

Minutes

The City Council of the City of Leawood, Kansas, met for a Special Call Meeting at City Hall, 4800 Town Center Drive, at 6:00 P.M., on Monday, October 6, 2014. Mayor Peggy Dunn presided.

Councilmembers Present: James Azeltine, Jim Rawlings, Lou Rasmussen, Andrew Osman, Debra Filla, Carrie Rezac and Julie Cain

Councilmembers Absent: None

Staff Present: Scott Lambers, City Administrator
Mark Klein, Planning Official
Chris Claxton, Parks & Rec. Director
Brian Anderson, Parks Supt.
Kim Curran, Recreation Supt.
Deb Harper, City Clerk

Richard Coleman, Comm. Dev. Director
Dawn Long, Finance Director
Joe Johnson, Public Works Director
Patty Bennett, City Attorney
Cindy Jacobus, Asst. City Clerk

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board:
Karen Ward Reimer, Chair
Lorrie Hamilton

Amy Vlasic
David Coleman

Others Present: Jamie West, Troon General Manager

Discussion of Parks Master Plan Priorities List

Mayor Dunn acknowledged that the Parks Board had done a great job in preparing the Parks & Recreation Master Plan/Project List, especially with emphasis of care for what the City already has and ensuring it is in good repair, before starting new projects.

Mr. Lambers stated the list had been created at the urging of the City Attorney to move forward and complete the Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA] improvements through the Operating Budget of 2014 - 2015. He agrees with Mayor Dunn to review existing items and improvements first, and he hoped the Council would agree.

Mr. Lambers continued by stating in working with Leawood Budget Manager Kathy Byard on the Capital Improvement Plan [CIP], \$1 Million per year has been allotted in 2016, 2017 and 2018 to pay for improvements. Once approved by Council, the improvements will be paid for with the most efficient manner possible, including cash and pay-as-you-go [PAYGO] financing, and improvements should be complete by 2018. Any financing that involves the issuance of debt requires a vote from residents, so the list needs to be carefully evaluated and prioritized with that in mind. Mr. Lambers anticipated a vote would probably need to be tied to a general election year; 2020 would be the next. Prioritization of the list may be a lengthy process, requiring a series of meetings. Thereafter,

financing mechanisms would need to be determined. The City does have good voter confidence and track record; Ironwoods Park was built for \$12 Million, just as the City had stated to residents. Mr. Lambers reminded that other Public Works improvements are taking place via curb, gutter and corrugated metal pipe projects, at a cost of \$35 Million, for issues that need to be addressed.

Mayor Dunn stated the Park Bond in 1998 was for three parks. The vote passed 70/30 and the funds were almost evenly split between Ironwoods Park and City Park, and then \$700,000 for I-Lan Park. It was clearly communicated to the voters that the debt would be paid through property tax with mill levy increase.

Ms. Claxton stated the list includes routine elements that came out of both consultant recommendations and committee discussions. Councilmember Filla stated the ADA access date shown on the list is 2016 and Ms. Claxton replied this would be corrected to state 2015.

Councilmember Rasmussen requested to go through each item on the list.

Repair/Replace-Unfunded

5-1 Poor condition access road between Lodge and Nature Center – Cost Estimate \$96,000

Ms. Claxton stated the deteriorating condition of the access road by Ironwoods Lodge and the Nature Center has been temporarily repaired. This is a high-traffic road that also handles heavy delivery and trash trucks, but other possible causes of deterioration are undetermined. This could be pushed back beyond 2016, because staff would like to divide the list based on funding. Councilmember Rasmussen disagreed with moving the repair out of 2015 because the road is not being maintained even with patching/temporary repairs.

Mayor Dunn asked if the cost of \$96,000 was with or without curbs. Mr. Anderson stated it is without curbs and if the road was curbed, it might improve storm water drainage [water runs across parking lot]. There is an inlet structure west of the Nature Center, and the water could be piped down.

