



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

Parks and Recreation Commission

Thursday, January 17, 2019

7:00 PM

Regular

ARC Meeting Room,

1701 W Ash

I. CALL TO ORDER

Present: 7 - Marin Blevins, Sue Davis, Daniel Devine, Meredith Donaldson, Ted Farnen, Linda Hutton and Chad Henry

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved on a motion by Farnen, seconded by Davis. Motion passed 4-0.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes were approved on a motion by Farnen, seconded by Davis. Motion passed 4-0.

IV. APPROVAL OF MONTHLY REPORTS

(Commissioners Hutton and Donaldson arrived).

Park Services Manager Gabe Huffington shared these highlights from December: Fleet completed winter service on 52 golf carts, saving \$4,000 compared to contract service; Forestry spent 264 hours planting trees and Horticulture fabricated new plant racks for the greenhouse. Recreation Services Manager Erika Coffman shared these highlights: total visits have increased for the ARC and Lake of the Woods Golf Course. Hickman Pool usage for Columbia Swim Club increased between October and December.

The November monthly report was approved on a motion by Henry, seconded by Hutton. Motion passed 6-0.

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V. PUBLIC HEARINGS*Philips Park Tennis Complex*

Huffington shared information about the project, which is budgeted for \$250,000 as a Park Sales Tax project. Phase I would include two tennis courts and a 30-car parking lot. The bid would include post-tension concrete court construction and asphalt court construction. Huffington showed a map of all three potential phases.

Henry asked about restrooms for phase I?

Huffington said portable restrooms would be used at first, then a permanent restroom may be added if usage warrants it.

Farnen asked if future phases would depend on future Park Sales Tax ballot issues?

Huffington said they would.

(Commissioner Devine arrived).

Donaldson asked about ADA accessibility for future phases?

Griggs said the third phase may be completely different based on public input. The plan may completely change.

Blevins opened the public hearing for comment. There were no comments, hearing was closed.

Devine asked if staff is satisfied with the amount of parking?

Griggs said yes, they think with only two courts, it would work, plus many users will likely walk from neighboring housing. Parking would also be available at the Fieldhouse if necessary.

Farnen asked if any other City tennis courts were concrete?

Griggs said they are asphalt.

Donaldson made a motion, seconded by Hutton, that the Commission recommends approval of the first phase of construction of the Philips Park tennis complex to the City Council. Motion passed, 7-0.

Philips Park Landscape and Trail Improvements

Huffington shared details about the annual park improvement project at Philips, which would include improving the low water crossing on the northeast corner of the lake, landscaping improvements with tree plantings and turf establishment. He shared maps and photos of the proposed improvements. The key part of the project is improving the low water crossing so trail users can avoid getting their feet wet.

Donaldson asked if mitigation is needed for the bridge?

Huffington said it was part of the plan.

Blevins opened the public hearing for comment. There were no comments, hearing was closed.

Davis made a motion, seconded by Donaldson, that the Commission recommends approval of the trail and landscaping improvements to the City Council. Motion passed, 7-0.

VI. OLD BUSINESS*MPRA Conference*

Staff reminded the Commission of the MPRA Conference in Branson. Blevins and Henry will be attending.

Coffman introduced new intern Arik Adams, who will be with the department through May.

VII. NEW BUSINESS*CoMo Gives update*

Griggs updated the Commission on the results of the 2018 CoMo Gives campaign. There was an overall 12 percent increase from the previous year. The Columbia Parks and Recreation Fund earned \$10,107, an increase from the 2017 total of \$2,715. The Fund finished in 25th place, but spent a lot of the campaign in the top ten which increased exposure on the CoMoGives web site.

Griggs shared some demographics of donors. It is possible that the Fund may earn a challenge grant, particularly the \$2,000 grant for the organization with the highest number of unique donors under age 35. Those challenge grant announcements will be made soon.

Some comments and suggestions for 2019: National Day of Giving is Dec. 3 so staff is planning another poster premium giveaway, with the kick off event at Walt's Bike Shop. Artist David Spear is working on ideas, but a trail theme is being discussed. There may be the option of making a donation and receiving both the 2018 and 2019 poster.

Hutton commented on the beauty of the poster, as well as the notecards that have the same image. They are available for purchase, separate from the Fund.

Farnen said it was a great event at Walt's, he wondered if other organizations may try to copy the idea of premium and kickoff event. He suggested sending a "save the date" notice early, so that the Fund claims the Dec. 3 date early.

