



ADVISORY BOARD
Meeting Minutes – July 11, 2006

5:30 p.m. - Maple Room

Board members in attendance were Steve Martens, Mark Mergen, Karen Reimer, Jacquie McKinney Bob Wright and Dr. Greg Peppes. Staff members in attendance were Chris Claxton, Kim Curran, Sara Dinkel, Dan Mahanke, Brock Shafer, Jeff Peterson, Lindsay Youle, Brian Anderson, April Bishop and Jackie Zinselmeyer.

Steve Martens called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m. Bob Wright made a motion to approve the May 9th meeting minutes and Karen Reimer seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Kim introduced Jackie Zinselmeyer, who has been hired as the Program and Facilities Supervisor, to the committee.

I. Staff Reports

Brian – Brian reported his staff is working on getting Ironwoods Park ready for the Stage Company’s production of Oklahoma. Work is progressing on the new entry sign and should be done by the time Oklahoma starts and the Lodge drive is progressing and is almost done. Bob Wright asked about the seating available/allowed at the production and Chris said it is okay to bring lawn chairs or blankets. Chris went on to add that this production has a bigger cast than what we have had in the past and that means we should expect bigger crowds. Steve asked what do we do to monitor the parking and Chris said the police will monitor and when the lots get full we will move it to Prairie Star Elementary, if necessary. Mark asked how much parking is currently available and Chris said about 600 spaces. Bob asked if there were any wedding receptions planned during the run of Oklahoma and Chris said only one will be held at the same time as Oklahoma.

Chris also mentioned that the park board members should have received invitations to the gala being held Friday July 28.

Kim - Kim reported the Oak Room is currently under renovation, but nearing completion. The pool season has been very busy. Dive team championships are scheduled for tomorrow and we have 875 kids enrolled in swim lessons.

Lindsay – The Fourth of July celebration went well and we are receiving lots of feedback especially about the additional fireworks. Wristband sales were down by about 100 from last year and the concession sales were about the same as last year. Steve asked about how much did we spend on fireworks and Lindsay said \$25,000. Lindsay also said that she was going to place an additional order for the tie-dyed t-shirts the staff wore in the park on the 4th if anyone

would like to order one. Lindsay also added that she thought the vendors did well also, and she was hoping to hear from some of them soon.

Lindsay reported she was working on the upcoming Labor Day Run and then after that will be Freaky Fall Fest in October.

The free senior luncheon in June had 60 people in attendance and we have 12 people signed up for the July luncheon thus far.

Jackie – Half-day camps are in Session III and the Outdoor camp is full. Bookings for the Lodge are out all the way until October 2007.

Jeff – Jeff reported that all the camps out at Ironwoods are going very well. The group out at the park today caught quite a few fish. Nature Center visits are sporadic. There are plantings going on in the garden. Cabin rentals are a little slow due to the heat. We are booking scout groups for the fall and the challenge course has several groups scheduled. Steve asked if someone else just opened a challenge course and Chris said Johnson County has one at Kill Creek Park (it's been there about 3 years) but it is different than what we have.

Brock - Reported that the Oak Room renovation is keeping him busy moving classes around. The yoga class has been moved to the Lodge. The Kids Spanish class has been cancelled due to low enrollment but the adult class currently has 7 enrolled, which is 2 above the minimum. We are going to offer a babysitting class next fall and we had enough interest to field a Girls 13 and Under JTL (Junior Tennis League) team. Brock also reported that private and semi-private lessons were going well.

Dan – Both the North Shore Basketball Camp and the Lacrosse camp were a big success this summer. The Wizard's Soccer camp is on-going and the Challenger soccer camp is scheduled for 7/31. T-ball games have been rained out thus far and the fall soccer registration deadline is just three weeks away.

April – The Family fun concerts have been extremely popular and many daycare providers are bringing their kids out too. The concerts run through the end of July. The book club is going strong and we are still handing out fliers for Oklahoma. The next scheduled art show is Friday, August 25th at M&I Bank.

II. Appointment of Sub-Committee for Ironwoods Projects

Chris requested to the board that three members volunteer to serve on a sub-committee to work with DesignSense in establishing the standards and to be part of the interview process for recommending a team for the upcoming projects at Ironwoods Park.