Mr. Lambers commented that \$3 Million will be infused into the City's park system, and this requires much consideration. Because the financing is cash, the budgetary impacts are immediate.

5-2 Renovate the older trail sections – Cost Estimate \$100,000

Ms. Claxton stated \$100,000 only represents a relatively small piece of the trail from Tomahawk Park that connects to a section completed at Roe. Ms. Claxton and Mr. Anderson would like to revisit this number and develop a spreadsheet of renovated trails, their location and date of renovation. The City has over eight miles of trail and the spreadsheet would show the big picture over 10 to 12 years. The City now utilizes a trail width of 10-ft. vs. 8-ft. or 12-ft. Mayor Dunn agreed that a width of 10-ft. is appropriate.

5-3 Replace playground with an inclusive playground [City Park] – Cost Estimate \$200,000

Ms. Claxton stated the Leawood Foundation has indicated interest in partnering with the City on this project. Councilmember Rasmussen asked why the playground needs to be replaced. Ms. Claxton replied that when the park was renovated, old equipment was fitted into the new structure. The

playground surface is also deteriorating. The proposed playground would be inclusive for all users, including physically and mentally challenged individuals. The Leawood Foundation would consider conducting a fundraiser similar to that for Gezer Park, which had funding from the City and the Foundation. Mayor Dunn stated the Foundation matched funds to a certain percentage on Gezer Park. If the City could offer funding of \$50,000, it may be easier for the Foundation to raise the remainder, as it shows interest on the part of the City. She indicated her desire to present fundraising efforts as a partnership and perhaps the City could commit funds in 2017 or 2018, expecting fundraising efforts to be a lengthy process.

Councilmember Rasmussen stated that replacing the playground with one that is more inclusive should be very low on the priority list. If the Foundation could raise \$200,000 it would be fine, but if the City would need to make up any difference, this should not be a top priority. However, he agreed with the Mayor's suggestion of City funding \$50,000, as his issue is with open-ended debt.

4-1 Tennis court resurface/repair short fence [City Park] – Cost Estimate \$180,000

Ms. Claxton stated that temporary repairs will be occurring soon, but the courts need to be redone in their entirety. The courts do have an extensive underground drain system, but over time surface seams have cracked and split.

Councilmember Rasmussen stated this is a job that needs to be done. Councilmember Rezac asked who utilizes the tennis courts. Ms. Claxton replied many school groups fill three non-prime time spots and they do pay to rent the courts. Additionally, the courts are heavily utilized by the public as they are the only public courts in Leawood.

4-2 Overlay of roads and parking lots [Ironwoods] – Cost Estimate \$390,000

Ms. Claxton stated that this project is currently unfunded.

Councilmember Rasmussen stated the Council had previously made a case for improving the existing parking lot outside Ironwoods Lodge. He expressed support for the repairs, but he felt the overlay of the roads should be coordinated with the changes in the parking lot and the access road, because the water flow goes into the existing parking lot. Mr. Johnson agreed it would be cost-effective to do both at the same time.

Councilmember Azeltine asked if the project could be subdivided and suggested \$400,000 as a sizable amount. Ms. Claxton replied that to do both projects would cost close to \$1 Million. Councilmember Rezac stated that while it makes sense to combine the projects because of economies of scale, the cost is high. Councilmember Rasmussen stated that he understood, but that the design of the solution needs to take into consideration the ultimate expansion of the parking lot. Mr. Lambers agreed the best plan would be to do all the paving at one time, even if it consumes a year's worth of allocation. He continued by stating the design for this project has been completed and paid for.

Councilmember Cain stated that scheduling of these projects needs to be done carefully to limit disruptions to businesses.

4-3 Remove and relocate smaller rocks along pond; add sod [Gezer Park] – Cost Estimate \$40,000

Ms. Claxton stated that rocks entering the pond continue to present problems. While the design was good, the pave stones are easy for visitors to throw in the water. The big rock would remain, and the sod would go to the edge.

