

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
Meeting Minutes – June 10, 2008
5:30 p.m. – Prairie Oak Nature Center

Board members in attendance were Amy Vlastic, Karen Reimer (chair), Bob Wright, Mark Mergen, Jacquie McKinney, Steve Martens, and Council Liaison Jim Rawlings. Staff members in attendance were Chris Claxton, Cody Kennedy, Jeff Peterson, Brian Anderson, Dan Mahanke, Kim Curran, Lindsey Youle, April Bishop, Brock Shafer, Tonia Morgan and Summer Intern Melissa Craig.

Chair, Karen Reimer called the meeting to order at 5:50 p.m. Mark Mergen made a motion to approve the March 11, 2007 meeting minutes and Steve Martens seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

I. Staff Reports

Kim introduced two staff members. Cody Kennedy is the new program and facilities supervisor, he comes from K.U., he'll take over what Jackie used to do with the full and half day camps, community center, the lodge, 4th of July, interns, so he will be busy. She also reported that Melissa Craig is the summer intern and comes from University of Central Missouri; she was in charge of National Trails day which was a successful event last weekend.

Chris introduced and welcomed Council Liaison Jim Rawlings back to the group. Jim was with us several years ago as a liaison and was always a very good participant and works for a cause in a positive way. Chris also reported that Mike Gill is still on the committee but Dr. Peppes is no longer with us.

Kim reported that the First Tee program started this week with eight sessions, and is held on the driving range at Ironhorse. There was an extensive waiting list, so two more sessions were added to accommodate everyone.

She also reported that a module was added for facilities to Rec-trac to hopefully help Cody and Tonia with people being able to check availability for shelter, The Lodge, as well as community center. We will also be able to post pictures and rules and regulations. She is anxious to get this up and running.

She has been working with Cody on the 4th of July instead of throwing straight into the fire.

Kim reported that she is on the board for Facility and Design school. It will be held August 4-7 and is a great program touring local recreational facilities. She will tour Gladstone, Matt Ross, Belton who had an expansion this year. This is a great way to see different budgets and design features and how other facilities are operating. She plans on sending a couple of her staff this year.

Chris reported that the trade show will be held at The Lodge again this year in August.

Cody reported that summer camps are running smoothly with great attendance and good counselors are working it. He is getting acquainted with the office and activities and everything that goes along with working in the Parks and Recreation Dept. He has been learning the computer system and attended a tour to see what goes along with that.

He also reported that he was introduced to the Live Healthy Leawood program, and attended a meeting last night. A dietician came in and spoke to the group, which was interesting view of the program.

He has been getting an overview of the position and looks forward to making a contribution.

Lindsay reported that she is taking over the pool which has kept her very busy. Swim lessons began June 2, and swim and dive teams are both going well, the first swim meet is tonight and the first dive meet will be tomorrow.

Lindsay reported that in the first week, 1,100 people came through but it was cloudy and rainy. But, last week there were almost 4,000 when the weather was nice.

Mark Mergen asked about how season passes are going. Lindsay reported that she hasn't looked at the numbers yet. Kim reported that they started slow because summer wasn't actually here when they went on sale. The last week of May, sales picked up and should be closed to getting caught up. Sales had a slower start than usual, but this was probably due to the weather.

Lindsay also reported that she is finishing up the first Live Healthy Leawood session; there were 77 participants which was a really good response. The second session begins at the end of this month and already has 38 people signed up. She has been working with Cody on this, but will eventually hand this over to him.

Brock has been busy with tennis lessons and the Junior Tennis League. There are 80 people signed up for JTL compared to 56 the previous year and there were none the summer prior to that. The tennis lessons have gone over really well. Two sessions were completely full which hasn't happened in the past.

Brock reported that he has taken over the senior lunch program from Lindsay. They've had several successful senior programs. They visited the nature center and the oxford school house last month and had a wonderful time.

Brock reported that he has also taken over Labor Day Run and has started working on this as it will come sooner than you think. He will be working with Lindsay to gain a better understanding of what needs to be done.

