memorial. We even offered to drive them around to find the site. The Vietnamese Community rejected this offer. They have not contacted any organization that currently has memorials in the park. They have tried to back door us to get their agenda passed. If the Vietnamese Community is so adamant in honoring their soldiers, why have they waited 40 years to do this? If these people want to honor us, they need to honor our concern to place their memorial in another location. When the Vietnam wall was erected, the Vietnamese Community was invited to place their flag along side our service flag to honor their soldiers. We feel that this honors their soldiers.

Bob Pinkstaff, 10208 E. Shadybrook

I am a veteran and member of various American Veterans organizations. About ten years ago we held a meeting the Vietnamese Organization and told them we did not support their trying to build a memorial in Veterans Park. We offered to help them find another site. The final outcome of their attempt to build a memorial failed. The City of Wichita did agree to allow them to build a memorial anywhere else in Wichita. I am strongly opposed to any plan to allow the construction of the Vietnamese Memorial in Veterans' Park. This park is a snapshot of American history and the dedication of the soldiers who died in action. The Vietnamese Association has attempted to purge their memory that Vietnam is a communist country and flies the flag of communism. There is not a free South Vietnam. The flag they wish to fly stands for communism.

There being no further requests to speak, Miller then closed the public comment portion of the meeting and encouraged any further comments be submitted via email to the Park Board.

#### **Item 4. Storm Water Filtration**

Miller introduced the topic by outlining that several Board members had expressed interest in learning more about how storm water can be filtered and slowed down. Larry Hoetmer was asked to provide information on this subject.

Hoetmer handed out several documents that pertained to storm water filtration and how to utilize it in parks and around the city. He referred to the storm water manual from Lincoln, NE, and pointed out good examples on how they are handling their storm water issue. Miller asked if Hoetmer would consider the items on the list alternatives to

diverting storm water into a concrete drainage box and getting it to the river quickly and unfiltered. Hoetmer replied that they are alternatives and that they are used for different types of drainage issues and sites. He explained that this information is for new developments and not so much for existing developments. Kupper replied that if we had been consulted on the Grove Park situation, for example, we would have required them to create a pre-treatment pond similar to this one. Hoetmer replied that having open prairie areas helps slow down the rain as well; it allows the soil to open up and receive the water. He said he would like to see the community get past the mentality that they need to mow these areas and that by letting the vegetation and prairie grow is really beneficial to the storm water plan.

Dey commented that it would be helpful to him if we knew how we could get the City of Wichita or Sedgwick Co. to adopt a manual like this for all developments. Hoetmer replied that we have to introduce the idea to the storm water department, which he believes is already beginning to consider the idea. He said that the biggest thing we need to do is to get with the GIS people and have automatic flags come up when they see that they are dealing with City property. Dey said he would like to encourage the City of Wichita to visit this issue. He went on to say that the PROS plan would be an exception to the current way of looking at these issues and the development of parks. Kupper said we need to work with the consultants and we can have them create a whole section of their PROS proposal toward storm water filtration.

Solter commented that the Park Department staff has a lot of inter-office communication with other city departments, but he wondered if the Park Board could make a presentation to the city commission and request that storm water filtration become a part of the city planning efforts. Kupper replied that the Board would have to have a joint meeting with the MAPC because it all starts with the developers. Solter commented that he has watched meetings between Jim Skelton and Tim Norton and the city and county are beginning to talk together at that level. Kupper said that we need to look at states that have higher rainfall levels than Kansas and look at what they require as it relates to storm water management. Miller then questioned how to get this process started and how we educate ourselves better and create prototypes to provide more information to the different organizations. She said she liked the idea of inviting Public Works and other entities to get together and express everyone's interest on the topic. The storm water manual is being re-done right now and we need to talk to them concerning this, too.

Miller asked what next steps the Board should take and Kupper suggested the Board members take time as individuals reading and reviewing the information. She then asked Hoetmer what his preferred storm water methods were from the listing in the manual. His preferred methods were:

- Bio-swell
- Dry Detention Basins
- Natural and Native Vegetation
- Rain Gardens

The Board agreed to keep this matter open and to continue to try and draw involvement from other organizations to help the storm water process grow in the area.

#### **Items 4 and 5: Park and Playground Requests/Dry Creek Neighborhood Request**

Miller then asked the Board if anyone would be interested in moving Items 4 and 5 to the next Park Board Meeting agenda due to the length of the current meeting.

