

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Thursday, July 21, 2011, 7 p.m.

ARC, 1701 W. Ash

MINUTES

Commission Present: Marin Blevins, Sue Davis, Terry Kloeppe, Bill Pauls, Dan Devine, Meredith Donaldson

Commission Absent: Linda Hutton

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

Blevins called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

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

Minutes: The minutes were approved on a motion by Kloeppe, seconded by Davis.

Monthly Report: The June monthly report was approved on a motion by Kloeppe, seconded by Devine.

Staff Presentation

Coffman introduced Janel Twehous, the aquatics supervisor. Twehous oversees the aquatics program, which includes two other full-time staff (SJ Idel and Laura Nerling) and many seasonal and part-time staff members. Twehous, Idel and Nerling are also working as managers at the pools this summer to cut costs.

Lifeguards receive their training through Ellis and Associates. There are a total of 160 guards for the summer.

Donaldson asked if guards could also work for private business?

Twehous answered that yes, they could work elsewhere as long as there was not a conflict.

Blevins asked about training for water instructors?

Twehous said that each program is different and offers different levels, but at Parks and Recreation, staff does the instructor training.

Twehous then shared some data from the summer including 91 first aid incidents and 30 rescues. She showed attendance numbers and concession revenues from June 2009, 2010 and 2011, which showed that attendance at the pools is mostly up a bit.

Twehous also talked about upcoming events, including the triathlon at Philips, which is part of the Show Me State Games. The ARC Water Zone will be closed for annual maintenance from July 30-August 7, and aquatics staff is also planning the Pooch Plunge and the Tiger Night of Fun on Halloween.

Council Items

Hood shared these updates:

Scott's Branch Trail: A compromise route has been proposed for the portion of the trail as it relates to the Audubon property. An attorney representing Audubon came up with a proposal that would allow the trail along the edge of the property with several conditions. Hood showed a map of the proposed route, along with the other routes that have been discussed over the past several months. He also showed photos of the area where the trail would go. The Audubon Board of Directors voted unanimously on July 17 to support the compromise but it is contingent upon a vote of the membership. At a lengthy public hearing during the Council meeting on July 18, most were opposed, Hood said, however some stated they were not Audubon members. Council approved the compromise 7-0, also contingent on the vote of the Audubon membership.

Donaldson asked about the surface of the trail, if a previous surface similar to one proposed for the Plymouth parking lot, would work?

Hood said that Council had requested that staff look into that.

Griggs added that staff will investigate, but those surfaces are usually twice as costly as concrete.

Kloepfel asked when Audubon would meet and vote?

Hood said they were considering a meeting in early August.

Devine said he watched all of the testimony at the public hearing, and was struck by how good the Parks and Recreation Department is. He said that every time a criticism was stated, he thought to himself "that's not true, staff does not do things like that." Devine added that this is a fabulous department and a high-quality trail will be put in that is well-used.

Atkins Concession Building: Hood showed the next phase of development of the Atkins property which includes completing a third field and concession building with restrooms. Commissioners saw slides with a map, and layout of the proposed concession building. Council has authorized the project to proceed.

Park Project Update

Griggs shared these updates and photos:

Beacon at PMC/Cosmo: ceremony held in June to celebrate restoration and location of old airport beacon.

Optimist Park: fencing project completed.

American Legion concession building: work continues, being painted. Ballfield construction is also ongoing.

Clyde Wilson Park: new bridges installed and work is being done on the trail.

Hindman Garden: Council Ring and the Living Wall are under construction.

3M Urban Restoration Project: work begins on the trail and ensuring the security of the building.

Lange Park: construction completed.

Lake of the Woods Golf: perimeter fencing installed

Douglass Park: new sign in progress.

Atkins Park: preparations being made for construction of the third field.

Brown Station: drainage improvements being made to the park.

Recreation Services Update

Coffman shared these updates:

Fire in the Sky: great event this year.

CARE: Summer program will end August 4. The CARE Gallery is having a reception on August 4 to celebrate their exhibit at PS:Gallery and end of summer reception will be August 5 at the ARC.

Douglass: good summer for Moonlight Hoops and Douglass baseball programs.

Juneteenth: held in June at Douglass Park.

Blue Thunder track: season has been successful. 22 athletes are participating in the AAU national meet in New Orleans.

Boone County Hoppers: popular jump roping group performed at Juneteenth.

Golf: Hagan Tournament held in June, courses doing well.

ShredFest: Annual Skateboarding event held in June.

Family Fun Fest: June event was very well-attended, July's was not bad considering the extreme heat.

Life Enrichment: Father Daughter Dance was best attended in years and other camps are going well.

ARC: Camp Adventure is at maximum enrollment.

Maplewood Community Theatre's last performance at Nifong will be July 31. Will move to Stephens Lake Amphitheater for remainder of summer while construction starts on new barn.

Upcoming Events: Show Me State Games, DJ in the Park on July 31, Lake of the Woods pool closes for season on Aug 7, Movies in the Park on Aug 12, NFL Punt, Pass and Kick on Aug 13, Little Mates Cove and Douglass close for season on Aug 14, Family Fun Fest on Aug 17 and Teen Garage Band Bash on Aug 18.

Commission Comments

Davis commented that at the previous night's Bike and Ped Commission meeting, the possibility was discussed of asking for a change in the ordinance that prohibits skateboards downtown. She said some view that as a means of transportation. She asked for the history of the issue? Hood said that several years ago, there were numerous complaints about skateboarders downtown. A particular concern was the safety of others on the sidewalk. An ordinance was passed, banning them from downtown. A group of skateboarders then approached Parks and Recreation about a place dedicated for them. Eventually, that is how the Skate Park was developed.

Davis commented that those who believed skateboards are transportation would advocate using them on streets, instead of sidewalks.

Donaldson asked about bow hunting?

Hood said the training sessions would be held near the end of August with the season held this fall. The same policies will apply as in the past, under the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Donaldson asked if the Grindstone Nature Area would be included?

Hood said that area is already open to hunters.

Pauls asked for copies of Leisure Times that he could take to the Visitors Center at Lake of the Woods?

Coffman said she would get some from the ARC's supply.

Pauls asked about the port-a-pots at Creasy being tipped and if there was anything else that could be done?

Griggs said they are anchored so he is not sure of what else could be done. There are funds available in the Park Sales Tax for a permanent restroom at that location.

Pauls also commented about a metal sign at Rhett's Run that could use some attention.

Donaldson pointed out a typo in the Ranger's monthly report. Miller replied that she would fix it.

Blevins commented on the recent tragedy in the department, the death of seasonal employee William Bell. Blevins said that he and his wife watched a portion of the press conference on TV with Griggs. He said the Parks and Recreation family was a close one and it was obvious that the tragedy affected everyone.

Hood said it has been a terrible month, but that staff did a great job of handling the situation and dealing with the media the day of the accident.

Staff Comments

None.

Public Comments

None.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.