April reported that the stage company is in rehearsals for Annie Get Your Gun. She invited the committee to drop by and watch a little of the practice, they should be singing and dancing tonight. They've only rehearsed a week and a half and they are amazing; every year the production gets better and she is certain this year will also be great.

April also reported that the schoolhouse has a book club every Wednesday during the summer. There were eighteen kids last week which was really good. She reported that they are tying the summer readings with the production. They are reading childhood of famous Americans such as Buffalo Bill, Annie Oakley and Sitting Bull.

April reported that on Thursday mornings, they are doing summer reading programs with the library. In the past they've had concerts, programs, storytellers and science programs. This year, there will be puppet theatres, magicians, concerts, story tellers, etc. There were 375 people at last week's event and it was very successful.

April also reported that Camp Shakespeare will begin next week during the daytime and will be held at The Lodge. She asked if anyone knows of any kids that would like to be in the program to let her know; it is really a great program and there are spaces available. She has scholarships available for children who aren't able to afford the \$300.00 for the camp.

April reported that the amphitheatre steering committee has had their design **charett** and are moving forward. She, Chris and Brian visited different amphitheatres around the country getting ideas. The **charett** came together and discussed what they hope to see in the amphitheatre. The architect will compile a report and present the committee with a design.

April reported that public sculptures in the works for porch lights. If you drive by Somerset and Lee, it doesn't look like there is much activity but they are waiting on the stone to be cut and to arrive. She is certain that as soon it comes in, you will see a flurry of activity.

April also reported that the pieces that were recently approved for City Park are well underway. She is hoping to get them installed in the fall. Steve Marten asked where they will be placed. April reported that one will go between the Lions shelter and the aquatics center near the parking lot, this piece is abstract, bright colored and are two figures playing soccer. The other piece will be on the hillside near shelters A/B will be runners coming up the hillside. She also reported that the in the artists contract, he is allowing us to produce enameled pens to give to the children who participate in the dedication.

Melissa (Summer Intern) reported that she helped with National Trails Day last Saturday and it went really well. More people attended from Leawood than ever before. She received compliments from those that attended and hopes the numbers will increase in years to come.

Jeff reported the challenge course has been really busy this spring. They began maintenance this week on the structure with T.W.P. Wood Preservatives. Camp Inferno, a camp for potential young female firefighters ended this past week which was a good program in cooperation with Overland Park and Leawood Fire Department.

Jeff also reported that the cabins have been full every weekend since April, they will start to slow down in a couple of weeks due to the heat. They have been training this week for nature adventure camp that begins next week. This is traditionally known as the climbing adventure camp.

Jeff reported that he is busy with a lot of camps and has already started receiving calls regarding fall programs.

Jeff also reported that he has been working on the expansion of the butterfly garden. He would personally like to say a special thank you to Jack Lawless who has donated \$3,000 worth of plant materials for the prairie oak nature center as well as his time with this project. This is greatly appreciated. He knows it will be beautiful when it is completed.

Jeff reported that the visitation has been slightly slower lately, he is uncertain why, but hopes it picks up soon.

Dan reported that soccer has started and ended since the last meeting. There were 2,000 participants in the spring league, and everything went well.

Dan also reported that baseball recently started; there are 36 teams which is the exact number of field spaces he has for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday night baseball games. He reported that the fields are in good shape and Brian's staff has done a great job getting them ready.

Dan reported that a Lacrosse League recently used fields 20 and 21 on Sunday afternoons. He is uncertain if this will continue as there were issues with parking and the participants were quite upset that they were issued tickets for illegally parking on the street although there is no parking signs clearly posted.

Mark Mergen added that while he was traveling to the meeting this evening, just over the bridge on Lee, a gentleman pulled over, parked and unloaded his baseball equipment on the busy road with cars in the middle of rush hour and people had to swerve around him. Dan reported that he probably had

practice on the North field and it is a long haul if you are the coach unloading equipment and it doesn't surprise him that a coach would do this.

Brian reported that has been looking at putting a sign to go to the field to alleviate parents having to do this but would have to be laid out on the west of the field and it would be a difficult lay out to keep run off going across it. But, this is a project they have looked at in the past. It would be beneficial for handicap people as well as parents with strollers.

