

# PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Thursday, June 17, 2010, 7 p.m.

ARC, 1701 W. Ash

## MINUTES

**Commission Present:** Terry Kloepfel, Dan Devine, Bill Pauls, Sue Davis, Meredith Donaldson

**Commission Absent:** Marin Blevins

**Staff Present:** Mike Hood, Mike Griggs, Erika Coffman, Tammy Miller, Erin Carrillo

Kloepfel called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

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

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

**Monthly Report:** Kloepfel asked about the drowning at Stephens Lake on Memorial Day, if there was anything more to report?

Hood answered that there was nothing really new, that it was still unclear as to what exactly happened. Others in the lake did not see the victim struggling or in any signs of distress before his body was found in the water. Staff has reviewed all procedures and don't feel that any changes need to be made at this time. The lake is a swim at your own risk facility, and there are emergency phones and rescue devices on hand for swimmers to use. Those items were all available and operational at the time of the drowning, Hood said.

Davis asked if staff would ever consider the possibility of lifeguards at the lake, particularly on busy holiday weekends? She was at Stephens Lake earlier on Memorial Day and said the lake and beach were crowded.

Hood said that if the facility was ever made to be guarded, then an admission fee would have to be charged. When the park was planned, Hood said it was decided to offer a free swimming lake similar to ones in state parks. He said the department's budget would have to have a significant increase to pay for lifeguards. At this time, the Aquatics budget only recovers a certain percentage of expenditures. Some type of revenue would have to be generated to pay for expenses.

Donaldson asked about public education?

Coffman said that the City has an executive safety committee and an employee from the aquatics staff is on the committee. They discuss such safety issues and have considered ways to promote water safety. They will continue discuss issues like that.

Davis commented that the hot summer so far seems to have led to increased use of Stephens Lake.

Devine asked that if the trend continues, would the department ever consider adding facilities?

Hood said that nothing else is planned as of now. If the crowd at Stephens Lake continues to increase, staff may review how best to control the crowds. He said it has been beneficial to offer a free swimming facility in light of the difficult economy.

Kloepfel mentioned the Park Ranger's report where 33 people were warned for swimming after hours?

Griggs said when that happens, it's often groups of people which explains the high number.

The May monthly report was approved on a motion by Pauls, seconded by Devine.

### **Staff Member Presentation**

Griggs introduced a summer intern, Michaele Vock, who is a recent Parks and Recreation graduate from Mizzou. She is assisting with a number of parks facilities and recreation programs for the summer.

Coffman then introduced Erin Carrillo, recreation specialist with a focus on special events, preschool and teen programs.

Carrillo has been with the department for 6 ½ years. She showed a PowerPoint of some of the programs she coordinates or works with, including preschool programs, Movies in the Park, Family Fun Fests, Go Skateboarding Day, Fire in the Sky, Teen Garage Band Bash, Heritage Festival, Tons of Trucks, Flashlight Easter Egg Hunt, National Trails Day and Walk a Hound, Lose a Pound. Carrillo described the events and in particular, stressed the sponsorships and community partnerships it takes to make these events successful.

Donaldson complimented her, saying the department events are always organized and well-run.

Davis asked if there is a fee for preschool programs?

Carrillo said it's either \$2 for Little Explorers field trips or \$6 for preschool activities.

Hood added that preschool charges are just enough to recover costs. He said Erin does a terrific job and complimented her for her work in establishing partnerships. Hood commented he thought she had one of the more difficult tasks in recreation, programming for teens.

Carrillo mentioned that the partnership with Youth Community Coalition has made that task easier.

### **Park Sales Tax Presentation**

Hood shared a presentation with the Commission that was shown at the Council retreat. This included a history of the Park Sales Tax as well as sources of funding of various parks, facilities and programs to give a better idea of what the tax funds. At this point, Council is considering the ballot issue package, whether to ask for a 5-year or 10-year extension, and is expected to pass an ordinance in August, placing the tax extension on the November 2 ballot.

Hood said the draft results of a citizen survey were shared with the Council at the retreat to help them make decisions as to particular project. He said he would present the citizen survey findings at an upcoming meeting.

Devine asked if the survey included more than just the Park Sales Tax?

Hood said yes the results will help staff with the Master Plan too. He said the consultant thought the City had a good chance to pass the sales tax extension, unless something unforeseen occurs.

The Council must determine how much to allocate to several categories, including land acquisition/preservation, neighborhood parks, improvements to existing parks and facilities, new park development, trails, annual monies, and contingency. Once it is determined what percentage of potential funding should go in each area, Council will identify specific projects that would be funded by the Park Sales Tax.

Hood shared with the Commission staff recommendations and how those recommendations were made. Namely, staff input, user groups, geographic representation, the Capital Improvement Plan, and the Parks, Recreation and Open Space master plan all influenced these decisions. Hood quickly reviewed the draft list of recommendations, which will likely change as Council discusses them. They have worksheets with staff priority rankings and a column for them to make their priorities as well. Hood said he would make sure the Commission had these worksheets as well.

As Hood reviewed the project, Donaldson asked about facilities at the Waters-Moss property?

Hood said they would need some work to make them ADA accessible. The exact use would have to be determined as well.

Hood showed a map with all the locations of the proposed projects. He acknowledged the map does not show many projects in the east, however, there are numerous projects underway there now including Eastport, American Legion and Lake of the Woods which is funded with golf improvement fees.

