



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

Parks and Recreation Commission

Thursday, September 20, 2018

7:00 PM

Regular

ARC Meeting Room,
1701 W Ash

I. CALL TO ORDER

Present: 6 - Marin Blevins, Sue Davis, Daniel Devine, Meredith Donaldson, Ted Farnen and Linda Hutton

Excused: 1 - Chad Henry

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved on a motion by Hutton, seconded by Davis. Motion passed 6-0.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes were approved on a motion by Hutton, seconded by Devine. Motion passed 6-0.

IV. APPROVAL OF MONTHLY REPORT

Park Services Manager Gabe Huffington shared these highlights from the Park Services division: Sports Turf made renovations on fields at Cascades, Indian Hills and Cosmo-Bethel; Forestry completed 232 hours of work at Gans Creek Recreation Area for cross country course construction; and staff offered three training sessions for the archery hunting program. Recreation Services Manager Erika Coffman shared highlights from the Recreation Services division: total revenue collected from web registrations from October 2017 through August 2018 has increased, instructional swim sessions at Hickman have increased since last year, and recreational swim sessions increased substantially at Albert-Oakland Family Aquatic Center from August 2017 to August 2018. Hutton asked if heat had affected numbers at the golf courses? Coffman said that it had, plus weather in the spring had a negative impact. Donaldson asked about birthday parties at the ARC? Coffman said people tended to have their parties at outdoor pools in the summer. Parties at the ARC will pick up over the fall and winter months.

The monthly report was approved on a motion by Donaldson, seconded by Farnen. Motion passed 6-0.

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS*Lions-Stephens Park improvements*

Improvements at Lions-Stephens Park will be funded by the 2015 Park Sales Tax, budgeted at \$100,000. Proposed plans include a new park shelter, new playground, removal of old shelter, new water fountain, bike racks, grill and ADA walkways, as well as a new sidewalk along Ann Street. A public input meeting was held Sept. 18.

Department Director Mike Griggs said the neighborhood has not reached consensus on what they would like for the park. The Benton-Stephens Neighborhood Association is meeting in early October and Griggs said he hopes they will reach a recommendation that will reflect what the neighborhood would like to see.

Hutton commented that she had attended the public input meeting. She said the neighbors had sent a long list of park improvements to Huffington and he had responded to each one.

Huffington said there were 28 items on the list and some differences as to what was needed at the park. Some don't believe a new shelter and playground are needed; others disagree on the location of the new shelter. Staff is recommended extending the public comment and input period so that everyone can offer feedback.

Hutton said it seemed like some residents did not want the department to spend unnecessary funds, that they did not feel new amenities were needed. But she said that they seemed to appreciate staff listening to them.

Devine asked if some in the neighborhood wanted more renovations beyond the budget?

Griggs said yes in some cases, but anything could be added to the park's master plan and saved for a future construction phase when additional funding might be available.

Griggs said that since no one is here tonight for the public hearing, staff would recommend holding it in October after the neighborhood association meets to discuss.

Farnen asked if the month's delay would affect the construction schedule?

Huffington said a contractor will be needed to demolish the shelter and the rest of the work would be weather dependent. There are a lot of projects going on right now, so staff would like to start this one soon.

Farnen asked if there were any other groups or organizations in the area that would have interest?

Huffington said there is a Montessori school, he will get in touch with them.

Hutton made a motion, seconded by Davis, to table the public hearing until the October meeting. Motion passed, 6-0.

VI. SPECIAL ITEMS*Web site presentation - Becky Stidham*

Griggs introduced Becky Stidham, assistant to the director, to share some web site statistics. Stidham showed how important the web site is to the public as an information source, as cited in recent citizen surveys. In 2017, there were more 412,000 annual web visits, with more than 1,100 daily visits. Citizens in 188 countries have accessed the City's web site.

Stidham shared the top visited Parks and Recreation web pages--the ARC, P&R home page, aquatic facilities, sport schedules and ARC Water Zone are the top five.

Stidham also gave a tour of the department's web site, especially the Commission's site.

Donaldson commented that she had been having issues navigating the Commission agenda.

Stidham suggested that she may need to update her Adobe Acrobat.

Stidham showed where Council items and reports are on the web site and other changes, including the park directory, which can now be sorted by amenity.

Donaldson asked if toddler playgrounds could be sorted?

Stidham said that playgrounds could, but they do not get more specific than that.

Farnen asked if there was a dedicated web technician for the department?

Stidham said there was a web master for the City, and that Parks and Recreation has several staff that divide the work in maintaining and updating the site.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS*Thirty-mile loop trail name recommendation*

Huffington shared a map showing the goal of achieving the 30-mile loop around the City. He described the name recommendation process: staff suggested about 60 names for consideration. The list was then narrowed by staff to the top three names: Six Creeks Greenway, CoMO Greenway and Columbia Greenway. The six creeks name refers to the number of creeks along the City's major trails.

The City's Community Relations team and Convention and Visitors Bureau reviewed the list, and Six Creeks Greenway was the top choice. An online public input survey also resulted in Six Creeks Greenway as the top choice. The City's legal department has reviewed the name and there are no trademark issues.

Farnen asked about the naming process?

Griggs said that the process can be difficult but City Council has the ultimate authority. He thinks staff did a good job in vetting the process.