Brian also reported that his staff has been dealing with the weather a lot lately. The water impacted the golf course really bad along with the trails and Lee Boulevard with a lot of debris that needed to be cleaned up. It really impacted south of 119th Street at Tomahawk Park where a lot of wildflowers were growing on the stream bank were washed down. Brian spoke with the contractor regarding the repair work that needs to be done and this work is pending.

Brian reported that they seeded a few areas last year with a donation from Councilman Rasmussen who requested putting wildflowers along the trail. They drill seeded approx. seven areas that are coming up really well.

Brian also reported that they are busy mowing, they've gotten behind a few times due to short weeks and Memorial Weekend. He received a call from a complaint regarding Gezer Park that hadn't been mowed for a couple weeks but the day he received the call, his crew was actually mowing that area.

Brian reported that the pool has been going really well mechanically until this weekend, the pump that runs the zero depth features failed and is scheduled for repair and should be repaired by the end of the week.

Brian reported that the trail at 123rd and Mission, the bad failure trail repair has been closed a year while the surveys and plans done is on the June 6th Council Agenda. The low bidder is Mega Industries and will cost \$265,000 or a litter over. They will put a retaining wall at the failure sight and some storm water improvements on another sight further south and move the trail four feet off the cliff. There were three bidders; a fourth bidder came late, that could not be considered. The contractor that was chosen works for us indirectly, they work with the county and Leawood and did the trail extension that leaves city park and goes to State Line Road approx. eight years ago and they did a good job. He looks forward to working with them.

Brian also reported that he has been working on the C.I.P. project. There is at least almost 900 feet of trail of creek bank close to the trail in three locations. He is working with Phelps Engineering to give us a design proposal. He is looking at doing some retaining walls or gate ins to stop the erosion without moving the trail. One of the areas is in the northeast corner of City park close to 435 that is eroding out and losing a lot of part of the field ground and would eventually impact field six if it is not fixed. This will be a few years away but a lot of flat ground will be washed away.

Brian reported that the lodge will be stained in the middle of July. They've received some proposals and Chris has put it on the council agenda. They have a two week timeline working around the gala.

Karen Reimer asked if it will be stained a different color. Brian reported that it will be a slightly different color called fireweed. Chris reported that it has a little more brown to it, she suggested two different colors to the Mayor and she chose the one she liked best. Brian reported that they will put new siding in places that need repair and touch up the trim.

II. Update On Ironwoods Park Buildings

Brian reported that they had a progress meeting today with S.M.Wilson. The weather has really had an impact on everything going on with this project. They've had twenty-eight rain out days since they began in March. They were hoping to complete the project at the beginning of July but have extended this date to the end of July, weather depending.

They had a problem at the bath house while installing the sewer line; they hit rock (5ft thick rock) which has caused things to move slower than usual.

They are further along with the playground restroom than they expected and should have the asphalt ceiling on by the end of the week. The plumber will be able to install the fixtures after the interior brick wall work is done.

April Bishop asked when the restroom would be complete since it is ahead of schedule. Brian reported that they are working in a sequential order which may result in it being completed a week or two earlier.

III. Update on Lake Renovation at Ironwoods Park

Chris reported that as Brian said, it is all weather related on the construction and many park departments around the metro are experiencing this.

Chris reported that they are almost finished. They were not able to get their sub out before the lake filled up again and need to stain the rocks and ledges, but other than this, everything has been performing as it should. They plan on repairing the asphalt trail replaced, there is a cross section that runs east and west on the north side of the lake and weather depending this will be done this week.

Chris also reported that the seeding on the south side is coming up really well, they will hydro-mulch the rest of it which should be better for the area.

IV. Update on Gezer Park

Chris reported that Phelps Engineers have completed everything. The architect is scheduled to come in next week. The city is looking at options in regards to the contract.

Chris reported that she spoke with the City Administrator Scott Lambers, and the tablet is scheduled to ship from Israel soon which is important as we need to measure it when it arrives to make sure the fittings are sized right and will hold the weight. It is coming via a boat and is very heavy. It is 8 ft tall and 4 ft wide. We are in a holding pattern at this point which is disappointment to the staff as well as the city council.