Councilmember Azeltine asked if the area has signage to indicate that rocks should not be moved or be placed in the water. Ms. Claxton replied there is no signage. Mr. Anderson stated I-Lan Park does have a sign asking visitors to not throw the rocks, but they still do so.

4-4 Determine Middle Pond leak – Cost Estimate \$15,000

Ms. Claxton stated that North Pond Lake looks great and is doing a good job of holding water. The Force Account has funds available for repairs. The system needs to be replaced and not continually repaired. The initial estimate for Middle Pond repairs was \$350,000, but the first goal should now be to determine the cause of the problem and then determine the appropriate course of action.

4-5 Construct Retaining Wall, Fix Back-Slope Drainage, Move Pond, Fix Garden [Nature Center] – Cost Estimate \$200,000

Ms. Claxton stated that the slope is challenging. The amount proposed would include a retaining wall to manage the drainage and potentially reconstruct some of the garden area.

4-6 Replace sprayground [Leawood Aquatic Center] – Cost Estimate \$150,000

Ms. Claxton stated the Leawood Aquatic Center was the first multi-faceted aquatic center in the area. The sprayground was added to take pressure off the use of the zero-depth pool. The center has been a maintenance challenge. A new Aquatic Staff member discussed the possibility of bringing in the fence and making the sprayground an open feature and not a true part of the Aquatic Center. The other option is to repurpose the sprayground in order to help cost recovery of the pool.

Mayor Dunn asked if the sprayground was deteriorating. Ms. Claxton replied it is antiquated and out of date, as most facilities now offer a dump bucket or other such equipment. Councilmember Filla asked if the consideration is to re-fence and separate the sprayground or to completely remove it. Ms. Claxton replied that it would not be removed. The options would be to replace it or re-fence it, which would be the cheaper option.

4-7 Restore trail shortcut area [I-Lan Park] – Cost Estimate \$2,000

Ms. Claxton spoke of a split trail that came around a treed area which was previously removed because the creek was cutting into the trail. However, trail users still utilize the path, which is dangerous. The proposition is to re-vegetate the path or to cut through the trees.

Mayor Dunn stated the area looks unkempt.

4-8 Low water crossing replacement – Cost Estimate \$150,000

Ms. Claxton stated the area of issue is the Town Center Drive Parking [117th] lot and is dangerous when it floods.

Mayor Dunn agreed the area is in need of repair. Councilmember Rasmussen stated this topic has been discussed previously and the cost to repair was weighed against the infrequency of the flooding. He stated opposition to the funding.

Mr. Anderson talked about the overflow from the pond at the nearby condominiums. He stated the water is not in the main flow of Tomahawk Creek and the area needs to be cleaned after every flood event. There are currently three storm pipes that convey water, which occasionally clog.

Councilmember Rasmussen asked how the water would flow. Mr. Johnson replied the three pipes would be replaced with a 20-ft. to 30-ft. span bridge, resulting in a larger channel. Additionally, the bridge would be elevated.

Councilmember Rasmussen asked about the consensus of the group. Mr. Lambers stated the intent of the meeting is to provide an overview and not to get a consensus.

3-1 Cross-walk striping, signage, fire lane/no-parking [City Park and Ironwoods Park] – Cost Estimate - \$3,500

Ms. Claxton stated that various striping, signage and other improvements are necessary. The crosswalk areas are not clearly marked, and some of the areas may need truncated domes. Ms. Claxton stated this could be moved into the list of ADA repairs.

Councilmember Azeltine stated this is a safety issue and should be resolved soon.

3-2 Improvements to Roe Avenue tunnel – Cost Estimate \$100,000

Ms. Claxton stated this project has been unfunded for some time and was requested many years ago. The issue now is how this integrates with the Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan, which has already been accepted by the Planning Commission and is scheduled to come before Council on October 20. The tunnel does not connect to the trail system. Many people prefer to go under Roe, reconnect and get to the trail system.