**Motion 4: Solter made the motion to delay items 4 and 5 to the next meeting. Leeper seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.**

#### **Item 6: Update on Riverside Tennis Center**

Kupper informed the board that the Parks Department had received bids from one vendor for the inflatable tennis dome. The bid came in at \$46,000 less than the original estimate. The dome came with heating, air conditioning and lights at \$403,000. He said they also purchased a truck airlock system so they can drive one of the large bucket trucks inside the dome to fix the lights. He said the entire \$429,000 federal money we had has been encumbered for the dome. The bids for the actual construction of the courts is slated to come in around September 25, 2006, and will go to the City Council the first week in October. After that we will find out the cost to demolish the existing courts. He said he is now thinking of placing post-tension concrete over the existing asphalt courts that are there, as it would provide a nice stable base. He has not reviewed the current plan, but by the next Park Board Meeting he would know the exact costs. Leeper asked if the dome was still going to be a permanent fixture to which Kupper replied that it was. He said it is his intent to use it 12 months out of the year and they had reviewed the cost estimates and they still stand by their original estimates. Leeper asked to make the point that perhaps it would be cheaper to seal the current courts and use a type of plexi-plate surface for the new courts. He said this material lasts forever and that tennis players love it. Miller then wished to inform the board that some operational funding for the dome had been approved. She said that \$40,000 had been approved in this year's budget.

#### **Item 7. Slate of Officers**

Miller informed the Board that she was willing to continue on as President of the Park Board and that Dey was also willing to remain as Second Vice President. She then said that Brunner had officially asked to resign as first Vice President but not from the Board. Leeper spoke and said that he would like to nominate Johnson as First Vice President and keep Dey as Second Vice President.

**Motion: The slate of officers to be voted on at the next Park Board meeting proposes that Janet Miller be retained as Park Board President, Johnson be nominated as First Vice President and Dey will remain as Second Vice President of the Park Board. Motion was proposed by Solter and seconded by Leeper. Vote passed, 6-0.**

### **Item 8: Park Board Retreat**

Miller informed the board that her mother-in-law had passed away the previous weekend and the memorial service was scheduled for the same day as the Park Board Retreat. She said that she did not mind if the Retreat proceeded without her and then asked the Board members what they would like to do. The majority of the Board members agreed to postpone the retreat until a later date. Kupper then informed the Board that he would be at a conference in Seattle during the next regularly scheduled Park Board Meeting on October 9. He asked the board to please reschedule the meeting to Oct. 16, 2006.

**Motion 5: Miller made the motion to postpone the Park Board Retreat originally scheduled for September 15 to a future date and time. She also made the motion to reschedule the October 9 Park Board meeting to October 16, 2006, and to include the officer elections at that meeting. Leeper seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **Item 9: PROS plan update.**

Wadle informed the Board that they had a good pre-submittal conference last week with 11 firms in attendance. Kupper added that the Trust for Public Land has also decided to respond to the RFP.

Miller informed the Board that they were getting ready to submit their first grant application for the speaker series funding to the Kansas Health Foundation. Kupper replied that the Board should try to contact the Lattner Foundation as well.

### **Item 10: Director's Update**

Kupper informed the board that a landowner in the southeast quadrant of the city would like the City to buy his section of land. This individual does not want any money, but his sister does. He said he has \$350,000 in CIP funds for 2007 reserved for land acquisition. Their quoted price is \$6000/acre for the 160-acre lot. Kupper said he wants to convince the landowner to give us his 80 acres for free and then he would not be far off in cost if he had to buy the other portion that belongs to the sister. He said he would need to come up with an extra \$130,000. Kupper said he has contacted Trust for Public Land to see if they can do the negotiating and will hold the money until we have all of the money.

Kupper said he had advised the landowner that he needs to sell it with stipulations on the deed to preserve the area and that it be protected and preserved or they would get the land back. Miller asked what the Park Board's role was in making this decision and Kupper said he will come back with an actual agenda item if he feels they are getting close to finalizing the plans to preserve and buy the land. Leeper asked if that money that was set-aside was to develop the new regional park to which Kupper relied that this would qualify as that park. Kupper agreed to keep the Board informed on the issue and let them know if and when they decided to purchase the property.

Miller then asked if anyone from the Board had any additional comments and there were none.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:10 p.m.

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Janet L. Miller, President

ATTEST:

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Myca J. Bunch  
Recording Secretary