

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Thursday, February 19, 2009, 7 p.m.

ARC, 1701 W. Ash

MINUTES

Commission Present: Terry Kloeppe, Marin Blevins, Bill Pauls, Dennis Knudson, Gary Kespohl, Sue Davis

Commission Absent: Dan Devine

Staff Present: Mike Hood, Mike Griggs, Tammy Miller

Kloeppe called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Agenda: Hood asked the Commission to add an item to the agenda regarding the closure of the Bear Creek Trail. The agenda was approved as amended on a motion by Kespohl, seconded by Pauls.

Minutes: The minutes were approved on a motion by Pauls, seconded by Kespohl.

Monthly Report: Knudson said it looked like revenues had increased from this time last year.

Hood agreed, saying that many areas, such as golf and scholarship applications have increased. A lot will depend on the spring and summer.

Pauls commented about the number of ranger warnings and not many arrests? He asked if there was a policy of how many warnings would be issued before an arrest made?

Griggs said there were not as many repeat warnings as one would think. Many times, repeat offenders receive citations. The warnings are kept on file in a computer system used by Arens so that she can identify repeat offenders. Arens will issue citations to habitual offenders. With juveniles, parents are always notified when warnings are issued.

The January monthly report was approved on a motion by Pauls, seconded by Knudson.

Scheduled Public Comment: Kurt Albert, Albert-Oakland Park

Patrice Albert distributed some documents to the Commission, entitled Actions and Solutions Proposed by the Albert family.

Kurt Albert began his presentation by starting with the fourth item on the document, asking that the Commission rule that "City Council members in 1972 knew what they were doing when they unanimously passed R24-72 and O47-72, naming the park." Albert also specifically cited the eighth item on the list which asks for the removal of the road through the park from city maps and plans. The ninth item on the list cites a repair of history, Albert asked that parks maps should contain Marjorie Albert Simpson and not just "Marjorie Simpson tract" on the second 20 acres purchased in 1972.

Albert also asked that parks department records should be repaired, namely adding any letters or notes from City Manager Don Allard supporting the naming of Albert-Oakland Park, a letter to the Tribune from Patrice Albert on the history of the purchase, and a bound record of the "Albert family's work on this matter placed in filed at Gentry, Cosmo and the City Clerk's office at the Albert family's expense."

Albert asked the Commission to consider adding a parking lot on the south side of the park to accommodate users there. He said he would like to see the department negotiate for land near the park, to secure those lots for a future parking lot and restroom. Albert added he would also like to see

permanent agreement with the school district for the use of land that is part of the park. He said it is possible for the school system to sell the land and only give Parks and Recreation 30 days notice. Albert said that issue, the parking lot and the name on the 20-tract were his most pressing needs at this time. He asked if there were questions of him?

Kespohl asked who owned the lots near the park?

Albert said he did not know; he would rather not investigate that. He asked about the plaque on the bathhouse?

Hood answered that the plaque has not been located nor a picture of the plaque. Staff is perfectly willing to develop and install a replacement plaque. All the pertinent information is available, although it may not be the exact wording, if that is acceptable to everyone.

Albert mentioned that there is a letter in the Albert-Oakland file at Gentry asking for Allard's name on the plaque.

Albert mentioned picking up trash in the cul-de-sac near the park on South Parker, and addressed another item on his list, fitness stations. He does not feel all the stations need to be replaced as they may not be well used. But, he said he would like to see the damaged ones be taken out.

Knudson asked about trends with fitness stations?

Hood said staff would look at the issue.

Pauls mentioned that one of the stations has already been repaired. He added that the cul-de-sac is in better condition than it used to be. He added it would be nice to have a parking lot on that side of the park, but that is a decision staff would have to make.

Pauls added that he uses the park all the time, that the park is in good condition and is well-used. He said it seemed like the best thing to do for the Commission is to ensure that the naming issue is what it was intended to be. He said some regretful decisions were made but it's time to move forward. He thanked the Alberts for their gift and sacrifices they made.

Kespohl asked if Bear Creek Trail users access the trail from the cul-de-sac?

