



## **MEETING MINUTES**

**RECORDED BY:** Melonie Trang

**MEETING PURPOSE:** Monthly PRC Board Meeting

**MEETING DATE** May 12, 2021

**AND LOCATION:** Meeting was held via Zoom

**ATTENDEES:** City Staff:  
Mayor Bill Cole  
PRC Board Members:  
Lew Morris, Tom Rupsis, Thom MacLean, Maia Dickerson,  
Jami Clark, Laura Drager, Mark Wahl  
PRPL Staff Members:  
Mike Whitaker, Director  
Mike Pigg, Park Superintendent  
Kory Thomson, Recreation Superintendent  
Mark Jarvis, Park Planner  
Chris Martin, Recreation Specialist  
Park Police Officer, Nate Schara

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### **I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

Chairman Tom Rupsis called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM

#### **A. INTRODUCTIONS**

Home Front Patti Webster  
City Council member Danny Choriki  
Tyrel Johnson

#### **B. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

No additions to the agenda

#### **C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

No minutes to approve

### **II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Michael Whitaker**

Director Michael Whitaker said staff was happy with how the Centennial Park Grand Opening went on June 5 and thanked staff for the assistance. He commented Centennial Dog Park was busy when he went out yesterday.

### **III. PUBLIC/BOARD COMMENT**

Chairman Rupsis opened the floor for public comment.

Board member Maia Dickerson asked the overall total down in seasonal staff the

department this year. Mike Pigg said he normally hires around 50 seasonal staff and currently he has 28 with 25 returning staff. Kory said he usually hires over 100 seasonal staff. He pointed out that he has usually 50 lifeguards, this year only 30 (most returning); he hires around 40 camp counselors, this year only 18 with mass majority returnees.

Kory said the department is pushing out ads/commercials for hiring positions through Charter/Spectrum.

Board member Jami Clark asked if 18 years requirement is for all seasonal positions or just the ones she pulled up online. Mike Pigg said 18 years and older is required to work in parks. Kory Thomson said that the recreation division could hire some 15 and 16 year olds.

Board member Lew Morris asked about the repairs to the roads at Riverfront. Mike Pigg said he spoke with the Engineering department and they should start working on those roads soon.

Board member Jamie Clark commented how happy she was that the shade structures at Centennial Park would be up in time of the grand opening there. Board chair Tom Rupsis thanked the Park Foundation for funding the shade structures.

He also asked if there would be any signage announcing the grand opening. Mike Pigg said the sign is being produced and Michael Whitaker said the sign is done and up at Centennial.

Board Member Laura Drager asked what permits the department is waiting on for Coulson Park. Mark Jarvis said he is waiting on the Core of Engineer's permit and a review from the Department of Justice who administers the funding, to sign off on the bid package.

Mayor Bill Cole mentioned that there is still opportunity to be a sponsor for the grand opening of Centennial Park.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Parks and Recreation Monthly Report:**

Due to recording issues, no information to report.

### **B. Park Police Officer Report:**

Park Police officer Nate Schara reported the following:

- **Officer Schara has been a police officer for 6 years and was hired as Parks Police officer starting in January of this year**
- Busy in general
- Works close with the Downtown Business Association
- Coulson Park is super busy with people staying overnight there
- Keeping officer present in the downtown areas; South, North, Pioneer
- Is looking to get some additional help this summer
- Cracking down on the loitering in the parks; see a lot of complaints from citizens
- Handful of officers are going to be out more on bikes in the downtown

area.

Board member Thom MacLean asked Officer Schara what his shift was and whether he did a lot of his patrolling in car or on foot. Officer Schara said his shift is Tuesday-Friday 6am-4 and does both patrolling in car and on foot.

Board member Laura Drager asked if he would be able to pull the type of activity information for the South Side Task Force to share with the parks board. Officer Schara said he would have to speak with the analyst about that and said the information shared with the South Side Task Force was information for that whole area on the Southside.

**C. Gratitude Monument Proposal:**

Tyrel Johnson proposed a life size sculpture of a Bison and Native American woman to be placed in a public place. The City will not be paying for the construction or installation of the proposed sculpture.

Board chair Rupsis asked if Mr. Johnson has an idea of costs to create the sculpture and a possible location for it. Mr. Johnson said yes he has discussed locations with the staff at Parks and Recreation. He said he has put out to bid for the materials recently but due to Covid, bronze prices have gone up so he is waiting to see if it will come down. He has an approximant price of around \$120,000 total project. Michael Whitaker said the location that rose to the top is Swords Park. He said there is a site set apart at Swords to represent Native Americans. Felt that would be a good location.

Board member Jami Clark asked what the dimensions were of the sculpture. Mr. Johnson said the male bison is around six foot, the Native American woman will be around five nine, and the concrete slab will be around twenty-three feet in length.

Mayor Cole mentioned that with the new airport would be coming online and there will be a need for public art at or near that facility and wanted that as a possible location for the sculpture. He said he did think the Swords park location is a good one but did have some concerns with vandalism, the location being in a remote area of the park, need for lighting and durability.

***Chairman Rupsis entertained a motion on the Gratitude Monument proposal for the public art construction and location at Swords Park. Board member Lew Morris made a motion to approve. Board member Laura Drager seconded. On a raised hand vote, all board approved the motion for staff to proceed with Tyrel Johnson on the monument proposal.***

**D. FY2022 Parks Recreation Budget:**

Director Michael Whitaker gave the FY22 Parks and Recreation budget.

**Chairman Rupsis opened the floor to the board for questions and comments.**

Board member Laura Drager asked how the department prioritizes Capital Improvement (CIP) Projects. Michael Whitaker said before a project can be added to the CIP we have to have a revenue source in place.

Board Chairman Rupsis asked what would be the funding source when PD1 is taken away in three years. Michael Whitaker said there is currently a lot of discussion on that. He said there is discussion on going out with a bond issue. Nothing has been decided as of yet. It should be discussed at the upcoming budget presentation.

Chairman Rupsis opened the floor to public comment.

Mayor Cole said City Council just received a letter from the Chamber of Commerce advocating a public mill levy pertaining to safety.

**E. HomeFront's Proposal:**

- Housing Authority ("Home Front") would like to build a wellness campus on Lampman which is 5.969 acres and located along Monad on the westend
- Campus would have 20-30 family dwelling 2-3 bedroom units/apartments, 4 classrooms to serve 40-50 children (childcare), community garden, on site adult family educational programming, walking trails, bike paths and focus on family wellness
- Housing Authority does and will have access to funding to do the project
- Housing Authority Patti Webster said there is a need for a westend location and this is a perfect spot. She commented that they do not need any more housing in the heights.
- It was suggested by staff and board to look at other parkland; Tom Rupsis asked staff for a list of available parkland sites that might work for this project. It was indicated by Patti Webster that the Housing Authority wanted this specific location and this location only. She said it best fit their needs.
- Michael Whitaker brought to attention that staff and the Park board recommended to City Council several years ago to not sell Lampman and use it/develop it for sports fields since there was a shortage and a need for them. (and still is a need for more sports fields) (this went before City Council back in 2019 and discussion on selling the land was all the way back in 2013)
- Board member Jamie Clark asked if we could sell the land. Mark Jarvis said that would have to come from City Council.
- It was suggested by Tom Rupsis and City Council member Danny Choriki to bring this before a council work session to discuss further.

**VII. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Parks and Trail Ballot Issue:**

Due to time constraint, Parks and Trail Ballot issue was postponed for discussion.

**VIII. AJOURNMENT** – There was no further business, and the meeting adjourned at 1:00 PM

**(Please note these are summary minutes)**