Chris also reported that once the plans arrive we need to get on the planning commissions agenda to provide them a report as promised.

V. Report on 60th Anniversary Events

Chris reported that they meet every month. They met last night and things are coming along very well. They are started to talk more about the parade, The Lions have so graciously agreed to head this. Gary Flick has been doing an excellent job getting the units and flyovers for the event. He currently has twenty units committed. The parade will be Saturday November 8, at 10:00a.m.

Chris reported that they will have a celebration event at The Lodge at 6:30 p.m. similar to the current and former elected event that was held April 17 that was a big success.

Chris also reported that The Lions had a rededication event of their shelter and fountain this past Sunday. Unfortunately the weather wasn't the best which resulted in low attendance. They served ice-cream and brought the left-over's to City hall and fed employees this afternoon.

Chris reported that Church Of The Resurrection will host an event Sept. 16 inviting all the congregations in Leawood to come and eat lunch and share the history of their churches. The historic commission will send a representative to record all of the information.

Chris reported that the garden club did a cookbook that sells for \$10.00 and has over a 100 recipes in it from a variety of people, not just the garden club. It is a really nice cookbook and would make a nice gift or would be nice to have in your home.

Chris also reported that David Basse is still trying to get his Leawood song on an album with fourteen of his other songs. This song was originally titled "Leawood Long and Lean" and was changed to "Leawood Long and Green" and now it is titled "Green". He is working to get someone to help him.

April reported that he's recorded everything and all of his songs are location related and will be a nice CD, if anyone would like to sponsor him or knows of a sponsor in the music business, it would be greatly appreciated.

Chris reported that August 17, will be a party in the park to promote this park more and there will be lot of activities.

Chris also reported that there will be more fireworks at the 4th of July celebration this year. Parking will be the same and shuttle service will be provided for the event. Kim reported that the band Liverpool, a local band will be performing.

Bob Wright asked what time the fireworks begin. Chris reported that they will begin at 9:45p.m as in years past.

Update On The Golf Course

Chris reported that things are going along well. The Chamber Event on May 21 was a success, the weather was nice and it was a well attended event. Chris reported that Pete's staff was working diligently but a big thank you to Brian's staff for working on the landscaping work that was last minute.

Chris also reported that they had the most water they've ever had on the course. There is a lot of debris on the course. She will make a call to the contractor to see what he is willing to finish.

Chris reported that the opening date is two – three weeks out. She is working with Orion and has been able to re-locate events that were scheduled on the course. She will send out an update once an opening date is determined.

New Business

Jacquie McKinney asked if invitations were sent out regarding the golf course opening. She received hers the day of and she would have loved to attend. Chris reported that the event was cancelled but apologized that she received her invitation late.

Jacque also asked if Alice Hawk called Chris regarding park benches. Chris reported that she did and they discussed this at the meeting last night.

Jacque reported that they are hoping to get a pamphlet to promote people buying park benches. Chris reported that at this time, there isn't because it will be in a bigger publication than the trees.

Brian reported that the standard donation bench used on the trails is \$1900.00 which includes the plaque and shipping varies.

Jacque reported that the foundation would like to see this happen to make people aware that could get these as a dedication or memorial for someone. The foundation thinking of something special they can do for the anniversary and it was suggested to do three park benches. She asked how long it takes to get one once the order is placed. Brian reported that it takes eight weeks.

The foundation also suggested a time capsule and put a stone structure near the three park benches.

Brian reported that the Lions have a time capsule under the flag pole at City Park and will open it in 2029.

Brian reported that he's been contacted by a family whose friends lost a child and the parent's of the child inquired about donating a playground or playground equipment in honor of their child. He is uncertain of their funding level is at this time. He suggested putting new swingsets at Tomahawk park as the equipment is ten years old which would be \$2-5k. Brian gave them some suggestions and expects to hear from them soon. Brian reported that the family has worked with us before and donated a bench a tree.

Chris reminded the committee about Taste Of Leawood. There are still tickets and there are a lot of restaurants this year.