Karen asked Chris "So that means we will not be doing the selection for these projects in front of the entire Park Board?" Chris said she thought it would be better for a sub-committee to help in the recommendation a design/build team. Chris went on to add that the sub-committee would meet three times and recommend three firms to hold interviews with. Once we narrow down a team we will start working with the group on the design concepts, which the entire committee would be a part of.

Jackie McKinney, Karen Reimer, and Steve Martens volunteered to serve on the sub-committee.

III. Fees for Recreation Programs and Facilities

Chris reported that she felt it necessary to share with the Board some concerns raised during recent budget meetings about the increasing gap between the departments expenses and income. She said Councilman Rasmussen was especially concerned about how the gap appears to continue to widen. Chris explained that our charges have been in keeping with inflation over the past eight years but now there is an increasing gap. Lou wants us to take a look at that for our fees we charge in 2007 not realizing that we do that in March for the following year. Chris said that it should be looked at. We will be working with a consultant for some comparison information of cities that we usually benchmark against.

Chris shared with the group that a few days after the budget sessions, the finance department had scheduled a study to be done on this issue. Chris said there was a meeting scheduled with PFC on Monday. Chris also said many things factor into determining what fees should be including instructor fees, rental space costs, price of supplies, etc, which may differ from agency to agency.

Chris then shared with the group an overview of the process the staff uses when developing fees including the development of justification sheets, determining the variable costs, does the program meet market needs, establishing final costs, etc. Chris also said after the staff determines what the budget should be then there is a directive by the City Administrator as to the ceiling that each budget can increase-usually 2-3%. At program completion the staff evaluates how many participated, what the cost recovery is and whether the program should be cut, put on the shelf for a while, or continued. Chris said the staff tries for 100% cost recovery, minus the debt; seldom do programs cover the debt. No program runs if minimums aren't met to cover the expenses.

Chris then went on to say that some programs/events are considered "community events" like the July 4th celebration, wherein it is not feasible to recover all the costs.

Chris offered to copy the materials she was referencing for the park board if they were interested in having a copy. She also added that the cost recovery analysis includes the Golf course of which parks and recreation does not control revenues and expenses, per say. It also includes the expenses for public art, but not the revenue source dollars on an annual basis.

Brian said that the \$2.2 million Parks Maintenance portion of the budget includes Public Works maintenance that the Parks Department is paying for. *(Brian will need to clarify this)*

Steve asked about the revenue on art and Chris said some of those revenues come from the "Art Impact Fee".

Chris then said we started to see this gap between income and expenses when the department took on additional park land. Mark asked "Does the Council not understand this?"

Then the subject turned to how we may better track the numbers of people who use the facilities. It is not feasible to put counters at the parks and trails to track general usership.

Jackie said she wanted to emphasize three things:

1. Leawood's fee should be equal to Blue Valley's
2. The location and convenience should be emphasized
3. Leawood should be wary of raising fees.

Chris said it would be useful to probably compare Johnson County, Leawood, Overland Park, and BlueValley fees if we are looking only to compare to our "competitors:" but the cities we are likely to benchmark against, for consistency, are Shawnee, Overland Park, Lenexa, and Olathe.

Steve then asked Chris and Brian "We provide maintenance to some Public Works facilities such as medians?" Brian said 60% of park staff hours are spent on non-park facilities such as medians and buildings & grounds, or areas such as the greenway and trails that do not produce any revenue.

Chris said she would report back to the group after the finding from the study come back from PFC.

IV. Miscellaneous

Chris reported that the fall program guide will be out the first week of August.

Mark said he has neighbors asking about biking trails through Leawood and Brian said that the new Mission Farms development is proposing a trail to hook into our trail system and that they are building it at their expense.

Karen asked who was responsible for the removal of event "NO PARKING SIGNS" and Chris explained that it was handled by the Police Department.

Jackie shared some information about Carmel, Indiana's Park and Bench Dedication program. She also talked about an attraction at one of their parks that was a replica of a big tree where sections pulled out to reveal the rings in the trunk of the tree. The children really enjoyed this type of feature on a recent trip.

Steve commented that his travel schedule is picking up again and asked if someone would step up to assume the chair position during any absences he may have due to being out of town. Jackie motioned that Karen serve as co-chair for the Park Advisory Board during this time and Mark seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday August 8, 2006.

Karen moved that we adjourn the meeting and Jackie seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Claxton, Director
Parks and Recreation Department