

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
McAdams Recreation Center
1329 E. 16th Street
July 18, 2011
3:00 p.m.**

Present: Bryan Frye, Andy Solter, John Stevens, Matt Goolsby, Tom Roth, Cindy Claycomb,

Absent: Randy Brown

Also Present: Doug Kupper, Director of Park and Recreation, Sharon Dickgrafe, Chief Deputy City Attorney, Christina Butler, Clerk, Don Harrison, Golf Division Manager, Troy Hendricks, Auburn Hills Golf Pro, Bryce Mumford, Fiscal Analyst, Jerry Ware, Hazel Watson, citizens

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

PUBLIC AGENDA

None.

REGULAR AGENDA

Item 1: Approval of Minutes

Motion by Frye, second by Roth, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the June regular meeting minutes of the Board of Park Commissioners.

Item 2A: Budget 2011 – 2013

Kupper handed out attachments with the 2012-2013 proposed City budget. He reviewed the numbers and stated that in mid-2011 the City of Wichita forecasted a \$3.1 million shortfall for the year. The City Manager identified areas for improvement for each Department to help resolve the deficit. The mowing contingency figure was reduced to \$1.6 million from \$1.7 million for a savings of \$100,000. Forestry has increased shrinkage to \$812,786 from \$512,786 which is a savings of \$300,000. Park Maintenance Division had experienced five weeks of furlough the last two years for a savings of \$160,000. A review of the Golf Division was necessary to establish a sustainable system. A position was added to develop the 501(c)3 not-for-profit PARC Foundation which is responsible for an increased revenue of approximately \$500,000.

Claycomb asked if the numbers were reasonable.

Kupper replied that they were reasonable with grants and foundation funds available.

Frye asked if the additional dollars would go to the General Fund or into Park Fund.

Kupper stated that if there were funds with no strings attached, like matching funds from the Capital Improvement Fund, then they could go directly into the PARC foundation dollars. He stated that Park and Recreation made up approximately 6% of the City's budget.

Solter asked about the status of the Recreation Programming changes.

Kupper replied that Karen Walker had spearheaded this move. Since she had resigned from her position of Recreation Division Manager, interviews for her replacement would take place in July and the department would proceed from there. He also stated that once the summer winds down at the recreation centers, the directors and assistant directors would be more available to update the Board on their status.

Claycomb asked if there would be more revenue.

Kupper replied that yes, there could be more revenue and there were positive results so far. The second session of programming saw an increase of 1300 new clients. There was a \$52,000 increase in revenue. He stated that they were still working on the revenue policy, reviewing new on-line registration software programs, and photo identifications for memberships.

Solter asked if the identification cards would be similar to the library card system.

Kupper stated they could partner with the library system but they have to see what is available in software systems. He stated that the Golf Division also needed new software because they currently cannot take on-line payments.

Stevens asked about the cost for the software system.

Kupper stated that they did not have the cost estimate yet. He stated that they were preparing to put a Request for Proposal (RFP) out for it. He stated that it may be cheaper to buy something already out there, but there was a question as to who would own the information. The cost really depended on what was available.

Frye asked what the next steps would be for the City budget process.

Kupper stated that the budget had to be approved on August 9, 2011. There would be a public meeting on Tuesday, 7/19, and a workshop as well.

Kupper went on to discuss the Golf Division and gave an overview and history of the City golf courses. He stated that golf demand is down nationwide and there have been more closures than openings in the last five years. For the year 2010, there was a 15 year low in rounds in Wichita. He stated that Echo Hills would be closing in September 2011 and the casino in Mulvane would be opening a golf course. He reviewed the need for improvements and plans for the future of the golf courses. He stated that two golf courses needed improvements to restrooms and parking lots in order to be ADA compliant. He stated that the pump house at Clapp and several bridges at the golf courses needed to be repaired or replaced. They would also like to add a driving range to MacDonald golf course.

Goalsby asked if there was a noticeable spike in golf numbers after fliers were stuffed in the Water bills in previous years.

Harrison replied there was an increase.