Farnen said he never really opposes any staff recommendations but he does not think that Six Creeks Greenway describes what the loop trail really is.

Donaldson disagreed, saying she liked the name and thought it reflected the watersheds which are important resources.

Devine said he agreed with Farnen, saying he thought the name should be more closely identified with Columbia. But he acknowledged that the name ranked at the top of all surveys and input obtained.

Hutton and Davis said they both liked the name.

Griggs responded to Devine's comment, saying that there is potential in the future of the name Como -that is so widely used now-may become dated at some point.

Coffman said that staff would work to ensure that any marketing efforts in branding the name of the loop trail would also be closely tied to Columbia.

Huffington said that staff considered other options such as Boone or Hindman, but those names are used in other instances.

Griggs asked if the Commission had any other recommendations?

Farnen said he did not know that the Commission should have to come up with a name, but he feels like the Six Creeks reference is not well-known enough. He also questioned the Greenway reference.

Hutton said that the creeks are the common link with all of the trails, so she thinks the name works perfectly.

After discussion, Devine said that he had changed his mind and was in support of the Six Creeks Greenway recommendation. He can see the connection between the trails and the creeks and also sees the reference of Greenway as related to trail corridors.

Davis suggested that educating the public could be part of the marketing efforts, explaining what the creeks mean in the trail system.

Farnen asked about the next step?

Griggs said that any Commission recommendation would be made to City Council at a November meeting.

Hutton made a motion, seconded by Davis, that the Commission recommends that Parks and Recreation staff asks City Council to approve the name Six Creeks Greenway as the official name of the planned 30-mile trail loop. Motion passed 5-1

Yes: 5 - Blevins, Davis, Devine, Donaldson and Hutton

No: 1 - Farnen

Excused: 1 - Henry

IX. REPORTS*Council Items*

Griggs updated the Commission: Council approved the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) grant for Clary-Shy Park, downtown CID agreement and TRIM grant. Griggs also updated the Commission on the budget process and the changes that were made to the City's personnel budget as related to wages.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission Report

Huffington said the Commission reviewed a citizen presentation requesting construction of a crosswalk and sidewalk along St. Charles Road, from Keene to the Hominy Creek Trail access. Staff responded that connectivity to the Hominy would be considered as a trail project in the 2021 Park Sales tax ballot renewal, or reviewed sooner if other funding would become available.

Farnen asked if the Bike and Ped Commission had discussed Bird scooters?

Griggs said the scooters are banned from trails since they don't meet ordinance requirements. Since the Birds do not have pedals, as an e-bike does, they are not allowed. The City is working on an agreement with Bird.

Capital Project Report

Huffington shared these updates:

American Legion Park: additional fencing was installed.

African American Heritage Trail: marker dedication was held.

Clary-Shy Ag Park: work continues on site preparation for the new Farmers Market.

Waters House: new raingarden installed.

Cosmo Park: new bocce courts under construction.

Gans Creek Recreation Area: new cross country course under construction with irrigation being installed.

Norma Sutherland Smith Park: new backstop is complete and trail is under construction.

Sports Fieldhouse: showed aerial shots of the construction site.

Stephens Lake Park: electrical installation occurring to prepare for Roots n Blues n BBQ. Thumper Productions is contributing to the cost.

Staff Work Day: staff recently worked at Stephens Lake Park to complete some projects.

Recreation Services Report

Coffman shared these updates:

Heritage Festival: held Sept. 15-16 with good attendance.

Kaleidospoke: 420 riders participated.

Family Fun Fest: Around the World themed event held in August.

Neighborhood Park Fun Day: held recently at Longview Park.

Pooch Plunge: 100 dogs participated.

Blue Thunder cross country: runners are meeting in various parks.

MML Award: City received award from Municipal League for scholars program.

Upcoming Events: Neighborhood Park Fun Days, Friends Fall event, Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day and Bear Creek Run Half Marathon.

X. STAFF COMMENTS

Griggs shared information on a ceremony on Oct 10 to announce commemorative signage along the MKT Trail.

Griggs also shared more details about the City's budget. Personnel increased and some other changes were made. The general fund subsidy to parks budget was decreased but the park sales tax subsidy to the Parks and Recreation general fund was increased.

Griggs also updated the Commission on Stephens Lake, which was closed due to the presence of harmful algae. This was likely caused by combination of heat and drought, Griggs said.

Devine asked about water testing?

Griggs said this type of testing is done by the State Department of Natural Resources. The local Health Department tests for E.coli.

The lake will remain closed until the water is deemed safe, Griggs said.

Huffington said the new Park Ranger will start in October.

XI. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Donaldson asked about the Releaf project application?

Huffington said he would check.

Davis asked if the beach at Stephens Lake would be open during Roots n Blues?

Griggs said it would, unless testing is showing toxins.

Farnen commented that he was pleased to see the donation from University of Missouri Health Care for the cross country course.

Donaldson said she had heard a complaint from someone about the ARC, that they could not find someone to help with a broken fitness machine.

Coffman said that staff is available on both floors at the ARC.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

XIII. NEXT MEETING DATE

Oct. 18, 2018, 7 p.m. at the ARC

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Submitted by: Tammy Miller

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