



PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
Meeting Minutes – October 9, 2007
5:30 p.m. – Maple Room

Board members in attendance were Amy Vlastic, Karen Reimer, Jacquie McKinney, and Mark Mergen and Council Liaison Gregory Peppes. Staff members in attendance were Chris Claxton, Kim Curran, Brock Shafer, Dan Mahanke, Jeff Peterson, Brian Anderson, Jackie Buser, Tonia Morgan, Lindsey Youle and April Bishop.

Chair, Karen Reimer called the meeting to order at 5:47 p.m. Mark Mergen made a motion to approve the September 12, 2007 meeting minutes and Amy Vlastic seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

I. Staff Reports

Brian reported that he has been working on trees, staining decks on cabins, and caulking windows at the Oxford Schoolhouse. He has also been working on Freaky Fall fest decorations.

He's also been working on unifying trail marking signs with other metro agencies. He is working on making them clear and understandable so that there are signs to identify where you are.

He attended a conference of the society of municipal arborists where they discussed such topics as pests moving into our country and management plans for same. He learned a lot about street tree ordinances, and realized that there are a lot of communities that are really involved with management of the street trees, probably a lot more so than what we are so it is good to see what other communities are doing and what is going on out there. It was a good conference.

Kim reported that she attended the National Parks and Recreation Conference in Indianapolis. Reported that there were 56 rescues at the pool this season, most of them were kids age three and under in the zero depth pool. This is down from previous years. The pool had a good year. She's been busy working on the next program guide getting all of the information into Rec-trac, which in turn will be out on the web when we release it for online registration.

Lindsey reported that she's working on Freaky Fall Fest, which is next Friday, October 19th. Everything is pretty much the same as in years past. There will be a costume contest at 7p.m. Also, the Halloween egg hunt, but the cake walk was changed to a cake and candy as it is a lot easier to get candy than it is cake. One new thing this year is we added glow in the dark dodge ball for the teens that are too old for the inflatables and hopefully this will keep them

off the trail. We are also charging a dollar per hayride, which will hopefully cut down the people that keep hopping back in line many times as in years past.

She also reported that trunk or treat has more businesses participating this year. Mark Mergen inquired about the problems last year with trunk or treat. Amy Vlasic interjected that she noticed the trunk or treat volunteers ran out of candy early. Some board members discussed seeing some kids going through the line several times. Lindsey said that they've discussed changing this process.

Jacque McKinney asked if there is a charge for businesses to participate. Lindsey replied that businesses are free; they just have to provide their own candy. Chris reported that since they are not making any money and they are enhancing the event and it is all civic groups, we don't charge them a "booth" fee. Karen Reimer suggested using a ticket and punch it as they go through to avoid them going numerous times. Or, Chris suggested giving them a ticket to turn in to give to the vendor. Lindsey appreciated the feedback and suggestions and will take them into consideration.

She is also working on Holiday Lighting and Breakfast with Santa. She is looking into having fireworks this year for the event, which will be Monday, November 26. This will be the kick off for Leawood's 60 anniversary and the fireworks will add a little extra. The fireworks will not be loud and only last a minute, so there shouldn't be any problems.

Jacque reported that she also attend the NRPA conference and went to some excellent sessions. She lost a recreation attendant but has hired another one so she is back up to full staff. Rentals are jam packed this month with only seven days open, and pretty much for the rest of the year with holiday parties going on. She is also working on the 2008 fees, and getting 2008 rental packets together.

Brock reported that he also attended NRPA and went to many good sessions. He's been working on the classes for the program guide for Winter/Spring. The art instructor for the younger children added a time that would work for the home school children and will advertise it to see if enrollment will increase.

He also reported that he attended the NAYS (National Alliance for Youth Sports) conference that was held here in the Oak room along with Dan. This was a really good conference. He is working on answering a twenty five question essay test that he has to complete regarding the conference.

Holiday camp is coming up in a couple of months and he will begin working on field trips soon.

Dan reported that he is beginning the fifth week of soccer with no rain outs. He also attended the NAYS conference with Brock. It was nice to have the conference at our facility, which was great because not only did we not have to travel, they both got free registration- over a \$700 value. He also went to Tomorrow's Leaders at Tall Oaks with Lindsey this past month. This was a KRPA sponsored work shop.

Jeff reported that the challenge course is open through November 6. There's one more open climb on October 27. The course will be inspected on October 29 by Alpine Towers International.

He also reported that the cabins are pretty full for the remainder of the season. The nature center is running several programs each week along with birthday parties. It has been very busy.