Pauls said yes, that some trail users park their cars there. He said with that issue and development that will likely occur with the extension of Providence Road, it would be nice to see a parking lot there.

Blevins told Albert he preferred hearing specific requests such as those he outlined for them. Blevins said he did not like to receive negative materials about city staff. He complimented Albert and said he personally was likely to respond more positively. He said the Commission is always open to citizen comments.

Pauls asked about the department's shelter naming policies?

Hood said no written policy really exists, but traditionally shelters are named for donors or they are named in reference to the history of the site. Examples are some Cosmo Club members who have shelters named for them in Cosmo Park. At Stephens Lake Park, the shelters names reference the history of the land. Hood mentioned the shelters at Stephens Lake were actually approved by Council by resolution. By setting that precedent, Hood said he thought staff would take future shelter naming decisions to the Council for their approval.

Pauls asked about the shelters at Albert-Oakland?

Hood said the shelters are numbered, not named.

Kespohl asked about the road, if it was still on the roadway plan?

Hood said he thought it had been removed but wasn't sure, he asked Albert if he knew?

Albert responded that he was not sure about it, he had seen conflicting information.

Kespohl asked if staff would look into the roadway plan, if the road was on or off. **He then made a motion, asking staff to explore the possibility of purchasing the two lots by the park, referenced by Albert. Pauls seconded the motion.**

All in favor, motion passed.

Kloeppe then asked about the city's agreement with the schools?

Hood said the department had several agreements similar to the one at Albert-Oakland, such as Douglass, Again St. Park and Paquin. The land at Paquin is an example of the school taking some land back for playground expansion at Lee School. This is the only time the school has ever taken land back.

Kespohl asked if staff could approach the school district regarding the 20-year contract and add in a 6-month notice?

Hood said he would look into it.

Pauls asked what portion of the park was actually school land?

Hood said it was most of the west parking lot, shelters, playground and soccer practice field.

Pauls asked if a longer-term agreement would be appropriate? He made a motion to that effect.

Hood said it was possible, but it would likely involve the new school superintendent. Since the new superintendent will not take over for a while, it may be several months before the possibility could be explored. However, staff does stay in contact with Dr. Boren, chief operations officer.

Pauls withdrew his motion, asking that staff look into that when appropriate. He added that he would like to see a park sign on Blue Ridge, since there is none there at all.

Hood said a sign is on the "to-do list" at the park, it is just not funded yet.

Kespohl asked Albert if these things were accomplished, would he be satisfied?

Albert said he thought so, as long as the name on the 20 acres was changed on the maps to honor his mother, he would be satisfied.

Pauls asked staff what could be done about that?

Hood said staff could change maps that reference previous ownership of parcels acquired to form the parks. But to officially name an additional part of the park would involve the City Council, he said.

Pauls made a motion that the name Marjorie Albert Simpson be added to the individual parcel that was acquired in 1972. Kespohl seconded the motion.

All in favor, motion passed.

Draft Implementation Visioning Report

Kloeppel mentioned that the Commission has been asked to offer any feedback on the draft visioning report. Comments are being accepted until March 27.

Hood said staff had the full 178-page report available if anyone wanted to review it, or it is also online for review. Specifically, the committee has asked the Commission to review section 3.

Boards and Commissions Questionnaire

Kloeppel received a letter from the Mayor, requesting that the Commission complete a questionnaire about their duties, similar to one they had completed the previous year. The item will be placed on the March agenda for the Commission to complete.

Bear Creek Trail

Hood told the Commission that due to the extension of Providence Road, a portion of Bear Creek Trail will be closed. There will be a bridge that crosses over the trail. Construction on the project has begun and the trail will be closed soon. It is expected to be closed until the fall. Hood said staff has prepared signs and maps with detours and alternate routes. There is no direct way to get through, but staff tried their best to give trail users another option. He shared the alternate routes.

Pauls said he thought it was as good of an option as any. He asked staff to make sure they posted signs at the Dog Park and to notify the Humane Society as well.