Kupper reviewed revenue for the golf courses and showed that cart rentals were a large revenue item.

Frye asked if there were room rentals in all of the golf course clubhouses.

Kupper stated that yes there were, but Auburn Hills has the largest number of rentals and weddings. He stated that the new Food and Beverage Manager at Auburn Hills has already booked more than 12 special events (weddings/birthday parties) for 2012 due to better marketing. He stated that they were in the process of creating a TV advertisement specifically for this.

Kupper went on to state there could be discussions of increasing fees in 2012. He stated there were fee structure changes in 2009 by adding a 2nd level of senior memberships and adding a \$1 to tee time fees. He also stated that course closures had also been discussed as a possibility and further discussion was needed to determine which ones would be considered. He noted that tax subsidies could be an option, but they would have to see how it would impact the CIP structure. He stated that Newton's new golf course is subsidized by taxes and it is working for them. He also acknowledged that private management outsourcing could be an option, but they would have to review the cost to see if it would cost more to outsource the golf courses and if they would gain anything by doing so.

Frye asked if WSU still outsourced their golf course.

Kupper replied yes.

Solter asked how the City's golf course fees compare to others.

Harrison stated that the City is approximately 5% lower than others.

Solter stated that if a golf course was to close, he hoped that it would still be viewed as an open space and does not want to see it sold.

Frye asked if the Park Board needed to offer recommendations before the August 9 City Council meeting.

Kupper replied no. He stated that they should have until October to work on it. Then they can have a decision by November in order to have discussions with employees if there were to be a golf course closure and if they recommend fee changes, they can send it to City Council for approval.

Goalsby asked if all of the golf courses were pulling their weight. He noted there were no expenses listed in the attachments and asked if any courses were lagging behind.

Harrison stated that all the golf courses share the debt. He stated the best performing golf course was Sim.

Solter asked what the difference was between the City golf courses and the other local courses.

Kupper stated that within 10 miles of downtown Wichita there are approximately 340 holes. Of those, 170 are public and 90 are the City's. He stated that he thinks other courses watch our fee structure....when the City increases fees, others increase their fees.

Harrison stated that they do not expect to lose 100% of the players at a course if it is closed. He stated they estimate that 35% will move to other courses and 65% will stay with the remaining City golf courses.

Kupper stated that they should do different scenarios regarding closing one course over another.

Harrison stated that some of the golf courses use City water and others have well water.

Claycomb asked who owns the golf courses.

Kupper replied that Sim is owned by the City. Clapp, MacDonald and Auburn Hills are owned by the Board of Park Commissioners. And Tex Consolver is owned by the City and the Airport Authority.

Goalsby asked if an RFP should be put out to see if someone wants to purchase a golf course.

Kupper stated that if an RFP is put out, that is saying that a golf course is going to close.

Goalsby stated that he thought it was an idea that should not be taken off the table.

Claycomb asked which expenses would be reduced if a golf course was closed.

Kupper stated that if a golf course was closed or outsourced, the costs for water and the work force would be eliminated.

Claycomb stated that she thought the CIP and the General Fund were different. She asked how the money can be used if they are different.

Kupper stated that revenue dollars being made could be used.

Stevens asked if there was debt other than the \$11 million.

Harrison stated that Tex Consolver and MacDonald have been paid off.

Frye asked what the debt was at Auburn Hills.

Mumford replied \$7 to \$8 million.

Stevens asked about the interest rate.

Kupper stated he would need to get that number and get back to the Board.

Frye opened the discussion to the public.

Hazel Watson (12507 Cornelson) stated that she was against any golf closures and would be willing to pay extra fees. She also commented that the Auburn Hills community would be upset if Auburn Hills golf course would close. She asked what would happen with the Junior Golf program.

Frye asked how many Junior Golfers the City had in the program.

Kupper replied that there were approximately 120 golfers at each course.

Watson stated the need for meetings in the evenings.

Jerry Ware (520 Elder) stated that he is a golfer and has golfed at Sim, Clapp and Tex Consolver. He suggested leaving 9 holes at a golf course and asked if 9 hole versus 18 hole rounds are counted differently.

