

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
Park and Recreation Department  
Conference Room, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor, City Hall  
Monday, April 10, 2006  
3:30 p.m.**

Present: Dennis Brunner, Glen Dey, Doug Leeper, Janet Miller and Andy Solter

Absent: Cherylane Adams and Mick Tranbarger

Also Present: Martin Libhart – U.S.D. 259; Kenton Cox and Joe Johnson - Schaeffer-Johnson-Cox & Fry; Merv Criser, John Coslett, Walt Campbell, Dale Churchman, B. K. Owens and Bill Barnes – Kansas Firefighter’s Museum; Bob Rives; Nancy Boewe – East Schweiter Neighborhood Association; Kathy Dittmer and M.S. Mitchell – Riverside Citizens Association; Patty Marlett - Audubon Society; Larry Ross; Kurt Schroeder – Office of Central Inspection; Mike North – Law Department; Scott Wadle – Planning Department; and Doug Kupper and Maryann Crockett (staff)

President Miller called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

**PUBLIC AGENDA**

The following individuals spoke:

- Nancy Boewe – East Schweiter Neighborhood Association – asked about the timeline on the scheduled improvements to Schweiter Park. She said Councilman Brewer had indicated that additional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds had been allocated to the project. Director Kupper said he would check on the status of the project.
- Joe Johnson – complimented the Board on the acquisition of property for development of a park in District II.

**REGULAR AGENDA**

President Miller introduced new Park Board Member Andy Solter. Mr. Solter commented that he has worked for the Wichita Public School System for 6 ½ years assisting low-income students prepare for college. He said previous to that he worked for the Regional Prevention Center. He said he has also been a member of the South City Progressive Association, South City Improvement Alliance, and the Southeast Neighborhood Association.

**On motion by Dey, second by Brunner, the Minutes of the March 13, 2006 Regular Meeting were reviewed and approved unanimously as submitted.**

1. **Report on Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Master Plan.** Scott Wadle, Planning Department, provided board members handouts, which were a PowerPoint Presentation entitled “Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan” and a timeline document entitled “Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Planning Process”. Mr. Wadle briefly reviewed the PowerPoint presentation as follows:

- 1) **PROS Plan Assumptions – Environment.** WCC and joint Park Board meeting, citizen involvement, Wichita funds for Wichita, work with others [Visioneering and other organizations], timely plan delivery -- estimated at 75 weeks.
- 2) **How can we involve other communities?** Create a PROS plan to guide the region, counties, and cities? Can it be manageable? Will Wichita lose its voice over its own vision and goals? Complete plan without communities subsidizing others? Approach Selection – should the process be bottom-up or top-down? (Top-Down Approach – region > counties > municipalities) – (Bottom-Up Approach – municipalities > counties > region). Multiple Organization Participation – develop regional visions and goals, create a public buzz and secure sponsors, collect information about each municipality and county (surveys, ratio of parks, etc.), process the information, develop a plan of action for each county (identify new development and potential shared use facilities). Levels of participation – Gold, Silver, Bronze. He explained the benefits of each level of participation and the costs.
- 3) **What, when, where, and who?** Referred to the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Planning Process timeline document, which included task responsibilities for the Consultant (once hired), Park Department, Park Board, Planning Department and Visioneering Wichita Staff. Identified important time lines: First and Second Draft documents, Request for Quote (RFQ), hiring of consultant, development of the Community PROS Needs and Resources Report, Wichita PROS Comprehensive Plan, public presentations, and project priority plan.
- 4) **Latest developments.** Involve other communities – Visioneering Wichita will set up a regional meeting with community decision makers.
- 5) **Next steps.** Meeting to review PROS process and tasks, incorporate Visioneering Wichita process, develop and review RFQ, discuss potential funding and donors.

