

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, August 9, 2016

4:30 p.m., Open Air Pavilion, Murphy Park, 1700 South Grandview Avenue

PRESENT: Paul Hoffmann, Robin Kennicker, Richard Kirkendall, Ken Klinge, Kate Larson and Jennifer Tigges

STAFF PRESENT: Marie Ware, Steve Fehsal and Eileen Trimble

MINUTES APPROVED; VOTE:

It was moved by Tigges, seconded by Kirkendall, to approve the minutes of the July 12, 2016 meeting with one correction: Second line of second to last paragraph on page one should say "Commissioner Lyness feels....". Unanimous.

DISCUSS EXPANSION OF VALENTINE PARK:

Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware shared the City has a purchase agreement to expand Valentine Park. The owner of approximately 8.44 acres next to the park approached the City about selling the property to the City. An agreement was reached and the offer to buy was approved by the City Council. The City is applying for a REAP grant to pay for the purchase of the property. Staff requested a letter from the commission supporting the REAP grant application. A draft will be sent to commissioners for approval and then final letter prepared for Chair to sign.

PARK DIVISION REPORT:

Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal informed commissioners:

- Upper Bee Branch is taking shape; trees are being planted between Garfield and 22nd.
- Staff has met with the consultant twice and done two walk-throughs for the Eagle Point Park restoration project.
- Working on integrated pest management by purchasing some alternative chemicals to try, including salt and 30% vinegar solution.
- By September the hanging flower baskets will be replaced at Riverwalk, Millwork District and Bee Branch and mums will be planted in mid-September.
- The digital part of the Grand Opera House sign was replaced.
- Staff is working hard on regular maintenance, mowing, trees, etc.

RECREATION DIVISION REPORT:

Leisure Services Manager Ware reporting for Dan Kroger:

- At the next City Council meeting an RFP for pool study will be presented to hire a consultant to evaluate both pools which are more than twenty years old.
- Monthly marina reports are being prepared.

Commissioner Larson said the lighted boat parade was fun and a good event. Mr. Fehsal shared Facilities Supervisor Ben Alden mentioned Saturday was the highest revenue day so for this season for the marina. The turnout for the event was about similar to last year's event.

MANAGER REPORT:

Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware informed Commissioners:

- Commissioner Tigges had previously asked why we sign the minutes after approved. Staff checked with the City Clerk and signature is not required. Since the commission approves the minutes at their next meeting, we will drop the signatures.
- Ms. Ware shared information related to the City Council goal setting session. The Council set Five Flags study and continuation of city-wide flowers as continuing priorities. Arts and Culture Master Plan will involve Leisure Services as Five Flags and Grand River Center have art items along with Eagle Point Park mural. Healthy living and active lifestyles was added to the vision statement. The full document will be shared with commission when completed.
 - Several hundred people participated in the community engagement process before the City Council goal setting. All city departments reviewed the input received and incorporated into their input to Council. Ms. Ware will share the community input information at the next commission meeting.
 - Commissioner Tigges asked if we should send the commission list of priorities to the City Council. Discussion was held and the general consensus was yes, the council needs to hear from the commission. Discussion will center on how commission priorities relate to the newest goals and priorities of the council. Staff will send the newest City Council goals and priorities document to commissioners along with the commission priority list and then place discussion on the September agenda.
- Pokeman has had a huge effect on our spaces. It is bringing multiple generations to our city lands, especially the Riverwalk.
- Neighbors of proposed park in English Ridge Subdivision generated a petition asking the City Council to move the park development forward in the CIP budget.

COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS / QUESTIONS:

- Commissioner Kirkendall asked about the green space at 8th and Main that is being developed by Cottingham and Butler. Manager Fehsal said the area is being built and managed privately but will be open to the public and it will have benches and trees for shade. The department will not be involved in maintenance of the area.
- Commissioner Tigges asked about the status of the Skate Park. Mr. Fehsal said one more public meeting is being scheduled. Letters will be sent to neighbors around Flora Park, a news release will be sent and notice will go to subscribers signed up for the Skate Park Notify Me on city website.
- Commissioner Kennicker asked about the trees on Jackson Street being cut down – was it because of the Emerald Ash Borer? Mr. Fehsal shared the trees on Jackson Street near Comiskey Park that were removed were dying and not all of them were ash trees.
- Commissioner Larson asked if we had started spraying at Washington Park yet. She said Washington Park has so much traffic with people eating lunch, sitting on the grass, etc. that she would like the commission as a group to consider asking the City to refrain from blanket spraying chemicals at the park. Manager Ware said it is part of the IPM right now that treatment of Washington Park is allowed. Commissioner Hoffmann would like to get feedback from community on pesticide free plan. Commissioner Kennicker said you have to be conscious of the people's needs but must also be conscious of things in the ground needed for birds and insects. This item will be placed on next agenda.
- Commissioner Hoffmann wanted to discuss the dog fight he witnessed in Washington Park where dogs are not supposed to be allowed. The animals were defecating in the park and owners not picking up – what do we do about this? Ms. Larson suggested discussion about pets in parks be put on the September agenda.
- Commissioners asked to have a tour of facilities in September or October. It was suggested that the tour not be part of a regularly scheduled commission meeting. Staff will send commissioners date choices for possible tours.

ADJOURN; VOTE:

It was moved by Tigges, seconded by Klinge, that the meeting be adjourned at 5:57 p.m. Unanimous.