



# City of Columbia, Missouri

## Meeting Minutes

### Parks and Recreation Commission

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Thursday, April 18, 2019  
7:00 PM

Regular

ARC Meeting Room,  
1701 W Ash

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#### I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Blevins called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. The Commission made a presentation to outgoing Commissioner Linda Hutton. Hutton's term will expire May 31 and she is not reapplying; the April meeting will be her last one on the Commission.

**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 Davis, seconded by Donaldson. Motion passed 7-0.

#### III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes were approved on a motion by Farnen, seconded by Henry. Motion passed 6-0, with abstention by Donaldson.

#### IV. APPROVAL OF MONTHLY REPORT

Parks Services Manager Gabe Huffington shared division highlights: golf course maintenance crews completed aerification and topdressing of golf greens in March, Forestry cleaned up storm damage at various parks and park maintenance is in full swing with cleaning and preparing park shelters. Recreation Services Erika Coffman shared these division highlights: web registrations have increased substantially from the previous fiscal year, Lake of the Woods has been open slightly longer than last year, ARC participations and birthday party packages have increased and specialty classes at the ARC have increased.

Devine asked about tree damage from the winter?

Huffington said it has been noticeable; one big snow snapped a lot of branches and limbs.

Farnen asked about online shelter reservations?

Coffman said the department has just started that, this is available for reservable shelters not located at Cosmo or Stephens Lake Parks. Those parks have twice-per-day rentals available.

The monthly report was approved on a motion by Davis, seconded by Hutton. Motion passed 7-0.

**V. STAFF PRESENTATION**

Parks Services Manager Gabe Huffington shared division highlights: golf course maintenance crews completed aerification and topdressing of golf greens in March, Forestry cleaned up storm damage at various parks and park maintenance is in full swing with cleaning and preparing park shelters. Recreation Services Erika Coffman shared these division highlights: web registrations have increased substantially from the previous fiscal year, Lake of the Woods has been open slightly longer than last year, ARC participations and birthday party packages have increased and specialty classes at the ARC have increased.

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**VI. OLD BUSINESS**

None

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

None

## VIII. REPORTS

### *Council Items*

Griggs shared these updates:

At the April 15 meeting, Council held a public hearing for Cosmo-Bethel Park Improvements and CPS agreement, as well as considering Fairview Hollow Nature Area donation, construction easement at Paquin Park, Islamic Center construction easement Flat Branch Phase II, revising Mo. Foundation for Health grant and fund transfers. Items introduced on April 15 for consideration at the May 6 meeting include Flat Branch Park expansion and reducing the Mayor's Council on Physical Fitness to 13.

### *Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission Report*

Staff informed the Bike and Ped Commission of a public hearing at the June 17 City Council meeting for Hinkson Creek Trail: Stephens Lake Park to Clark Lane.

### *Capital Project Report*

Huffington shared these updates:

**Clyde Wilson Park:** entrance improvements are complete.

**Lions-Stephens Park:** improvements are continuing.

**Farmers Market at Clary-Shy Park:** structure is continuing, the Market may move there officially on May 18.

**RTP Trail maps:** New maps are located at trailheads.

**Cosmo Cherry Grove:** area prepared for visit of sister city Hakusan.

**Sports Fieldhouse:** work continues, with possibly completion at end of July.

**Cross Country course:** irrigation system installed.

**Oakwood Hills Park:** site prepared for new playground.

**Bocce courts at Cosmo:** event planned for July 10 with Mayor Treece to open the courts.

**Emergency phones:** Phone has been replaced at the MLK trailhead with new model. Other similar ones may be installed to replace others.

Farnen asked if it is an actual phone or just notification?

Huffington said there is a button to press that goes directly to Joint Communications.

Griggs added that staff has discussed the emergency phones at length and asked what the Commission's thoughts were? There is a history of problems with the phones, with false hang-ups and maintenance issues.

Griggs added that the new ones, such as this one at MLK would provide a notification that it is out of order. Rangers check the ones monthly including one that is located on the County portion of the MKT Trail but paid for by the City.

There have been a decrease in calls, mostly the phones are false or prank calls, Griggs said.

Donaldson asked if there was a best practice for trail phones?

Griggs said there is not, the phones are not actually required.