Devine asked if staff had talked to the school district about possible joint projects with the new high school, similar to agreements with Rock Bridge and Hickman?

Hood said the new high school covers most of the facilities that are needed but city staff is not sure what their needs are at this point.

Griggs added that there may be an opportunity for partnerships that may result in some reciprocal use. But at this point, it is early to determine those needs.

Devine asked if there will be any other city issues on the ballot?

Hood responded that he did not think so; this will likely be the only issue for the city.

Devine said he would prefer to see the 5-year extension at this time, saying the economy still may be an issue. He likes the "stay the course" approach and not getting too extravagant with needs.

Kloeppel added that he thought stressing "extension" is a good approach as well. He is glad this will be the only city issue on the ballot, as voters may not have to "make choices" between issues.

Hood said he thought the language on the ballot will be extension. He asked the Commissioners if any of the projects made a positive or negative impact on them?

Devine responded that he thought staff had achieved a good balance. He liked the approach of prioritizing the projects to make it easier to move them up or down the list.

Pauls said that one he might move up on the priority list would be an indoor pavilion at Philips Park, one that would be similar to Riechmann. He thought the revenues generated from the rental of such a facility would pay for itself.

Hood said that staff really considered that. But the cost of constructing such a building, plus a parking lot and associated amenities might be too costly.

Donaldson asked about aquatic centers, and how they were viewed?

Coffman said such centers are very labor intensive which increases operating costs. But centers with a high number of features require a high number of guards. Coffman added that such places need to be more of a regional attraction to draw more visitors, increasing revenues.

No other comments were made. Miller said she would send the work spreadsheets to the commissioners.

### **July Park Tour**

Hood shared a list of potential destinations for the July park tour, including Paquin, American Legion, Nifong, Philips and Cascades. He said that more time may be spent off the van, looking at the parks more closely, rather than constant driving.

Kloeppel asked the Commission if it would be all right to start the next meeting at 5 pm rather than 5:30 to allow for a bit more time?

All agreed.

Pauls asked about adding Bear Creek to the list of stops as well.

### **Council Items**

Hood informed the Commission of these Council actions:

**Douglass lot acquisition:** Council authorized the purchase to proceed.

**Renaming of Rockhill Park:** Council will vote on the issue on Monday. Some Council members have expressed strong support for the renaming.

### **Capital Projects**

Griggs shared these updates:

**Eastport Park:** Construction is nearly complete.

**Stephens Lake Park:** Construction on amphitheater continues in preparation for the June 26 opening.

**Albert-Oakland:** Pool repairs have been completed and some undergrowth was cleared along the walkway between the ballfield and parking area to improve visibility.

**Douglass Park:** Sprayground is operational and walkways and fencing are being installed.

**Rock Quarry Park:** Tennis court walkways have been completed.

**Cascades:** Treekeeper project completed on May 15.

**Smiley:** CARP project completed on June 12.

### **Recreation Services Update**

Coffman shared these updates:

**Columbia Golf Foundation Junior Golf Clinics:** taking place at Nickell with about 175 kids including some from Boys and Girls Club. Unique and free opportunity for kids to learn the basics of golf.

**Summer camps:** variety of camps going on this summer including Camp Adventure, Mini Art Camp, first Days of Summer mini camp, STARS, Summer Active Kids Club, Advantage Basketball Camp, and other basketball camps at the Armory.

**OAK Tours:** regional trips going well. Osher session began last week.

**Fire in the Sky:** coming up July 4

**Upcoming Events:** Father Daughter Dance, Go Skateboarding Day, Juneteenth, Whiff and Giggle, Grand opening of Stephens Lake Park amphitheater, Fire in the Sky, Movies in the Park and Family Fun Fest.

Kloeppel asked if there would be a formal dedication of the amphitheater?

Hood answered that there would not. The performances will open the venue, but since the mayor will be unable to attend and several dedications have already marked openings at Stephens Lake, staff chose not to have a dedication.

### **Commission Comments**

Donaldson asked if it would be possible for the agenda and other meeting items to be posted online?

Miller answered that the agenda is posted online several days before the meeting and once the monthly report and minutes are approved, they are posted as well.

Devine asked if it was possible to have a “small dogs only” area at dog parks?

Griggs said that has been asked at various public meetings. Some residents would say that they have one of each and then could not bring both dogs to the dog park. Griggs said staff has considered both sides of the issue and have drafted “pros and cons” of both, which he could provide. He said larger dog parks in other cities have both a combined space and then separate spaces for large and small dogs. The problem staff has faced is lack of space for such a dog park.

Hood added that another issue that is raised is defining a large dog and a small dog. Enforcement issues would also have to be considered.

Devine then asked about signage at Antimi, particularly to the fields in the back.

Griggs said that people do get confused at times when trying to find the fields.

Hood pointed out that there is a directional sign at the round-about at the Cosmo entrance but more may need to be done.

Griggs said staff has been working on signage. They will look at the signs at Antimi and see if a better solution is available.

Devine asked about the area where the MKT splits off, if MU maintains that?

Griggs said yes, that area is their responsibility.

Pauls mentioned two areas on the Bear Creek Trail that are washed out. He acknowledged that since those areas wash out frequently, a hard surface in those portions may be better with a gravel shoulder on the side of the trail for runners.

Griggs agreed, saying that it is difficult to get trucks to those areas to do repairs.

### **Staff Comments**

None.

### **Public Comments**

None.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.