The 60th anniversary committee put together a recycled black bag with the 60th logo on it in gold and white and holds a lot of stuff. It will be given away with the goodies at this event.

April reported that the gala will be held at the lodge and afterwards you are invited to attend the performance of Annie Get Your Gun. This will be the 10th summer production for the Leawood Stage Company. Jaspers will provide the food for this event at a reasonable rate. Invitations will go out soon.

Chris reported that Scott would like to recognize volunteers from the city. He is planning a bar-b-que event on the 4th at City Hall from 6-8p.m. If you come to the event, transportation will be provided to the park and back. The invitations are ready for Scott's approval; once they are approved, they will be mailed. Committee members should receive theirs soon.

Mark Mergen asked if there is any information regarding the surveys. Chris reported that she spoke with Jason at E.T.C. today and it is finished. They are working on a draft report and had a great response. They don't have an exact number but received over 500 completed surveys of the 1800 that were sent out, and the goal was 400.

Karen Reimer addressed the board members in regards to the problems with attendance at the meetings. She opened the floor for a discussion to come up with a guideline on attendance or how they want to handle this situation. So, in the event, it is starting to affect the meetings regarding decisions that need to be made we know how to better handle the problem. She asked the board for their thoughts.

Amy Vlastic shared that it is frustrating and she and Chris have talked a lot about it, and if you are having trouble making the meetings it may be time to take a look at your schedule and possibly step down. She feels people want to be here but have other obligations.

Steve Marten reported that he has spoken with the Mayor and plans to step down because of his busy schedule. He feels it is important to make the meetings and on suggested to the board that if they can't make the meetings, it may be time to reconsider and step down as well.

Amy assured him that it is not just him and that there have been many meetings that there has been a problem getting a quorum.

Steve Marten asked when the Mayor asks people to be on the board. Chris reported that she calls in May but has everyone on staggered terms.

Amy Vlastic suggested that if you are missing more than half the meetings, it is time to look at your schedule and consider stepping down.

Bob Wright reported that his thought was if you missed more than three meetings in a row you were asked to step down.

Councilman Jim Rawlings reported that it really hard to dismiss someone from the committee that is a volunteer.

Mark Mergen asked if this is the Mayor's responsibility to ask a committee member that isn't showing up to step down from the committee or should they decide themselves.

Jacque McKinney asked how many are needed for a quorum. Chris reported that four are needed which is bad but there have been times she is asked if there is anything we are deciding at the meeting as a determining factor of their attendance and we don't always vote on everything but a large part of what is done on the parks and recreation advisory board depending on the season is informational but it is still important to attend the meetings.

Chris also reported that there are options and we are not required to meet every month but she likes meeting to give the staff a chance to discuss things that are going on departmentally.

Chris reported that the meetings have always been held on the second Tuesday of each month. The council is the first and third Monday. Golf meetings are on the fourth Thursday and Park Board on Tuesday so they are staggered.

Chris reported that she agrees with Amy and feels this needs to be discussed by the board. Chris suggests the board should make recommendations as to what should be done. Chris also reported that she provides the Mayor with an attendance report at the end of the year for the months of May – April.

Bob Wright asked if progress is being held up by missing a vote, do we have the ability or is it acceptable to vote via e-mail or through an alternative means if there is a problem getting together at the same time each month.

Steve Marten reported that he doesn't feel this has been a problem in the past as it is now. If you are going to volunteer, you should come to the meetings and if your schedule doesn't allow you to do so, you need to step down which is why he is stepping down after this meeting. It is important to the staff more than the volunteers and it is interesting on a monthly basis to hear what the staff is doing and important to meet once a month.

Amy Vlastic reported that she has had many conversations with Chris and another problem is not receiving r.s.v.p's in regards to attending the meeting. It is really important to know if you are able to attend. There are often times when we don't know if there will be a meeting because people don't respond.

Bob Wright suggested setting the expectation that the committee and r.s.v.p by Friday at noon the week prior to the meeting. The current agenda's ask to reply by Monday at noon but moving the date may be beneficial.

Amy Vlastic reported she doesn't think this will make a difference. If you can't respond by noon on Monday how are you able to respond by noon on Friday.

