

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Thursday, September 17, 2009 7 p.m.

ARC, 1701 W. Ash

MINUTES

Commission Present: Terry Kloeppe, Marin Blevins, Bill Pauls, Dan Devine, Gary Kespohl, Sue Davis

Commission Absent: Meredith Donaldson

Staff Present: Mike Hood, Mike Griggs, Erika Coffman, Tammy Miller

Kloeppe called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Agenda: The agenda was approved on a motion by Kespohl, seconded by Devine.

Minutes: The minutes were approved on a motion by Devine, seconded by Pauls.

Monthly Report: Blevins asked about an item on the Park Ranger's report regarding a lost female?

Griggs replied that it was a case of the parents thinking she was lost, but she actually was not. Monthly report was approved on a motion by Devine, seconded by Blevins.

Boone County Parks and Recreation Commission Discussion

Several representatives of the Boone County Parks and Recreation Commission were present at the meeting, including: Boone County Commissioner Skip Elkin, staff member Bob Davidson and Commissioners David Moore, Nancy Langworthy, Mary Laddis and Drew Conner.

Kloeppe opened the floor for an open discussion.

Elkin said that the county commission had wanted to get together again after meeting jointly three years ago, in an effort to share ideas and keep the lines of communication open.

Laddis complimented city staff on the Atkins fields.

Kloeppe agreed and said the fields are a great example of cooperation between the city and county. He asked Elkin how often the county commission met?

Elkin answered that they normally met every other month unless an important issue came up.

Kespohl asked how many county parks there were?

Elkin responded that most of the land could not really be classified as parks, as there are tracts not really developable but more suitable for passive recreation. One neighborhood park is in El Chapparral, about four acres in size. The County's facilities department takes care of the park, led by Davidson, Elkin added. There is no budget for a parks department.

Elkin mentioned other sites such as the old city landfill, the land that will become the Jay Dix Station Park in cooperation with the city, and Pinnacles.

Kespohl asked about the county's plans for the landfill?

Elkin said there weren't any plans at this time.

Devine asked city staff if opportunities with the county were ever considered as part of the master plan?

Hood answered that the 2002 master plan really only includes the City and the outer fringe areas, not too far into the county. That may be a consideration in the next master plan process. Hood mentioned the natural resource inventory which is becoming a useful tool for the city's planning

process. The Council is interested in using that tool to identify undeveloped areas and preserve them.

Kespohl asked Elkin if there is a map of the county land?

Elkin responded that such a map is in the works.

Devine asked if the county had a land dedication requirement from developers?

Elkin said that most developments already have lots of open space since most of the county's subdivisions boast big lots. He said some developers have offered land for parks, but the county has had to turn them down since there is no staff to build or maintain a park. Elkin said the county will normally encourage the developer to set land aside so that the homeowners association could maintain a park.

Elkin expressed support for the City's park sales tax that will be on the ballot in 2010. He said he believed it was crucial that voters approve the renewal of the tax and that the county would support efforts in any way possible.

Kespohl asked if there are any other future plans for a county parks budget?

Elkins said the county has considered going to the voters for a tax to fund a budget, but with the current economic climate, does not think it's feasible right now. He said he would not want to affect the city's chance to pass the park sales tax renewal either.

Devine asked if smaller towns such as Hallsville and Sturgeon have parks?

Elkin said that most do, but the county does not really have much to do with those.

Laddis added that Ashland has a city-oriented park that hosts a fall festival each year.

Langworthy asked the City Commission for any advice on how to be active without a budget or staff?

Kespohl said he thought many city-county partnerships such as Atkins and Jay Dix worked well, with the county owning the land and the city maintaining the park. He would like to see more partnerships such as these in the future.

Devine agreed, saying he especially would be interested in such partnerships with donated land.

Blevins recommended that the county look at other counties in Missouri with communities similar to Columbia such as Marshall, to see how they operate.

Hood added that St. Charles County just started a parks department within the last few years and may be a good organization to look at.