Farnen added that at some point, it would be good to consider a type of event for larger donors. He congratulated the staff on the campaign.

Cosmo Park tennis court resurfacing

Huffington shared details of the project, it's a \$40,000 project funded from annual park improvements. Four courts will be resurfaced with cracks filled and painted. The other courts would be renovated in FY'20.

Flat Branch Park expansion update

Park staff and the CoMo 200 committee have completed the proposed design for the expansion of Flat Branch. There is a contract with Crockett Engineering for initial design for creek cleanup and bridge placement. A public input meeting will be held Jan. 31, with possible review by the Commission on Feb. 21.

Huffington shared the potential design of the park expansion, which includes lengthening of the turn lane from Providence onto Broadway, and the incorporation of the Gateways downtown entrance project. The CID has pledged \$1 million toward the Gateways project.

Donadlson asked about the brick restoration of 4th Street, as shown on the map?

Griggs said he is not sure about that, staff has concerns about

accessibility.

Donaldson asked about signage and linking to the bicentennial?

Griggs said that would be incorporated in the Gateways design.

Hinkson Creek Trail projects update

In regard to the Hinkson Creek Trail Shepard to Rollins project, Griggs informed the Commission that the condemnation hearing was heard in court. The judge ruled in the City's favor, so the condemnation will move forward. At this point, there would be five individuals pooled from the real estate community to determine the value of the property.

Farnen asked if there would be an appeal of the judge's decision could be appealed?

Henry commented that if the price of the property is not agreed on, it could go to a jury trial.

Huffington updated the Commission on the Hinkson: Stephens Lake Park to Clark Lane project. A public input meeting was held in October and a public hearing will be scheduled for the Feb. 21 Commission meeting.

Easement agreements with the Kroenke Group and an engineering agreement are being finalized. Staff is also applying for a 2019 RTP grant for the project.

Ameren downtown property

The Downtown Leadership Council sent a letter to City Council, which was addressed at the Dec. 17 Council meeting. The letter supported the acquisition of the Ameren property at 210 Orr St. by the City. The letter mentioned lack of parks and public space in the downtown area and supports the vision of the H3 Charrette plan. The Charrette plan, approved by Council in 2010, presents the option for revitalization at Broadway and Providence, as well as the North Village Eco-Arts District. Griggs presented details of the Charrette, which targets the Ameren property as being converted to public space. Regarding the property, the City has a right of first refusal, and Ameren was required to clean the site prior to selling it. More than 30 tons of soil were removed and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) issued an environmental covenant. There are some restrictions on the property: it's for non-residential use, there are soil disturbance restrictions, construction of enclosed buildings must have DNR approval and there is no drilling or use of ground water. The Brownfield grant program could be used for further site clean-up. Only cities or counties may apply for those grants, with a maximum of \$500,000. There is a three-year timeframe for grant monies to be used. The Downtown Leadership Council is requesting recommendation of the Commission to acquire the site, Griggs said.

Blevins invited public comment.

Ken Greene, spoke as representative of the North Village Arts District. He shared a rendering of what the public space could look like, as prepared by

a local artist. He said he'd be happy to answer any questions.

Devine asked if the site clean-up is a concern?

Greene said that the DNR clean-up met specifications, but the additional clean-up would be beneficial.

Henry commented that to do the level of landscaping showed in the rendering, the site would require a lot of backfill.

Hutton asked if residents nearby were aware of the proposed plans?

Greene said yes, they had heard a lot of support from the area.

Henry asked about the timeline on the first refusal?

Greene said he was not sure at this point.

Griggs said that a meeting may be set with Interim City Manager John Glascock. Former City Manager Mike Matthes had been involved, but a new meeting is needed with Ameren.

Davis asked what is on the site that could be harmful?

Greene said there was gasified coal left over from when the site was Henderson Oil. The clean-up is similar to what took place for the Wabash Station and nearby Fire Station.

Henry asked about maintenance of the site?

Greene said the hope would be that Parks and Rec would maintain the site as a City property.

John Ott, also representing the Arts District, spoke to the Commission. He talked about the clean-up to date, saying that the southernmost part of the property would be concrete but that a 12-18 inch soil removal would be OK. He added that residents are really behind the idea, expressing the desire for more greenspace and a gathering spot.

Farnen asked about the small park that had been on Walnut?

Griggs said that had been on the neighboring church's property and the use agreement expired. The church needed more parking so the Village Square Park is no longer there.