He will attend the National Association for Interpreters Conference in Wichita where local municipalities such as State, Federal, Natural Parks and Nature Centers and Historic Sites all come together. Karen asked when the passport book program will start again. Jeff reported that it officially ended in September. They donated t-shirts, and Prairie Oak pencils for the packets. It will start again in March, basically running April through September. Kim asked where the kick-off will be this year. Jeff reported that the kickoff for next year is not official yet but it should be at Independence Center Mall. They are going to bounce it around to different locations- north, south, east, and west.

April reported that the school house has been very busy, which is very exciting now that it is listed on the Girl Scout web-site. She has had a lot of scout programs coming on a consistent basis.

She has been really involved with public art since most of her art events have slowed down. They are preparing to select a piece that will go into City Park. They sent out a request and received sixty responses from artists. They invited three to visit, and have met with two of them so far. They have one more scheduled for next week. The selected piece will be fun, exciting for children, and sports related. They've had a couple of great proposals so far.

They are starting to look at potential architect teams for the amphitheatre development. She reported that the next art show will be Friday, November 9 at 5:30p.m. There will be some really great artists, such as Mike McMullen, the black and white photographer, and Cathy Broski, Robert Quackenbush, and Ellen Wolf will also present their works.

She will have a speaker at the Schoolhouse on the 25th, for adults. He's written a book and it incorporates local history. He'll be talking and signing books. Karen Reimer asked if someone has an artist that's interested in getting into the shows, should they contact April. April said yes. There may be a waiting list but it varies because they try to have four different types of art, so it is a possibility that they have to wait longer, relative to the show that is going on at the time.

Chris reported that they brought a print from Kevin Sink that was put out at the nature center. It is nice to have the nature center displaying some pieces of art that blend into the center. Jeff said they have had many comments about the two pieces installed so far.

Chris reported that east side of the golf course complex, which is basically everything east of Mission (hole numbers four through eight), is completely done. It has been seeded a couple of times and is coming along nicely. All the walls and creek bank work is also done on that side. They are now concentrating on the west side, and a lot of work is being done over in the 159th and Nall area. This is also where the SMAC project is being done, and the levees are being built.

She also reported that they've commenced work on the inside of the clubhouse. Work is being done including new ceilings, the carpet, painting, changing the grill area so its not so open, etc. She clarified that it is not expanding, just upgrading. It is not in the budget to expand at this time, but it is going to be very nice.

She is also working on the 60th anniversary. At the last council meeting, the Mayor appointed Mel & Alice Hawk as the co-chairs. They had a meeting with some of the groups, which is the Leawood singers, The Foundation, The Women's Club, The Lions, Kiwanis, Garden Club, etc. so everyone can get involved. There will be another meeting in the near future, but in the meantime, everyone was going back to their groups to come up with ideas.

She reiterated what Lindsay said that we'll kick off that night and Alice may make an announcement and we'll start to have a couple of things every month from then through November 30 of next year which is the City's incorporation date.

II. NRPA Conference Reports

Chris asked staff to report on a couple sessions they attended.

Chris reported that she attended a session called "Doing More with More", the Director was from San Carlos, California and he was awesome. It was about getting more ingrained into your community and finding out about who your stakeholders are, and learning how to do a better job at branding. He is sending Chris some more information about his work.

She also attended another one on "Developing Your Agencies Balance Score Card Strategic Plan", which was also very good. They gave you all the steps on how to try to do a basic strategic plan for your community. When you attend these conferences, a great thing about them is people are always willing to share everything with other agencies. These are the two she really enjoyed the best.

Kim attended one on Experiential Learning because she wanted to get more of an outside look at what they do at the nature center with the challenge course. When she first attended, she didn't think she really got much out of it, but after since she's been home, she keeps finding herself going back to it with different programming ideas.

She also attended a session presented by Leon Younger from Pros Consulting, which was a reminder of little tips that we can do hear and there to take our programming, marketing and customer service to the next level. These are the two she got the most out of.

Jackie attended a great session about sponsorship. Normally Lindsay handles the sponsorships but she felt this would give her ideas to share with Lindsay. It was facilitated by a group from Dallas and they were phenomenal speakers.

She really enjoyed the session with the C.E.O. of The Meeting Institute. She talked about training and the importance of it. This will be beneficial as she has seasonal staff and Recreation Attendants; she definitely wants to implement an across the board training program for her staff on how to deal with parents, conflicts etc. and she can feedback on what she learned during this session.