Harrison stated that they track rounds.

Frye brought the discussion back to the Board.

Goolsby stated that this would be his last Park Board meeting as he was transferred to the Historical Board.

Roth asked if the Golf Division had looked at new programming.

Kupper responded that the Hook A Kid program had expanded to 4 golf courses and these were supported by the recreation centers. He also stated that there are 4-7 discount rates or programs and 6-7 annual membership programs. He stated they are always looking for new ideas.

Stevens stated that he is not a golfer, but he has spoken with a gentleman who travels to the Newton golf course because they have GPS and the ability to order lunch from the golf cart. He asked if the City courses are missing out on some of these competitive things.

Hazel Watson stated that the Newton golf course has a liquor license.

Kupper stated that the City ordinance prohibits alcoholic beverages on Park property with the exception of the golf courses which have cereal malt beverage (CMB) licenses. He stated this could be changed, but the policy would have to be changed. He also stated that Newton's golf course is tax subsidized.

Dickgrafe stated that the City would have to exempt out those locations.

Claycomb asked if it would have to go to City Council.

Dickgrafe replied yes because it is a state statute and city ordinance.

Claycomb asked if expenses per course could be given to the Board for the next meeting.

Kupper stated he would need that for the next meeting.

Harrison commented on Newton's golf course philosophy was to make money on tournaments at the expense of the regular players. He noted that the City's golf courses focus on their regular customers instead of taking tee times away from them with tournaments.

Kupper stated that a commercial was just shot advertising the courses that will run during most of the major golf tournaments.

Claycomb stated that at the public meetings the Park Board should ask for promotional ideas and review all of those that are submitted.

Kupper stated that the Golf Division would like to get the current golfers to play more golf and to attract new golfers to the City courses. They should focus on target marketing.

Frye asked how much money was dedicated to golf course improvements last year.

Harrison replied approximately \$150,000 was spent last year and stated this number would fluctuate based on how well the courses do in a particular year. They need to cover existing year expenses plus the first 3 months of fixed costs for the following year.

Frye noted that drastic actions were needed in order to continue sustainability.

Kupper noted that the City Manager has stated this also.

Frye stated that all golf courses are faced with this. He stated that a GPS system would require capital dollars and asked what the goal should be. He asked if the goal should be to provide for seniors or provide for youth and if they were trying to focus on too many things.

Stevens asked if there was an option for a well at Clapp.

Harrison stated that Clapp had a lot of clay in the ground.

Kupper stated that there was a possibility of tapping into Derby water because both Derby and Haysville buys water from the City of Wichita. There were 10 wells not being used and this could be an option to look at.

Frye stated there needed to be public meetings to educate the constituents...maybe two meetings in the evening.

Solter stated that he would be willing to serve and support the meetings.

Motion by Frye, second by Solter, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO hold a Special Board of Park Commissioners' Meeting on 8/10/11 at 6:30pm at a City golf course TBA prior to the next Regular Meeting on 8/15/11.

Motion by Frye, second by Solter, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO move the 8/15/11 Regular Board of Park Commissioners' Meeting to Clapp Golf Course at 6:30pm.

Claycomb reminded Board that 4 Board members must be present at the meetings.

Item 3A: Park Board Bike Trails Priority List

Kupper stated that he had brought 2 different maps for the Board's reference. One map highlighted existing paths and the other map highlighted priority trails. He stated that the Board needed to appoint a member to serve on the City's committee to submit the Board of Park Commissioners' priority list to them.

He stated that the following bike trails were still on the docket:

- #1 – K-96 to Harry
- #2 – Arkansas to Haysville – from Watson to Haysville along the river corridor
- #3 – Delano neighborhood pathway north of Douglas
- #4 – South Central neighborhood – East river bank to Herman Hill Park

Kupper stated that these bike trails could change in priority.