Farnen asked if there were concerns about vagancy with the Orr Street property?

Griggs said he thought this park would be heavily used and experience has shown that transients normally go to places that aren't as crowded. The Ranger would patrol the area also.

Farnen offered the comment that he disagrees that parks and public spaces are disproportionate for the First Ward. He would not use that argument.

Hutton agreed with Farnen's comment.

Devine said his only concern is liability for the clean-up.

Griggs said there aren't as many parks in the First Ward, but funds are spent on improvements and amenities.

Ott said by keeping the design open, it would help prevent unwanted activity in the park. He mentioned his involvement in raising funds for Flat Branch Park and believes there would be potential for the same type of public support.

Griggs said that if there were not public donations, then park development could be a ballot issue project in the future.

Henry said for him, the acquisition would come down to the purchase price for the City.

Devine asked about time schedule with a Brownfield grant down the road possibly?

Griggs said if the property is simply greenspace, there may not be a need to apply for the Brownfield grant. That would impact the project's timing.

Devine asked if there would be harm in delaying at all?

Ott mentioned it would add credibility to have the Commission's support with City Council.

Devine made a motion, seconded by Farnen, that the Commission generally supports the acquisition of the property at 210 Orr St., delaying a final recommendation until more is known about costs of acquisition, clean-up and development of the site. Motion passed, 7-0.

VIII. REPORTS

Council Items

Council items were already covered on the agenda.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission Report

Park staff informed the Bike and Ped Commission that the City has been awarded silver level Bicycle Community Friendly designation. The designation is valid for four years and will be up for renewal in 2022.

Capital Project Report

Huffington shared these updates:

Hinkson Creek Trail/MKT: concrete repair done near bridges.

Clary-Shy Ag Park: work continues, though winter weather is causing delays. Electrical conduit is being put in place, more concrete is being poured, soil is being excavated.

Gans Cross Country Course: steel being purchased for fabrication of finish line.

MKT bench replacement: some benches along trail being replaced due to age.

Oakwood Hills: playground demolished to make room for new one.

Antimi Sports Complex: new scoreboards installed.

ARC: maintenance done on pool pump and basketball goals.

Trails: new maps installed, markings in place at underpasses to encourage caution.

Sports Fieldhouse: concrete work done, ramp in place,

Recreation Services Report

Coffman shared these updates and photos:

Toys for Columbia's Youth: 240 kids were served in 2018.

ARC: New members are joining, enrollments have increased.

CARE: recruitment is ongoing, application to apply for summer is Feb. 28.

Art Gallery created banners for the Diversity Breakfast.

Preschool: recent holiday activities held.

Jr. NBA Skills: held at the Armory in December.

Aquatics: Starguard certification held.

Upcoming events: Dr. MLK Candlelight Walk, ROC Trail Run, and Black History Month film and discussion.

IX. STAFF COMMENTS

Griggs said that the new minimum wage has taken effect, which will mostly impact recreation staff. It will cost an additional \$69,000 this budget year. Staff is looking at ways to be creative with staffing and may have to change facility hours or take other measures to take up the slack.

Griggs added that staff has worked about 552 hours on clearing parks and some streets after the recent winter storm. The staff is transitioning to clearing limbs and branches that snapped because of the heavy snow. It took a couple of days for the forestry crew to clear the MKT Trail, Huffington said.

Blevins commented that he had heard compliments about the Parks and Recreation crews from a city driver who had been clearing the streets near his home.

Griggs said that Parks and Recreation crews have smaller trucks which enables them to do cul-de-sac clearing, as well as streets near parks and the ARC.

Huffington said that city staff always meets ahead of winter weather to plan snow clearing zones and a plan of action.

Griggs mentioned the Cosmo Club pancake breakfast on Jan. 26. The Cosmos have contributed more than \$600,000 toward Parks and Recreation projects over recent years. Huffington has breakfast tickets for anyone who would like to purchase them.

X. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Farnen commented on the age of the ARC, citing the 20th anniversary of the ballot measure that enabled its construction. He asked if there are any plans or discussions of renovation and/or expansion?

Coffman said she is making a wish list for the future of the facility. She said it is a matter of balancing needs and meet what the community wants, while still remaining self-sufficient.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Greene and Ott thanked the Commission for their comments and support.

XII. NEXT MEETING DATE

Feb. 21, 2019, 7 p.m. at the ARC

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Submitted by: Tammy Miller

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