

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Thursday, September 20, 2007, 7:00 p.m.

ARC, 1701 West Ash

MINUTES

Commission Present: Terry Kloepfel, Marin Blevins, Dennis Knudson, Dan Devine, Bill Pauls, Julia Grus

Staff Present: Mike Hood, Gary Ristow, Tammy Miller

Kloepfel called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

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

Minutes: Knudson pointed out a typo under the discussion about events. Miller said she would amend the typo. The August minutes were approved on a motion from Blevins, seconded by Grus.

Monthly Report: Knudson asked about the differences in rec services numbers between years?

Ristow said that staff considered individual areas, such as sports, where numbers have decreased, as have pool attendance numbers. He said though that overall, those aren't particularly trends. Staff has improved and tightened up the way attendance numbers are reported.

Blevins mentioned the number of warnings (68) at the Skate Park seemed like a large number.

Hood said the department had been asked by the Pilot Club to increase warnings for youth not wearing helmets. The Park Ranger distributes coupons to youth—for those not wearing a helmet, she gives them a coupon discount on a helmet at a local store. Those wearing helmets receive some type of coupon for a reward. Hood said he suspected the Ranger was counting those coupon distributions as warnings.

Pauls asked about the part-time ranger?

Hood said he would be leaving in the late fall.

Knudson asked about the report of a group burning furniture at Stephens Lake?

Hood said it was at the firepit at Collins Shelter.

Blevins asked if the golf courses had a dress code for golfers?

Ristow said no, that attire had never been a problem.

Devine commented on a large number of arrests for parking violations and asked for clarification?

Hood said the word arrest in this case just means a ticket. The Ranger usually issues a verbal warning, then if the vehicle has not been moved, she writes a ticket.

The August monthly report was approved on a motion from Grus, seconded by Pauls.

Crane Property Update

Hood told the Commission the City had closed on the property on Friday (September 14). The family has one year to relocate. In the meantime, they would continue farming the property and keep their livestock there.

The City and the Conservation Department have been discussing a partnership which might impact the Crane property. Conservation is interested in developing a new education facility for demonstrations for the public, showing environmentally friendly conservation techniques. The facility would also serve as a new regional office, and the Conservation Department is interested in placing this facility on about 10 acres of the Crane property. In return, Conservation would allow Parks and Recreation use of 110 acres across Grindstone Nature Area on Old 63. The property features an office and several maintenance buildings. Hood said this could serve as Parks and Recreation satellite operations center in south Columbia.

A Memorandum of Understanding was authorized at the September 17 City Council meeting to authorize a

feasibility study. This would take between 6 and 10 months. Hood pointed out on a map several areas on the Crane property which interests the Conservation Department.

Devine asked if that area would interfere with any park planning?

Hood said it would not substantially affect the planning. No major facilities are being discussed on any of the sites that the Conservation Department is considering. Hood pointed out if the City would be able to use the current Conservation site off of Old 63, it may save up to \$1 million for future building.

Pauls commented that in his past job, he worked on that Conservation site, doing soil testing and said it was great facility with all of the acreage and buildings.

Hood added that Conservation is working to raise funds for the new facility. They may have a substantial amount already promised.

Blevins asked about work on Philips Lake?

Hood said we are working with Conservation on a grant for initial development. Staff is also getting requests from the public to allow fishing, but the road and sidewalks are still being built by the developer. The access street is still private and has not been turned over to the City yet.

Fall Festivals

Hood commented on the month of September and all that is happening in Columbia with the Roots 'n Blues 'n BBQ Festival, which drew about 70,000 according to organizers. There is interest in having the event next year, though the bank will likely not be the main sponsor. Hood said the City has committed \$10,000 in the new budget to assist.

Ristow said the 30th Annual Heritage Festival was also a big success with great weather and big crowds both days. There were some concerns with parking, since the Historical Village is in place. But that was not an issue. The Twilight festivals and Tour of Missouri bike race have also been successful, drawing huge crowds.

Hood said the main concern with all of the events happening was potential conflicts with Heritage Festival.

Council Items

Hood shared these updates:

Auburn Hills Master Plan: Council has approved proceeding with the development of the Auburn Hills Park. Grading will take place this fall with major development taking place in the spring.

Budget: The FY'08 budget was approved with no major reductions. Staff was asked to prepare for possibly \$100,000 in cuts, just in case they were needed. Council did approve increases of \$10,000 in the CARE program, specifically for the Options program at Hickman.

Devine asked how that worked?

Ristow explained that youth in the program come from high-risk families. The goal is to ensure they overcome their obstacles and earn their diploma or GED. Students must commit to a certain number of class credits and must work a certain number of hours per week. This is where Parks and Recreation assists, by placing the youth in a job, similar to the CARE summer program. Ristow said the youth in the program are usually very motivated, they just need a boost to meet their goals. The program is being considered at Douglass and Rock Bridge as well.

Alcohol Sales in the Parks: The City Manager did not want to schedule the public hearing during budget hearings and discussions so a resolution will be introduced at the October 1 meeting to set the public hearing for the October 15 meeting.

Capital Project Update

Hood shared updates as follows:

Stephens Lake: Solar lights have been installed at the east parking lot on an experimental basis. The waterfall bridge is complete. Work is progressing on the sprayground. Crews there have been pulled off periodically for other priorities.

Cosmo-Bethel: Lights have been installed at the new parking lot and a new covered grill has been installed at the new shelter.

Louisville: A rain garden is being installed at Louisville to take advantage of the storm water runoff. The garden will use this run off for the growth of aquatic plants. A dedication may be held at the park in the fall. Louisville Road is also under construction adjacent to the park.

Cosmo RC Track: Electrical service is being installed at the track.

Atkins: Earthwork began on the ballfields in late August and a lot of progress has been made.

Ridgeway Elementary School playground: A new playground piece has been installed as part of the city/school playground partnership.

Cosmo-Bethel Tennis: All eight courts are being resurfaced; four are complete.

Oakland: The floor of the bathhouse is now complete. The work was not able to be finished before the swimming season.

Longview: The shelter is under construction and the park is nearing completion.

Flat Branch Phase II: The park was in good condition for the Roots 'n Blues Festival, though some finishing touches still have to be done.

Commission Comments

Knudson asked about the building on Walnut which will house the 50+ program. He asked about pedestrian walkways across the street to Stephens Lake?

Hood said that would be considered, as he expected people using the facility to also walk over to the park.

Pauls asked about replacing Mike Jones on the Commission?

Hood said the position would likely be filled at the October 15 City Council meeting. It is representing Ward 3, so if other Commissioners know of anyone, applications are being accepted by the City Clerk.

Kloppel mentioned that he and Hood had lunch with Mike Jones the previous week before he moved. Blevins told Commissioners he would be taking his camera to the national conference and would share photos.

Grus complimented staff on Flat Branch II and said she was able to watch the progress from her office window. She was impressed at how hard everyone worked on the project.

Staff Comments

Hood briefed the Commission on current conditions at Hickman Pool.

Public Comments

None.

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm.