

July 19, 2010

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
Park and Recreation Conference Room
11th Floor, City Hall
Monday, July 19, 2010
3:00 p.m.**

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

Absent: Randy Brown

Also Present: Karen Walker, Assistant Director of Park and Recreation, Tim Martz, Superintendent Park and Recreation, David McGuire, staff, Warren McCoskey, staff, Sharon Dickgrafe, Assistant City Attorney, Lee Ann Sack, Clerk, Jerry Warren, citizen

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

PUBLIC AGENDA

None.

REGULAR AGENDA

Item 1: Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Roth, second by Claycomb, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the Park Board regular meeting minutes of June 21, 2010.

On a motion by Claycomb, second by Goolsby, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to amend the agenda to place item 3A before item 2A.

Item 3A: City Ordinance 9.08

Kupper advised the Board that Ordinance 9.08 has been updated with all accepted suggestions and defined legal terms. The ordinance has been presented to all DAB's twice. The Board has reviewed the ordinance twice. The tree ordinance is ready to present to City Council for adoption.

Goolsby asked if all accepted suggestions from Westar Energy were incorporated into the document emailed to the Board.

Kupper said all of their suggestions were considered, but not all were accepted. No regulation or enforcement of tree species planted under utility lines on private property is included in the ordinance.

Frye asked if the Board had additional comments.

Goolsby stated he did not want the city to tell people what to plant on their personal property and no resident should have to call to have trees maintained on the easement in front of their property.

Goolsby stated he opposed the ordinance.

Frye asked for Public Comment, there was none.

Motion by Claycomb, second by Solter. IT WAS VOTED TO APPROVE Ordinance 9.08 for presentation to City Council for approval. Motion passed 5-1, Goolsby dissent.

Frye thanked Tim Martz and staff for their work completing the ordinance.

Item 2A: 2011 Budget Proposal

Kupper introduced City Manager Bob Layton to speak about the proposed revisions to the 2011 Budget and what is proposed for the Department of Park and Recreation.

Layton thanked the Board for inviting him to discuss the 2011 Budget Proposal. He indicated USD 259 has some of the same budget problems as the city. They have found that Community Education is not sustainable and have decided to discontinue providing those services. Layton also pointed to stiff recreation competition with the YMCA and other competitors. Layton would like to redefine the cities purpose in recreation and breadth of programs. Layton said it needs to be determined if services are duplicated or if there is an audience whose needs are not being met. No citizen should be left behind by newly formed partnerships or service changes. Recreation may expand into long term learning. Roles need to be defined, but no structure or model has been determined. Some recreation locations may transform to community education or contractual locations. The target is 80% cost recovery.

Goolsby asked what timetable Layton was planning for determination of the model.

Layton stated January 1, 2011. The reorganization is a top issue along with a call center for City Hall. Current circumstances have encouraged all organizations to work together for improvement and collaboration.

Solter asked Layton to define Community Education.

Layton said the old concept would be adult education. Layton wants a broader concept of lifelong learning. Recreation centers would possibly open evenings or week-ends. The programming could be as simple as Spanish or Aerobics. Education programming for adults would be core. After school and recreation programming would be included.

Kupper said Community Education and Continuing Education can be combined. Professional certifications may be an area of opportunity to provide to the community. It is more economical to heat or cool a small recreation center versus a large school building to provide after school programming. Discussion with USD 259 will need to continue to determine available resources.

Solter stated since discussions are evolving, the developed model should include community development and how to assist each neighborhoods growth.

Kupper stated this already exists and will continue in neighborhood meetings.

Layton stated the need for a Community Education steering committee and a needs assessment to enhance existing programming. USD 259 will possibly help with marketing and as budgets improve programming could expand into schools. The initial focus will be to define the model. The USD 259

business model looks at this as an employment opportunity. The City would only want instructor lists to access. The accepted model would not be encumbered by instructor selection.

Kupper stated the SCORE program could be expanded.

Claycomb observed the \$1 million savings in the recreation proposal. Claycomb ask how 80% recovery could be achieved.

Layton said there will inevitably be staff reduction, recreation hours diminished or buildings closed. The model is still being formed so no details have been decided. Cost recovery will be essential to the model.

Goolsby noted Layton is indicating the process will be open and inclusive. Goolsby asked if public input will be sought before or after the model is defined.

Layton said all input is welcome and Kupper is very involved in the process. Layton wants to define what current users are getting from current programs and determine how better to serve the community. User groups should not constrain the model. It is important to understand the recreation centers are not being handed to the YMCA. Private providers are still a viable option and some may represent the free market.

Kupper stated success will depend on strong marketing strategies.

Stevens commended Layton on involving USD 259 to discuss sharing assets. If sharing arrangements can be established it will be beneficial to the community. Stevens urged Layton to be careful with park and recreation as the department suffered serious cuts in the previous budget. Park and Recreation is very important to the economic development policies of Wichita. Too many dollars are going outside the city.

Layton stated the City Council defines core and essential services. Park is essential but competing for dollars with Police and Fire as core services.

Stevens stated it is important to improve the department, but he does not want to see it further diminished.

Layton said everyone is waiting for the economy to rebound. Public safety grabs most of the budget dollars. He is engaged with City Council in good discussions about the budget.

Frye asked for public comment, there was none. Frye thanked Layton for his presentation.

Item 3B: Update on Outsourced Mowing

Frye acknowledged this is the first growing season with outsourced mowing of parks and right of ways. He is aware of some challenges in certain areas of the city. Martz was introduced to update the Board on the status of outsourced mowing.