Dey asked when the speaker series would occur in the process, since he thought it was a way to frame the general concept of the PROS Plan and what it would accomplish, and communicate that to the public. He asked if the speaker series would occur before or after the consultant was hired. Mr. Wadle commented that both items occurred approximately within the same time frame. There was brief discussion concerning the planning process, funding (Wichita has set aside \$250,000 for the project), and participation by Sedgwick County, as well as surrounding counties and small communities, in the PROS project. Director Kupper commented that a meeting would be held to discuss the plan concept and explain the project to City Managers, County Administrators, and Mayors in order for them to decide if they want to participate.

There was considerable discussion about the project time line as presented. Leeper mentioned that springtime is when people get excited about parks. Wadle commented that public presentations should occur around October. Director Kupper suggested that board members begin discussing the plan with District Advisory Boards, neighborhood associations and other constituents. Leeper suggested that perhaps a draft of the completed plan could be displayed at the 2007 Riverfestival. Dey asked about surveys. Wadle said they would be distributed at the end of October or early November. Dey asked if the surveys would happen before or after the consultant was hired. Wadle commented that both items would take place about the same. Dey expressed concern that the speaker's bureau happen prior to the surveys being conducted. He said survey feedback would be different if people were better informed on the project. President Miller commented that these issues would be taken

into consideration as the project schedule is refined. She added that she felt Visioneering would be instrumental in getting the word out to the community on the project.

2. **Discussion of U.S.D. 259 Request.** This item was deferred from the March meeting in order to provide the public sufficient time to comment on the proposal. Martin Libhart, U.S.D. 259, briefly reviewed the land exchange proposal stating that U.S.D. 259 would transfer ownership of Parcel, "A" which consisted of approximately 3.45 acres west of Sullivan Street, and Parcel "B" which consisted of approximately 2.75 acres immediately east of Sullivan Street (a total of 6.20 acres referred to as the Riverview Elementary School site) to the City of Wichita/Board of Park Commissioners in exchange for the City of Wichita and/or Board of Park Commissioners transferring Parcel "C" which consisted of approximately 3.5 acres of Heller's Park immediately west of the west property line of Earhart Environmental Magnet Elementary School, including the dedicated right-of-way for a future extension of Mascot Avenue, and Parcel "D" which consisted of approximately 2.0 acres immediately north of the north property line of Earhart School currently owned by the City of Wichita (a total of 5.50 acres).

President Miller asked if the land swap would include all the land west to the river at Riverview? Libhart stated that was correct. Brunner asked if the school system had any agreement for use of the ball diamonds at Riverview. Mr. Libhart explained that there was contract, which was renewed annually for use of the fields at the site. He said the league did a lot of field preparation and maintenance at the site. He said there had been some discussion concerning the league acquiring the property; however, there were more issues involved with the acquisition than the league was willing to take on.

Brunner commented that he had gone by the Riverview site to view the facilities. He said this was a tremendous acquisition, especially since the surrounding area was underserved in parks. He said there were numerous possibilities for the site. President Miller agreed saying that she too had driven around and walked the area. Leeper commented that the acreage also had access to the river.

Solter asked if there was a policy on land acquisition. President Miller commented that there was no short answer to that question and added that there was no specific written policy. She said the Board has been struggling with that issue for more than 36 months and mentioned land trades at both Linwood and Planeview Parks. She said perhaps a more formalized policy on land acquisition will come out of the PROS process. She said she felt the Board's mission was to preserve, protect and acquire land for parks, not to dispose of or sell parkland. Director Kupper commented that the City acquired almost 16 acres at three different locations in exchange for the 4.6 acres forfeited at Linwood Park. Leeper said he was in favor of the land exchange and commented on the need for lighted ball diamonds, the cost to construct such a facility and river access. He said taking all those items into consideration; he felt this proposal was in the best interest of the Park Board and City.

**Leeper moved, second by Dey, to recommend that the City Council accept U.S.D. 259's land exchange proposal, with the amendment that the acreage at Riverview be adjusted to include river access. Motion carried 5-0.**

3. **Request from Historic Firefighters Museum.** This item was deferred from the March meeting in order to provide the public sufficient time to comment on the proposal; resolve some questions regarding parking for the facility; and provide architectural drawings of the proposed expansion.

