



PRC PARK BOARD MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY: Melonie Trang

MEETING PURPOSE: Monthly Meeting

MEETING DATE April 13, 2022

LOCATION: PRPL Conference Room

ATTENDEES:

PRC Board Members: Thom MacLean, Jamie Clark, Chuck Platt, Jon Thompson, Jim Rott, Laura Drager

PRPL Staff Members: Mike Whitaker, Director; Mike Pigg, Park Superintendent; Kory Thomson, Recreation Superintendent; Mark Jarvis, Park Planner; Nate Schara; Park Police Officer, Paul Reinhardt, Community Outreach & Engagement Coordinator

City Staff Members: City Administrator Kris Kukulski, Assistant City Administrator Kevin Iffland; Elyse Monat, City Planning

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

Chairman Thom MacLean called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM

INTRODUCTIONS:

Michael Whitaker introduced Parks Police Officer Nate Schara. Officer Schara introduced himself to the board and explained that he has been part of the Police Department for 7 years and a Parks Officer for 1 ½ years. He expressed his current issues in parks as vandalism and people sleeping or camping in the parks. He said he has also been dealing with abandoned vehicles in parks. He expressed that having an officer in parks has helped the community feel safe while in parks.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Thom MacLean requested a motion on the February 9, 2022, meeting minutes. Board member Jamie Clark made a motion to approve. Board member Jon Thompson seconded the motion. On a voice vote, all approved and the motion passed.

DIRECTORS REPORT: Michael Whitaker

Michael had nothing to report

PUBLIC/BOARD COMMENT:

Chairman Thom MacLean opened the floor for public comment.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Disc Golf at Phipps Park Update:

Parks Superintendent Mike Pigg updated the board that he has met with the disc golf group to do a walk of the proposed course. He said he approved their proposed course layout where the baskets would be installed. The disc golf group has started installing the baskets. Mr. Pigg said they should be completely installed before their spring fling.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Parks and Recreation Monthly Report:

❖ **Recreation Superintendent Kory Thomson gave the Recreation Division report:**

- Wrapping up all of our winter/spring programming; adult volleyball and basketball, girls volleyball
- Beginning to transition into the summer season. Summer activity guide went out April 1 via the mail to the community. It was also inserted into Simply Local Magazine.
- Currently, summer registration is up 40% over last year and several programs are full or nearly full
- Current summer seasonals count: 20 camp counselors, need 40; 21 lifeguards, need 50
- Staff is advertising for summer help

Board member Clark asked for a hiring comparison between last year and this year. Mr. Thomson said it was about similar, but aquatic was a little better last year. He said the department has upped the pay this year by \$1.50.

❖ **Community Outreach & Engagement Coordinator Paul Reinhardt Report:**

- Working on CDBG-CB projects: North Park projects are on hold; upgrades to the Zimmerman Center; Pioneer Park water issues are being addressed and the Engineering department is getting towards the end of the engineering part of the project
- Meeting with the Poly Vista Grand Opening committee. The committee has a good idea of what the event is going to look like. If construction wraps up as planned, the grand opening should be sometime in late August
- Arbor Day is coming up on May 5th; getting ready for that
- Tree planting event for Earth Day at Mountview Cemetery is planned for April 29th

❖ **Parks Superintendent Mike Pigg report for Parks, Forestry, and Cemetery divisions:**

- There are 26 returning seasonals, have been able to hire three restroom closers/openers (our most difficult positions to fill), have recruited eight additional seasonals. Still need to fill two more positions including one for trash truck operator position
- Forestry hires four seasonals, currently have hired three
- Cemetery hires four seasonals and have hired one
- Staff is getting ready for the ditch water in the canals, working on pumps and screens.
- Staff is preparing for summer; restrooms will be opened once it gets above freezing at night

A question was asked by a public attendee as to when more water would be pumped into Lake Josephine. Mr. Pigg said the culvert that runs into Lake Josephine had deteriorated. Once that is fixed,

water will be able to flow again into the lake.