Brock attended a session on "Teaching Young Staff to be Leaders" which goes along with the training theme and fits perfectly with the segment dealing with tennis and camp and instructors on how to deal with them to portray what you want them to do with the participants. He also went to a Tennis Session hosted by the USTA who has come up with a quick start tennis pros and media people got together and came up with this one

program to start kids off from 5-10 on how to do everything pertaining to tennis. This will perfectly feed into our J.T.L. program which hopefully will be a nice transition from one to the other. They made recommendations on ball size, court size and racquet size. It was really good.

Chris added that Brock has done an excellent job with our tennis program so this is a really good way for him to build it onto our program to make it stronger.

Mark Mergen reported that he attended the membership meeting and the Finance Committee meeting at NRPA. This was the first congress that he was on the Board of Trustees, which was a new experience. Now he is on the Public Policy Committee and the Annual Fund and Development Committee so we will hear about a lot of grants early on. There is still open sign up for anyone who donates to the annual fund and they will get a chance to win a trip to Las Vegas. It is fun to see Parks & Recreation from a different perspective. He has literature for anyone who would like to look at the demographics of the association. Attending the conferences is a nice chance to network and the exhibitor hall is overwhelming.

III. Update On feasibility Study For Potential Future Community Center

Chris reported that she networked with people they new were interested in for information about the Feasibility Study. They talked with them and also got a couple of other people that heard we have something out there, Ankeny Kell is one, and Bill Yarger, is another. The RFP is currently out.

An addendum was sent out. They started to listen to people more and talk with other communities that were there. Since it looks as though we will be tight on funds, we took the original study components and divided them into two phases. It was done the same way, and asked them to put a price on the component and rank them. She feels that one of the challenges we have as a city is how to look at the site potentially as it may or may not encompass the community center. As far as the justice center in some ways we are a little farther ahead with our thought process. Such as looking at the site, sharing the site, and talking about infrastructure. That piece of property needs to be looked at as a whole because everything that we do or might do could have an impact on them and vice versa.

She asked our Liaison Dr. Peppes how this can be addressed. She sees a lot of potential to try to get things right on the front side without playing catch up on the back side.

Kim added that from talking to some of the consultants that are interested in it, they discussed adding a few more things that would give us a bigger picture of how big the square footage is, capital costs, and if it will fit on the site, and also our maintenance budget and staffing levels. This will give us a clearer picture. She also reported that the time was extended to six months. The community survey will probably take two months.

Chris reported that they would like to stay away from architects in the process if possible as they often have a vested interest telling you that it can be built because they would like to be the one to build it. We will be setting up interviews and she reminded the board of the discussion at the last meeting to have a sub-committee represent the park board, bringing a recommendation back to the full committee. It would potentially be in the evening. They would definitely want a councilman included in the group for his feedback.

IV. Update on Construction of New Buildings at Ironwoods

Brian reported that we are getting very close to breaking ground. We are waiting on the permit from Johnson County Wastewater. Brian has located the utilities at Ironwoods Park for them. He's removed and relocated some small trees, and trimmed up a big oak tree where the bath house will be. They will break ground in two weeks, with a completion goal of April 1. The contractor S. M. Wilson has been really good so far. They are going to be sending over some color samples for the outside and inside color scheme.

V. Update on Lake at Ironwoods

Chris reported that they met with Brett Haugland of CCE last Friday. There is an agenda item on the council this Monday to go ahead and complete their engineering plans. She also reported that they've been working with them three years to get the lake improvements going. This is going to be a pretty significant project. Amy Vlasic asked who would be pay for this. Chris replied that they budgeted for some of it and the additional monies will come from the 2008 Special Parks Fund. She hopes to move forward with this project very soon.

Brian added that north of the lake they will have inlets that will collect all of the rainwater that would run off. Currently, it runs off across the trail and then it fills up the lake. Now, it is going to be dumped into the bottom of the lake under the trail to keep it full. It will make it a ¼ of an acre bigger. The trail will be a little closer to the trail.

Karen Reimer asked if it has gone out to bid yet. Chris reported that it has not, but as soon as they get the contract approved on Monday night with Continental, they will finish up the plans.

VI. Update on Amphitheater RFQ at Ironwoods

Chris reported that she is going to propose to the Mayor that she appoint a Technical Steering Task Force/Committee with Bill Elwood as the chair to offer technical advice on the RFQ and construction for the amphitheatre. We will still have the stage company and the arts council involved, but these people that can help shape it and work with the Park Board.