Council Items

Hood shared these updates:

Perche Creek property acquisition: This property is adjacent to the newly acquired Anderson property on the west side of the city. The Council on Monday authorized the transfer of the property which is the former site of a sewer utility. It is 130 acres and is expected to be the site of the Perche Creek Trail as well as being preserved as greenspace.

Knudson asked about the future route of the Perche Creek Trail?

Hood answered that it would pass under I-70 and connect to the Bear Creek Trail and Cosmo Park.

Blevins asked about flooding on the site?

Hood said that it does flood in parts. The design for the park will take that into consideration. The fact that the tract will not be developed as residential or commercial will actually help the flooding there.

March Heibel Building: Council has authorized agreement with First Chance for potential use of the building.

Lee School playground: The school is reclaiming a portion of Paquin Park so that the parking lot and playground at Lee can be expanded. Hood showed a map of the area. The department and school came to an agreement that will allow the ADA-accessible sidewalk to remain as part of the park. This is critical to allow access to the community gardens for the residents of Paquin Tower. This actually could reduce a lot of “cut-through” traffic through the park

Mo. Dept of Conservation Lease: Has been approved by the Council. MDC is raising funds for their visitors center and offices on the Gans Creek Recreation Area property so when that facility is built in a few years, Parks and Recreation will take over the Waters Moss property along Old 63 across from Grindstone. Hood showed a map of the property and which areas will be maintained by the City, while some remain in a natural state.

Farmers Market: Has approached the City seeking a long-term lease agreement that would help them in their fund-raising activities.

Kespohl asked how much has been raised so far?

Hood responded a little more than \$200,000. A new director is in place who is largely charged with fund-raising and donations.

Capital Projects

Griggs shared these updates:

Memorial heritage benches: are being replaced. The oldest benches are being taken care of first and others will be phased in.

Stephens Lake Park: Waterfalls are about completed; a test run was conducted. ADA fishing access has been completed and the amphitheater is about to be under construction.

Grasslands Park: the site is being prepared for the new park.

Albert-Oakland Park: improvements are being made to the infield, to turn it into an ag lime infield. The Diamond Council made a contribution for these improvements.

Auburn Hills: shelter and trail are under construction.

Louisville Park: a gate has been installed to halt traffic driving through the park.

Garth Nature Area: a prescribed burn was conducted there, as well as at Stephens Lake Park.

Albert-Oakland fitness stations: six have been removed and two were repaired.

Kiwanis Park: TreeKeepers clearing honeysuckle from the park on Feb. 7.

Commission Comments

Davis mentioned that she was approached by someone asking about advertising on the fences at Rainbow.

Hood said the ads are restricted and anyone interested would have to contact the department. The ads do depend on the type of use. Ads are usually competitively bid through the City.

Griggs added that the Diamond Council does put up banners with ads during games and tournaments. Pauls informed staff that the prescribed burn damaged the protective tubing on some of the bluebird houses.

Kespohl asked when the parks sales tax was set to expire?

Hood said it would expire in March 2011, so it will likely be on the ballot in August or November 2010.

Kespohl asked about the note on the Crane property, and Hood said it was on schedule to be paid off in 2011.

Kespohl then asked about engineering work under GetAbout Columbia, if the federal funding covered that?

Hood said the funds cover almost everything, although some of the trails projects are being funded by Parks and Recreation with the parks sales tax.

Kespohl asked what projects would be funded under future park sales taxes?

Hood said some trails will likely be listed such as phase III of Hinkson Creek and Hominy Branch. He told Kespohl he would provide a list of Get About priority projects.

Kloeppel asked about the status of the search for the new recreation services manager?

Hood said he would be meeting with the City Manager the following week to finalize details, then an announcement would be made.

Staff Comments

Hood informed the Commission about an author visiting the ARC. The CARE program is sponsoring a visit from Ishmael Beah, author who was a child soldier in the Sierra Leone. The public will be able to meet him at an event on Feb. 21.

Public Comments

Patrice Albert thanked the Commission for their time and consideration with the Albert family's requests. She said she appreciated it.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.