Motion by Claycomb, to keep the 4 trails as stated by Kupper (#1 – K-96 to Harry, #2 – Arkansas to Haysville – from Watson to Haysville along the river corridor, #3 – Delano neighborhood pathway north of Douglas and #4 – South Central neighborhood – East river bank to Herman Hill Park) and add 2 more – #5 - Continue Redbud trail from Oliver and 127th Street east to the Sedgwick County line and #6 - Connect the west trail to Prairie Sunset Trail through Goddard.

Goolsby stated that the 127th Street trail could be a waste before Kellogg is finished.

Claycomb stated that they had received input from bike groups, Prairie Travelers group and Scott Wadle, from City Planning and different groups with whom she was associated. She stated that there were different options to connect out west. She stated that WAMPO had suggested continuing west on Maple to 135th, but she would suggest going with whatever the City suggests.

Goolsby asked if it would be better to submit Redbud in chunks rather than as a whole bike trail.

Claycomb agreed that it would be better to split Redbud into two.

Amendment and a second by Goolsby to Claycomb's motion, to move Delano to the #1 spot and split Redbud into #5 Redbud A continue existing trail to K-96, #6 Redbud B K-96 to county line and #7 connect west trail to Prairie Sunset Trail through Goddard. So the priority list would be: #1 – Delano neighborhood pathway north of Douglas, #2 - K-96 to Harry, #3 – Arkansas to Haysville – from Watson to Haysville along the river corridor, #4 – South Central neighborhood – East river bank to Herman Hill Park, #5 Redbud A continue existing trail to K-96, #6 Redbud B K-96 to county line and #7 connect west trail to Prairie Sunset Trail through Goddard.

Claycomb accepted Goolsby's amendment, and IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

Motion by Stevens, second by Frye, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO appoint Cindy Claycomb to the Master Plan Steering Committee.

Item 3B: PROS Plan

Frye stated that the Board needed to start reviewing the PROS Plan and determine goals to achieve capital dollars and funding, projects and community costs and timelines. He suggested that a sub-committee be created to meet with Kupper.

Solter stated he could meet with Kupper.

Kupper stated that the first deposit into the PARC account would come from the Fresh Air Baby Camp. He stated that Stacey Hamm needed tools in place to go to corporations for donations.

Frye stated that the Board had lobbied for Stacey's position and they needed to have priorities set for her.

Kupper stated that Kingsbury needed to be lined out.

Frye stated that there needed to be a sub-committee to bring priorities back to the Board.

Item 4: Updates from the Director and President

Kupper stated that bids were due Friday for the Meridian Dog Park. They expected construction to begin Fall 2011.

Stevens asked if the Board would name the Park.

Kupper stated that it would be a naming opportunity.

Kupper stated that \$60,000 was received from the Miracle Network for the baseball diamonds. He stated that he would go to the City Council at the first meeting in August and hoped to get the CIP approved soon to start construction in the Fall of 2011 with teams playing baseball there next season.

Dickgrafe asked if USD 259 started on the track at West Douglas.

Kupper stated he believed it was done.

Claycomb noted that they had not started on the Cessna piece of it and suggested they need to place timelines on future USD 259 MOUs.

Frye stated that the Auburn Hills IT Tower was going back to MAPC on Thursday. He stated it had gone back twice already and had been on the Park Board's agenda two times. He had a meeting with the City Manager, Mike Mayta and Doug Kupper to discuss other possible sites within park inventory. He also told them that it was not the Board of Park Commissioners place to find a location for the Tower.

Dickgrafe asked if there were other options.

Kupper stated that Buffalo, The Meadows and Millbrook had been options. But Buffalo was too residential and The Meadows and Millbrook were both in flood plains.

Kupper stated that if MAPC does not approve the tower location, then staff could take the option to City Council. A vote of 5 members would be needed.

Item 5: Issues on the Horizon

Stevens asked if the Board should meet two times in September.

Dickgrafe stated that there would have to be a change in the by-laws.

Frye stated that the annual meeting needed to be scheduled on a Saturday for Board Elections. He asked the Board to bring nominations to the August meeting.

Frye thanked Matt Goolsby for his service on the Board of Park Commissioners.

Item 6: Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:45 p.m.

Bryan Frye, President

Christina Butler, Clerk