Farnen commented it's a tough issue; since the phones are in place and if they don't work, they may pose some liability. However, these days, most people carry cell phones so the emergency phones may not be as needed as they have been in the past.

Donaldson agreed, saying that if the phones rarely work, then they do no good.

Griggs commented that staff has worked in recent years to install mile markers, so that trail users can better identify their location, should they need to make an emergency call. The new trails do not have emergency phones.

Davis asked how many there were?

Griggs said about 13 or 14, but staff would like to get the number to four: one at the MKT trailheads at MLK Memorial, Flat Branch Park and Forum Nature Area, as well as the Stephens Lake Park swimming beach.

Farnen asked why the City is maintaining phones on County property?

Griggs said it has always been that way, but not sure of the reason. He said before the phone would be removed, they would ask the County if they would like to take over the line.

Henry said the four phones at the locations that Griggs described sounds perfect. He commented that most people may not even know that they are there.

Griggs said that Huffington can share a detailed report at the next Commission meeting for further feedback and discussion.

#### *Recreation Services Report*

Coffman shared these updates and photos:

**Spring break camp at the Armory:** about 15 kids enrolled.

**CARE job readiness:** Coordinator Ron Schmidt has led some job readiness training to get ready for the summer program.

**Kite Flying Day at Douglass:** annual free event, a second one will be at Indian Hills Park later in the month.

**Douglass Baseball Clinic:** held recently at the park along with Kite Flying Day.

**Paquin activities:** residents made seed bombs for raised garden beds.

**Tappercise at Hillcrest:** ongoing life enrichment class.

**Osher Book Talk:** held monthly at Hillcrest, always a large attendance.

**Upcoming events:** Eggstravaganza, Kite Flying at Indian Hills, Yappy Hour, Columbia Youth Intro Track meet, For Columbia event, Earth Day, Tons of Trucks, Amphitheater Concert Series, MLB Pitch, Hit and Run, Douglass Skateboard competition, Movies in the Park and Heritage Day Block Party.

**IX. STAFF COMMENTS**

Griggs asked about the annual meeting and park tour, which is traditionally held in June. The Commission agreed that the date would work.

Huffington shared a potential list of sites for the tour. If anyone has other thoughts, it will be discussed at the May meeting:

- Lions-Stephens Park
- Columbia Sports Fieldhouse
- Gans Creek Recreation Area - Cross Country
- Clary-Shy Pavilion
- Oakwood Hills Park
- Cosmo Bocce Courts
- Antimi Sports Complex
- Norma Sutherland Smith Park

Griggs also thanked the Commission who said they could help at Fire in the Sky. More details will be shared.

**X. COMMISSION COMMENTS**

Farnen asked if restrooms are open?

Huffington said they are, as well as fountains. No repairs were needed after the winter.

Farnen commented that the Hominy Creek Trail signs are much improved. He said the 1.5 mil marker sign is still gone.

Huffington said he would check into it.

Hutton made the following comments, as this is her last meeting:

"It doesn't seem like I've been with the Commission for 9 years. This is truly a bittersweet evening. I've seen so many wonderful projects come into fruition and I'm envious because you have so many exciting projects ahead. I was hoping to live long enough to see the NE part of Columbia connect w/ our beautiful trail system...and it looks like we just might make it!

I want to thank Dan Devine for encouraging me to sign up and all my colleagues on the Commission for their support and tolerance. I especially want to thank Marin Blevins who exemplifies civic virtue; who continually demonstrates how one serves their community in the good times and the not so easy times. And, I want the staff...Mike, Tammy, Gabe and Erika to know what an honor it's been to serve along with them. Because of your reputation, I feel like the kid who drops names, "oh.....I serve on the Parks and Rec Commission." This department's professionalism has deservedly earned the respect and admiration of our town. And that respect and admiration is genuinely owed because of the hard work ethic, creative attitudes toward problem solving, positive attitudes, and most importantly honesty in communicating with its citizens.

Thank you all so very much!"

**XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**XII. NEXT MEETING DATE**

May 16, 2019, 7 p.m. at the ARC

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Farnen made a motion, seconded by Henry to adjourn. Motion passed 7-0; meeting adjourned at 8:15.

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