Kupper stated that some vendors are encountering problems with crews just like the city has in the past. Some crews are diligent with outstanding work and some crews need more supervision. Outsourced contractors are encountering the same problems.

5,000 acres have been outsourced. Twenty eight contractors qualified to bid, eleven submitted bids. Four of those did not have the required equipment or withdrew their bid. Seven vendors are now contracted for not more than 1,200 acres each. \$546,000 has been paid to vendors so far this year.

Kupper reported there have been inspection problems due to contractors rushing to report the job as finished and the city inspectors are finding errors. One contractor has accrued \$6,000 in liquidated damages for failing to complete work on schedule. One contractor had a crew that string trimmed the bark off of small trees.

Kupper stated the contracts are renewable, but the vendor can change pricing and the city will have the option to accept or refuse. The next challenge will be if the savings will be maintained or if the vendors will raise their pricing.

Kupper stated Linwood Park and all athletic facilities have been retained by a single park crew. Wichita Wild sites were also retained.

Frye asked what the mowing cycles were.

Kupper stated the cycles are the same as provided by city employees. If the bids remain unchanged, some rotations may be changed from 21 to 14 days. If bids are increased, rotations will be lengthened.

Martz said the inspectors are doing a great job with approximately 800 parcels to inspect.

Goolsby asked if it was stated \$546,000 had been paid so far to vendors.

Kupper stated this was approximately 33% of allocated funds.
Goolsby asked how much was allocated to outsource mowing.

Kupper stated \$1.6 million was allocated. \$546,000 has been paid through June.

Goolsby asked if this included trash clean up.

Kupper stated the bids include trash clean up and run March to February 28.

Martz stated the bids include base and options. It is the cities choice to exercise options.

Goolsby asked if the department is saving more than was proposed in the budget.

Kupper stated the bids reflected \$1.8 million in savings and the funding reflected \$1.6 million in savings.

Goolsby asked if the department thought the bids will be renewed at the same pricing.

Kupper anticipated some vendors will maintain pricing, but not all. Some contractors under estimated the work involved and will likely raise pricing. The city then has the choice to renew. The city may also choose not to renew because of quality or completion problems.

Frye asked if new right of way projects that include landscaping are park responsibility.

Kupper stated that City Council asks for budget responsibility on all new projects before giving approval.

Goolsby noted that some Homeowner Associations have taken over responsibility for adjacent ROW.

Kupper agreed that some Homeowner Associations have taken that responsibility.

Martz noted that the mandatory employee furloughs were a challenge for inspectors and are still in the budget for next year.

Kupper stated during furloughs, employees were inspecting double their work load. The department is still working to ensure uniform inspections. Kansas City has been outsourcing for twenty years and still only outsources 25% of their land.

Claycomb asked if the ratio of inspectors and sites is going fairly well.

Martz affirmed.

Frye stated the citizens are still complaining about the quality of service.

Kupper stated the citizens have a higher sense of awareness. The displaced employees are greatly missed and appreciated. There are more complaint calls now than when the city provided the service, but this may be caused by heightened awareness.

Item 4: Updates from the Director and President

Frye reminded the Board of the annual election of officers in September. An election committee will need to be formed to provide a slate of officers.

Claycomb asked if the September meeting was being changed to September 18 to coincide with the Play Day.

On a motion by Roth, second by Claycomb, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED to move the September Park Board meeting to Saturday, September 18, 2010, at the Watson Park Enclosed Shelter at 9:00 a.m. to be followed by the fall retreat and Annual Play Day.

Kupper said the West Douglas/Mayberry Middle School issue may be back at the August meeting. USD 259 may be proposing providing a walking path in District 4 in exchange for the land. Kupper has not seen the proposal yet.

Kupper stated the policy has been established for visitor passes in City Hall.

Frye asked if everyone had received the policy.

The Board affirmed.

Kupper informed the Board of RDG supplemental agreement is on the July 20 City Council meeting. The agreement will allow addition design consulting for Kingsbury site engineering drawings for the slope of the lakes and where type soils should be placed. This will result in more efficiency.

Kupper stated there are a number of grant requests on City Council July 20 agenda. Hopefully this will bring needed funding to the department.

Kupper reported a citizen call regarding rumors that Country Acres parcel A and B are being sold. No sale is being pursued at this time, no land has transferred. This is a dormant issue.

Claycomb asked if a map is being acquired for the conference room to detail parks.

Kupper said one will be installed before the next Park Board meeting.

Kupper stated bids have been awarded for the road system through Chapin Park. Staff plans to propose fundraising through Greenway Alliance to place a regional skate park in Chapin Park.

Solter asked if Peach Tree Park is complete.

Kupper stated all trees are planted and being cared for. He will check to make sure the park sign has been installed.

Item 5: Issues of the Horizon

Goolsby asked what the status is on the naming of Ryan Woodard Memorial Park and on Arson Canine Ashley's Memorial Dog Park.

Kupper stated he would check the status.

Stevens stated he was shocked at USD 259 even talking about sharing assets and asked Kupper what he thought of the potential.

Kupper stated the attitude and energy of the City Manager and new Superintendent of USD 259 are dynamic and will make potentially positive changes for the community.

Stevens said it sounded positive from Layton's perspective; the School Board may be more difficult.

Kupper noted that the taxpayers are paying for both assets and it would be in the best interest of citizens if collaboration were possible.

Item 6: Adjourn

There being no further business, Frye adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:25 p.m.

July 19, 2010

Bryan Frye, President

Lee Ann Sack, Clerk