Mayor Dunn stated she thought this would be a great amenity.

3-3 Indian Creek bank stabilization [northeast corner of City Park] – Cost Estimate \$350,000

Ms. Claxton stated this is on an annual watch. Location is north of the volleyball courts, near Field 6 and along Interstate 435. Mr. Anderson added a bend in the creek continues to erode. The cost is funded, but it has been pushed back through three CIP cycles.

Councilmember Rasmussen stated this should remain on the watch list and is not a high priority, as it has not moved in the last eight years and the park is not adversely affected now. Mr. Anderson stated it does not currently affect the soccer field, but that it will at some point in the future.

Councilmember Rezac asked about potential solutions. Mr. Johnson replied stabilization could be accomplished with large pre-stacked ready-rock blocks.

3-4 Playground surface replacement [City Park] – Cost Estimate \$50,000

Ms. Claxton stated this item is separate in case the playground equipment is replaced.

Mayor Dunn asked if the inclusive playground and surface could be done for \$200,000 total. Ms. Claxton did not think both could be accomplished for that amount. Councilmember Rasmussen stated this item should be included as part of the overall discussion with the Leawood Foundation of Item 5-3. Ms. Claxton suggested that if the items were combined, then the City could commit \$100,000, and partner with the Foundation's \$150,000, for a total of \$250,000.

2-1 Pool bath house renovation – Cost Estimate \$750,000

Ms. Claxton stated the pool renovation in 1997 should have included a leveling of the bath house, as it is in disrepair and houses antiquated equipment and systems. The proposal is to take it down and build something more functional.

Mayor Dunn asked about the restroom on the exterior of the Aquatic Center, as it is in bad shape and is used by walkers. Ms. Claxton agreed and added the two-stall restroom is also not ADA accessible. To become ADA compliant, the number of stalls would be reduced to one. She expressed concern that if the bath house is renovated and the restroom continues to be used, there could be a water pressure issue at the site. Ms. Claxton stated one option would be to completely shut down the restroom, but besides use by walkers the restroom is also used by people visiting Shelter D and C. Councilmember Filla stated that if people are recreating, a walk to a restroom should not be a hardship. Mayor Dunn pointed out that families with children may need something more accessible.

0 Restroom at North Lake – Cost Estimate \$150,000

Ms. Claxton stated the item has a rating of "0" and expressed her concern that flood water at North Lake is deepest and most swift; the area is in a floodplain.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that to connect to the sanitary sewer, the structure must be raised. Councilmember Rasmussen stated that restrooms along the trail are not necessary, a restroom at North Lake is not feasible and this item should not be on the list.

Mr. Lambers stated there are no restrooms at 119th Street on either side with a lot of recreational activity. The use of portable units in that location does not meet expectations for Leawood. Trail walkers can walk to a restroom, but for children playing sports, restrooms should be a consideration.

Ms. Claxton stated there are some attractive waterless systems, but they require a large exhaust pipe that looks like a chimney for air circulation. Mayor Dunn has seen these in Colorado and would be interested in the cost. Mr. Anderson replied that the look is concerning, as well as the possibility that waterless systems would not meet building codes. The base would need to withstand flooding and be easily cleaned.

Mr. Anderson stated the \$150,000 would be for a restroom with a single stall for men or women at North Lake, which could not be connected to the sanitary sewer without 10-ft. of fill.

Councilmember Filla asked if a system could be something between a portable unit and a facaded structure, to look nice and be cost-effective.

0 Add landscaping along Mission Road [Gezer Park], Access route to pond edge [Gezer Park], Add/reconfigure parking [I-Lan Park], No Parking [Brook Beatty] – Cost Estimate \$0

Ms. Claxton stated that these last four items were listed by their consultant, but staff does not feel these need to be done.