Pauls said that he thought the city's strong parks department may be the county's biggest problem, since Columbia is such a large urban center in Boone County. It may be difficult for the county to prove its case in forming a parks department.

Kespohl asked about the thought of attaching a county park sales tax in with the city's tax renewal?

Moore asked when the city's tax would be on the ballot?

Hood responded either August or November 2010.

Elkin said he thought it would be a really tough sell to the public especially with a short timeframe.

Kespohl asked Hood about the timeframe of the renewal?

Hood said it would likely be for five years.

Kespohl said maybe that timeframe could be either shortened or lengthened depending on interest in some sort of mutual collaboration.

Trails Master Plan Presentation

Hood said that Council has referred this plan to the Commission for their review and recommendation, as well as to Planning and Zoning, and the Bike/Ped Commission. Revisions were last made to the plan in 2005.

Hood shared slides presented at the Council retreat in June, including vision, goals and a 2005 trails map.

The 2009 revisions are an update of primary, secondary and tertiary priorities and take into account GetAbout Columbia trail projects.

Hood showed maps of trails in each stage of priority and where they are located in the city. A change in the primary targets is upgrading the Cow Branch Trail between Providence and Smiley. Secondary changes include the Bear Creek Trail between Cosmo Park and the ARC, with I-70 being a major barrier; the Moon Valley connector; and Harmony Creek from Cosmo to Perche Creek. Tertiary changes include a Grindstone connector to Sunrise Estates, and Gans to Rock Bridge Elementary, Hood added that that may need to be a higher priority with the new regional park.

Hood said the Commission may want to review the list on their own then bring it back for discussion at the October meeting.

Pauls moved to table the master plan until the October 15 meeting; seconded by Blevins. All in favor, motion passed.

Council Items

Hood informed the Commission of these Council actions:

Jay Dix Station: example of great cooperative project between City and County. The City will manage and maintain this park to be built on County property. It is a 29-acre tract located near the MKT access at Scott Boulevard. An ordinance authorizing the agreement is on the consent agenda for Monday's Council meeting.

Griggs questioned County officials on fireworks rules in this park?

Elkin said that City ordinance would apply.

Hood added that the property would be annexed into the City.

MKT Bridges: Bridges #12 and #13 are in poor condition and are slated to be replaced. A report is going to Council informing them of some trees that will need to be removed in order for the work to take place. Staff has taken all measures to minimize the tree removal and put into place a tree replacement program.

Russell/Bonnie View Park: Staff is taking three master plan options for the park to the Council for their input. Hood said Council may be referring the matter to the Commission for their recommendation, at which time the Commission may schedule a public hearing.

Capital Projects

Griggs shared these updates:

Philips Park: Lake perimeter trail is in and work is being done on boat ramp and parking lot.

Riechmann Pavilion: irrigation system has been installed and floor has been refurbished.

Stephens Lake Park: amphitheater footings are in.

Rainbow Softball Center: light poles have been repainted.

Cascades Park: playground and connecting walkways have been installed.

Smiley Park: playground and shelter have been installed.

Recreation Services Update

Coffman shared these updates and photos:

Life Enrichment: New fall classes have opened and are doing well.

Special Events: The last two Family Fun Fests (circus and Creative Kids) have been very well-attended. The last movie of the season was Jungle Book on Sept. 11 with about 450 in attendance.

50+: Closed the summer programs with watermelon bingo and a Cardinals game. More events are planned for the fall.

ARC: Espresso bikes have been added, noon volleyball has started, boot camps are going well and indoor golf lessons are about to resume.

Upcoming Events: 32nd Annual Heritage Festival, One Sky-One World Day, Family Fun Fest: Percussion is Phun, and Halloween Tiger Night of Fun.

Commission Comments

Kloeppel said he received a call recently about a portion of the Hinkson Creek Trail under the Providence bridge. He asked if that area was maintained by the City or University?

Griggs said that particular portion is maintained by the University.

Staff Comments

Hood informed the Commission that dedications at Auburn Hills and Grasslands parks may be set in October. Invitations will be sent once a date is chosen.

Public Comments

None

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.