❖ **Park Planner Mark Jarvis report on Projects in Parks:**

- Central Park tennis courts: prices came in above budget amount; bid was rejected; hoping to get additional funding from LWCF (Land Water Conservation Funding)
- Multi-generational Recreation Center: moving forward on design
- Ponderosa Irrigation: received a proposal; hope to start on that soon
- Terrace Estates: selling parkland
- Poly Vista Park Improvements: the work is just about complete
- Coulson: proposal for additional work on the south end, working with the consultants
- Optimist Park Shelter: on hold due to weather, shelter is here
- Terry Park Shelter: shelter and playground is complete; Park staff is installing the playground fall protection
- Lillis Park Playground: contractor is onsite working
- Comanche Park Playground: waiting on environmental study and assessment
- Castle Rock Playground: had discussion with Cushing Terrell and their landscape architect Dayton Rush. We should have a concept from them by May 9th and then we will go before the Heights Task Force

B. Unique Park Program - Buckthorn:

Mr. Pigg gave a presentation on Buckthorn removal going on at Riverfront Park.

Buckthorn is considered a very invasive species. A large area of the park has been taken over by Buckthorn. A group of volunteers has been working with the Forestry Division on removing the Buckthorn and reseeding.

A question was asked if there was any way to control the Buckthorn. Mr. Pigg said staff has done a lot of research and there is not a lot they can do. Buckthorn does not respond to spraying. He said there is a man here locally that has a special machine that looks like a skid steer with a wood chipper on the front. Staff is looking at possibly trying this machine to help in removing the Buckthorn. He said staff would also continue to look at other ways to remove it.

C. Stephens Lane Extension with Parking:

Michael Whitaker said staff was directed to look at another way to solve the issue of parking at Optimist Park without the use of green space as approved in the master plan. Mr. Whitaker said an option to put parking along Stephens Lane has been proposed to staff. City Engineering Mac Fogelson gave a presentation on the planned layout of the proposed parking area. Mr. Fogelson said there are two options with this proposal; first, one is to extend Stevens lane with a mid-block crossing and the other would be just extending Stephens Lane. Michael said there is an event shelter being built on that far west end of the park. He said the shelter is what is driving the need for more parking in the area. It would accommodate the shelter going in.

After detailed discussion from the board, Board chair MacLean asked for a recommendation from the board on the proposed extension to Stephens Lane for parking to Optimist Park as presented by the Engineering Department.

Board member Jamie Clark made a motion to recommend to City Council the (Stephens Lane Extension; parking along Stephens Lane) concept without the middle crosswalk. Board member Jim Rott seconded the motion.

Board member Jon Thompson made a substitute motion with the current motion on the floor given by Board member Jamie Clark, for a recommendation to City Council to look into the future at creating a smaller drop off area perhaps with handicap parking that is closer to the shelter. Board member Laura Drager seconded the motion. On a voice vote, members Jon Thomson, Thom MacLean, Jim Rott, Chuck Platt, and Laura Drager were in favor. Board member Jami Clark was opposed. In a five to one vote, motion passed.

D. Parks Board Discussion:

Chairman MacLean opened the floor to the board for discussion on any item not on the agenda. Board member Chuck Platt brought up his concern regarding the road at Swords Park. He expressed how he would like to see something done in repairing the road. Mr. Whitaker said the biggest challenge the department has to being able to do this project, is finding a funding source to do the project. He said staff recognizes there is a need there. A question was asked if it was part of the Capital Improvement Projects. Mr. Whitaker said it was pulled off. Assistant City Administrator Iffland said there is a project going on up there with Northwestern Energy and there was talk about part of plan being a parking lot.

Board member Dragger wanted to continue discussion on Stephens Lane and wanted to know about lighting along the street. Mr. Whitaker said lighting is not part of the project.

Board member Clark wanted to know what happened to the CDBG-CV funds that are not being used for Wi-Fi in parks. Mr. Reinhardt said those funds are being used to install adult exercise equipment pod, freeing up regular CDBG funds for other projects. Ms. Clark if those other projects are for parks. Mr. Reinhardt said he did not know.

AJOURNMENT – There was no further business, a motion was made to adjourn, and the motion passed. Adjourned at 12:40pm.

(Please note these are summary minutes; this meeting is recorded and available to the public for any additional information discussed)