VII. Master Plan

Kim reported that she attended a session on master planning for small communities and they offer a master plan in a box, a step by step how to. This package has been ordered Staff from both recreation and parks will do a retreat in late November or early December to kick it off and see what it is all about. Chris reported that it is a big commitment by the staff and she appreciates there initiative and what they are willing to do to make Leawood such a great place to live.

Karen Reimer asked if it would be open for Park Board members to attend the retreat. Chris extended the invitation for any board members that want to attend.

VII. 2008 Fees

Karen Reimer asked Kim to only highlight the changes. Kim reported that she and her staff met last week. The changes are as follows:

- Jackie is opening up non prime time Oak Room rentals, which is becoming really popular at the lodge. Prime time is Monday – Thursday 8:30 – 5:00.
- The fees were increased slightly at the lodge for non residents and commercial groups.
- The range on the top end of the tennis leagues increased by \$30 & \$35 due to the junior tennis league program. We are offering a lot more with that.
- The T-Ball fees were raised due to the fact that they hadn't been raised since 2001.
- The major increase for instructional class fees were raised due to some computer classes that are pretty intense and are becoming popular such as Video Game Design.
- Birthday parties have increased due to increased staffing cost and requests for a more in depth programming, and more detailed crafts.
- Outdoor Education Programs due to an increase in programs and programs times and the crafts that go along with it.
- Facility transfer fees is a new addition due to customers renting the facility and then within a couple of weeks of the event, they want to make changes which result in a potential of lost revenue and the possibility of losing the rentals from someone that may have wanted that date as well. This will hopefully recover the cost if we are unable to fill the spot.
- The cabin rentals are increasing due to a high demand, but we will add shower, bath houses, and a picnic area. Primitive camping will also be new, November – March on top of the hill. Chris added that we receive a lot of requests for this. It will not be open camping; it will be for civic groups and scouts only. It will only be in the winter months. They will not be allowed to rent the cabins and throw tents in the back.
 - The major changes were in the team building programs. The lower end of the range increased by \$5 for civic groups and \$20 for corporate. The top end really increased. Dana Lehman, the Outdoor Recreation Specialist has been doing a lot more than an average program. He has been building the program around the mission statement of the company and has really increased the programming options and what he can do for the company. He has also added the Alpine Tower, The Caribbean Course, and The Giant Swing that were previously only used for team building events. He is hoping to increase the use of these with having a rental option.
 - The other thing that is new is off sight programs that they are proposing for this year, but have not been approved as of yet by the city attorney. They would be taking low ground level elements out to companies as opposed to companies coming to us, which increases the flexibility of the program. It is a great winter time activity that he can go into the companies and promote indoor activities and spend a couple of hours with them. Chris added that if they enjoy that experience, maybe they will want to come out and do the big elements. Dana is confident about this program.
- Shelter fees increased. They haven't been raised in five years. Chris added that she raised them minimally. The resident fees were raised \$5 and the non

resident fee \$10. The rental times are five hour blocks of time. We don't have many shelters and it is not unusual during the peak of the season for them to be used at least twice a day. They are used a lot and very labor intensive for our staff to clean. After a rental, we have one hour turnaround time to clean and prepare for the next rental.

- Sunday Lodge rental rates were discounted slightly to increase the use of the facility on Sundays. If a Friday or Saturday isn't available, opposed to utilizing another facility, they make look at the Lodge because it is a discounted rate. The Lodge usually sits empty on a Sunday.
- The screen and projector DVD rental has increased to \$50, it was previously \$25 which is the rental fee at the Oak Room. There has been an increase on routine maintenance. The bulb is \$400 to replace.
 - Karen Reimer asked how our fee relates to other facilities. Jackie reported that they are comparable to other facilities such as the City of Mission where the fee is \$100 and the Ritz rents their equipment for \$700.

Jacquie McKinney made a motion to accept the fee changes for 2008. Mark Mergen seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

IX. Schedule Visit to Overland Park Community Center

Kim spoke with Jontay Middleton, the Community Center Director for OP. The best dates are Saturdays, and Tuesday /Thursday evenings. Chris suggested if Tuesday is good, it would be nice to have the Park board meeting there. Kim will schedule this meeting. Karen asked the board to tentatively put November 13 from 6-8 on their calendars, which will be our next meeting. Chris will send out a confirmation e-mail with the exact address.

X. Misc.

Mark sent an e-mail to Chris regarding the Lions, and the Gezer park signage. The past president asked him to bring it up at our meeting and the resistance they received. Chris said that they are still working towards this and will discuss with park designer at the next meeting.

Jackie McKinney made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Amy Vlasic seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Claxton, Director
Parks and Recreation Department