President Miller briefly reviewed the proposal to expand the current facility into Lincoln Park. She stated that the Board had several questions regarding the proposed building expansion, parking, the City Parking Ordinance, and any American's with Disabilities (ADA) requirements. She commented that the Board had requested that Kansas Firefighter's Museum (KFM) representatives meet with City staff to discuss requirements for the project.

Walt Campbell commented that a KFM representative had met with City staff to discuss parking requirements. He said the current ordinance requires one parking space for every 3,000 square feet (depending on how the space is used – storage, offices, etc.). He said the current building is 2,500 square feet and the proposed expansion is 10,000 square feet. He said they were advised that the building would require 42 parking spaces. He said the spaces needed to be adjacent to the structure or within 600 feet, but not separated by a major arterial street. He said ten spaces exist at Fire Station #2. He said they also have an agreement with Immanuel Baptist Church (IBC) to use their parking lot, which is 450 feet from the building; therefore, the church parking qualifies as far as distance.

Mr. Campbell said no architectural drawings have been completed because the group would like to have some kind of assurance that the proposal will be approved before they spend money on drawings. He said an artist's concept of the proposal was included in the brochure that was distributed at the last meeting. He said they also do not have a financial plan or donations for the project, and won't until they receive approval for the building expansion. He added that they have very little chance of getting financial assistance from any governmental agency because they do not own the land at the museum site. Responding to a question, he stated that there were 100 parking spaces at IBC. President Miller asked about the city's on-site parking requirements for the museum, noting that all parking Mr. Campbell referred to was off-site. Mr. Campbell commented that there was space along the tracks near Topeka. Director Kupper asked if the building would have overhead doors in order to get the exhibits inside. Mr. Campbell responded that equipment will need to be moved in from the driveway off Topeka. He said the new addition will have meetings rooms and some apparatus.

Mr. Campbell concluded by stating that they felt the proposed expansion would in no way detract from Lincoln Park, but may in fact attract additional visitors to the area. He said the museum's future at this location depended on the Board's decision. Responding to a question, he said they project approximately \$50,000 in annual revenues. He also stated that the group is attempting to get a 99 years lease from the City in order to qualify and apply for any grants that may be available to help with expansion costs. He added that the Arts Council had provided some minor funding. B.K. Owens explained that they currently had a 20-year lease with the City on the building, which was about half expired.

President Miller asked Kurt Schroeder, Director of the Office of Central Inspection, if he had anything to add. Mr. Schroeder stated that 50% of the parking for the building should be "on-site" abutting the building. He said there was an administrative provision in the Zoning Code that allows for 100% parking off site, as long as it does not cross an arterial. He said the Planning Director, **with concurrence from the Superintendent of Central Inspection**, was authorized to make the decision to grant the administrative exception. Solter asked if Mr. Schroeder would make that recommendation to the Planning Director. Mr. Schroeder said he did not believe he had enough information to make a recommendation. Mr. Schroeder said there were a couple of issues such as parking across the railroad tracks and not competing with the IBC for parking. Brunner suggested that as an advisory board, they

didn't need to get too technical. He said the questions the Park Board needed to answer were "Is the museum a good thing to have in the park? And, does the expansion proposal have any merit?"

Leeper said he would support the expansion the group was proposing with stipulations. Brunner said he would support giving land for expansion of the building, but definitely not for parking. Dey said he could probably support the proposal if he had some indication on how this proposed expansion fit in with the Park Department's plans for Lincoln Park. He also expressed concern as to how the museum would get equipment/apparatus into the building. President Miller said she needed additional information on ADA requirements. She added that the expansion had not been included in the South Central Plan. She said she supported the work they were doing in the existing facility, but could not approve the expansion proposal without information on parking and other access issues.