Landscaping along Mission Road to Gezer would visually close off the park. The access route to the pond edge does not appear to be necessary, as visitors need to go right up to the edge. I-Lan Park is a trailhead with double parking, and no more of the green space should be removed. Brook Beatty is working well without parking.

Mr. Lambers stated he may group together projects if it makes sense to do so, he would assign a year [2016, 2017 or 2018] and bring a revised list before the Council at the CIP meeting. Also, he would continue to research issues and bring information back for discussion.

Mayor Dunn asked about the bonding for the projects. Mr. Lambers stated we are not discussing new projects tonight, but plan to work with existing projects by funding PAYGO in the CIP program.

Councilmember Filla stated that nothing is new except that a few projects are targeted with 2015 Special Park Funds. She stated she would like to see two things brought to the three-year plan. Mr. Lambers stated he would prefer a consensus to work with the existing list, but was open to suggestions.

Councilmember Filla stated some projects are funded with fundraising and some projects are not being done, like the North Lake restrooms. As these projects were pulled out of CIP funding, that is \$100,000 in the operating budget. She asked about the \$35,000 for the Bicycle/Pedestrian signage. Mr. Lambers reminded that park project estimates have typically been low.

Mayor Dunn stated there is an item in the 2015 budget for park improvements. Mr. Lambers agreed, and said Mr. Johnson is procuring bids. Mr. Johnson stated that after the environmental report is complete at the end of the week, the bid request will be advertised.

Councilmember Filla stated that she called Mark Aster with Habitat for Humanity to ask if he or anyone he knows is interested in saving bricks. Mr. Johnson replied that bricks that are mortared add a level of difficulty to recovery and reuse of the bricks.

Councilmember Cain asked about a placeholder in the CIP for improvements at Ironwoods, which could potentially be removed with the new concept. Mr. Lambers replied that it does not exist and Mayor Dunn stated that it is considered a new item.

Councilmember Rasmussen stated that new items would need a campaign to get before the citizens in a bond issue, as was done for City Park and I-Lan. Mayor Dunn replied to Councilmember Cain and stated the amount for the Ironwoods improvements is not included in the three items that are planned as cash funding. As Councilmember Rasmussen had indicated, it would be part of a bond issue.

Councilmember Rezac asked about the \$100,000 budgeted for 96th and Lee, and if it included demolition and ground preparation. Mr. Lambers stated funds have been budgeted for this. The reason for budgeting the \$100,000 is that once the buildings are removed and the property is reclaimed, there will be pressure from the neighbors to see progress and this will provide an opportunity to present a park improvement.

Councilmember Rezac asked if the \$100,000 includes the leveling and the grass. Mr. Lambers replied the budget has two funds for that project.

Councilmember Rezac asked about the \$1.8 Million for improvements to Ironwoods that are proposed for the CIP 2017 – 2019. Mr. Lambers replied that this is unfunded.

Mayor Dunn stated that a Park Bond issue is a good conversation to have at the first of the year when input from the Park Board will help the Council bundle and package the new items, providing clarity to the voters, who will hopefully approve the 1/8 cent infrastructure sales tax for stormwater and street improvements in November.

Councilmember Filla pointed out that discussion has reduced the \$3 Million to \$2.5 Million, which could allow for discussion of some of the new items. Mr. Lambers suggested evaluating the projects and reminded that some projects make sense to be clustered, which changes the look of the financing.

Councilmember Rasmussen asked if the new items would be in 2020. Mayor Dunn pointed out that the timing would be to tie to a general presidential election. Mr. Lambers stated the vote could be 2018 at the earliest, but that would be during a mid-term election.

Councilmember Filla asked about a feedback mechanism for 135th Street to ensure the technology could be used not only to get feedback, but also serve as an education process.

Mayor Dunn apologized for calling the meeting to a close and thanked everyone.

There being no further business, the Work Session was adjourned at 7:20 P.M.

Deb Harper, CMC, City Clerk

Cindy Jacobus, Assistant City Clerk