**Brunner moved, second by Leeper, to recommend that the City Council grant the Firefighter Museum's request for the amount of land needed for expansion of the building *only* at Lincoln Park. The motion was amended to include the requirement that the footprint of the building include any pedestrian walkways/paths that are necessary to support the building. Motion carried 4-1. Miller – No.**

4. **Request from Family of Former Park Director.** President Miller stated that this and the next item were related in that staff had received two separate requests to rename West Side Athletic Field (WSAF) after two individuals. She referred board members to correspondence, one letter dated February 1, 2006, and another dated March 6, 2006. She clarified that City Council Policy #13 – Advisory Committee/Naming of Public Facilities, stipulated that "If the recommendation is a person's name, it may include only the name of a person who is deceased." Director Kupper explained that "amenities" within parks could be named after living persons and referenced Lynette Woodard Recreation Center, Barry Sanders Football Field, Antoine Carr Basketball Courts and Goose Doughty Tennis Courts. He added that the family of the former park director was not stuck on WSAF; that was just one of the suggestions that had been discussed.

Responding to a question from Brunner, Director Kupper stated that at the present time, none of the fields at WSAF were named after anyone. He mentioned the possibility of naming a field at the complex after each individual. Another suggestion was naming the bike path after the former director.

President Miller asked if anyone from the public wished to comment on the issue. The following individual spoke:

- **Bob Rives** – explained that he had not been aware that the City had a policy against naming a facility after a living individual. He mentioned the possibility of naming a field at McAdams Park. He briefly reiterated the reasons to name a baseball facility after Daryl Spencer, adding that Mr. Spender was born in 1928, and while he was in good health, it would be fitting if he were honored while he could participate in any ceremony. He also mentioned consideration of naming a field after Bob Thurman, who did not reach the major leagues until he was 37 years old because of the color barrier. He said this made him the only native Wichitan to star in both the Negro Leagues and the majors.

Brunner mentioned the players on the Walk of Fame at Lawrence Dumont Stadium. He said he would like staff to research other possibilities for naming a facility after the former director than just baseball fields.

**Brunner moved, second by Leeper, to table this issue until the May meeting in order for the Board to receive additional information on possible sites that could be named after the individual. Motion carried 5-0.**

5. **Request to Rename West Side Athletic Field.** President Miller said the Board needed additional information before they could make a decision about this item.

**Brunner moved, second by Miller, to table this issue until the May meeting, pending resolution of the previous item. Motion carried 5-0.**

6. **Discussion of Moratorium on Riverbank Replatting.** President Miller commented that the final draft resolution read exactly as the Board had requested. She asked that staff move forward with the revised resolution and get it placed it on the City Council agenda.

**Miller moved, second by Dey, to request that the revised resolution be presented to City Council at the earliest possible date. Motion carried 5-0.**

7. **Director's Update.** Director Kupper reported briefly on the following items:

- **Reschedule of May Regular Meeting and Workshop** – it was the general consensus to hold a short regular meeting and adjourn into a workshop to discuss the PROS Plan on Saturday, May 13, 2006, at 8:30 am, location to be announced at a later date. (It was later announced that the meeting would be held at Century II, Room #202.)
- **River Access Study** – reported that other municipalities including Reno and Sumner Counties, the cities of Hayesville, Hutchinson and Oxford have contributed funds towards the river access plan. He said the state and City of Wichita were providing \$30,000 each towards the project. He said a Request for Quote was being issued to hire a consultant to study locations for canoe launches along the Arkansas River.
- **Northeast Baseball Complex** - he said staff was working on designating a preferred developer to work with the Central Plains Youth Sports organization on development of the complex.
- **Evergreen Park – Land, Water and Conservation Funds (LWCF)** – explained that the land at Evergreen Park designated for the El Zocalo project was outside the land identified in the 1972 application for LWCF. He said staff had received a verification letter from the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks and were moving forward to develop a “Memorandum of Understanding” with El Zocalo.
- **Community Development Block Grant Funds** – indicated that an additional \$250,000-\$400,000 left over from other projects had been reallocated to Districts III and IV.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:40 p.m.

---

Janet Miller, President

ATTEST:

---

Maryann Crockett  
Recording Secretary