Bob Wright reported that if you have to make a deadline, you might as well know a day or two in advance.

April Bishop reported and Tonia Morgan, Administrative Assistant who takes care of the catering aspect of the meeting agree that it makes a big difference regarding ordering food for the meetings as most restaurants have a 48-72 hour policy to place an order.

Chris agrees and feels this would be much better for us. Restaurants used to require 24 hour notice and it went to 48 hours and now in most cases it is 73 hours because they don't want to risk the chance of wasting food.

Jacquie McKinney asked why we eat. Chris reported that we eat because it is a courtesy and any meeting that begins prior to 6:00p.m., crosses the dinner hour, and it is a great perk.

Bob Wright suggested if there aren't four r.s.v.p's that are positive by noon Friday the meeting should be canceled. And, people should be reminded if they are missing the meeting consistently that they need to seriously consider their commitment.

Jacquie McKinney added that she feels it is great when we have a very orderly meeting and things are moved along and not going off the agenda and tonight Karen really moved things along. If you are going to take the time to attend the meetings, they should be organized and saying things that are worth while.

Councilman Rawlings reported that he is on the storm water committee and they are scheduled to meet monthly at 7:30a.m, for a breakfast meeting but the committee came to an agreement that if there are times that they may not meet if it is not necessary to do so. He understands that it is good to get together every month, but everything is up and running in the parks and recreation department and programs are going, so it may be a good idea not to meet in July because everything is up and running. It may be good, and is his idea to take some time off and regroup and meet in September.

Councilman Rawlings reported that communication is good but it may be nice to give yourselves a break.

Chris reported that this is a good idea and the 60th anniversary committee came to the same conclusion at their meeting last night that they would not meet in the month of July because it is a busy month. She is not opposed to this idea because the 4th of July is on a Friday and the next meeting would be the following Tuesday.

April reported that she sits on several committees and some have decided to meet every other month when there aren't big projects to discuss which works out well.

Amy Vlastic reported that this may work for some committees but if we do not get a quorum on a every other month basis then you are not meeting. She understands doing this on certain months such as July, May, and March due to spring break if there wasn't any new business.

Jacquie McKinney asked if a meeting was recently canceled. Chris reported that we did not meet in the months of February, April or May due to not having a quorum.

Chris reported that from a staff's perspective, and her role as the director is to facilitate the meeting but the chair actually runs the meeting. This is why she always welcomes suggestions from committee members that they would like to discuss to please bring them to her attention or the attention of the chair.

Jacque McKinney reported that it is really good to move the meetings along because by 7:00p.m., she is sure the staff works an 8-5 schedule.

Chris reported that there aren't any staff members who work that schedule.

Bob Wright suggested putting a standing item on each month's agenda as the last item to review the status for next's months meeting to determine if there needs to be a meeting next month.

Jacque McKinney reported that this is a great suggestion but things can come up all of a sudden.

Bob Wright reported that if a meeting is postponed if there is nothing to vote upon, but a meeting can always be scheduled if something does come up.

At this time, the committee discussed if there needs to be a meeting next month. Chris reported that the survey information will be back but this could be discussed at a future meeting.

Amy Vlastic suggested meeting in July and discuss the survey and other important issues and possibly not meet in August when vacations are going on and school starting.

Chris reported that this is something to consider because the August meeting would be the week before school starts.

Jacque McKinney reported that a decision should be made on a month to month basis and she would hate to think that anyone as a volunteer felt like they need to drop off the committee due to family reasons or business reasons, i.e. Steve because in regards to an architect point of view with buildings and parks, he is more knowledgeable than most. It is good to have quality volunteers and not just someone who sits on the board because it is fun.

Dan Mahanke reported that he agrees and is a member on another board in another city and nothing is more upsetting knowing that you have to attend a meeting that has been scheduled the same time each month for years and members don't show up. Understanding that emergencies do arise, but if there are members that don't show up 5-6 months out of the year, it is a problem. It doesn't matter what type of job they have, if staff is required to attend the meetings and other committee members come on a regular basis, it is frustrating.

Bob Wright suggested establishing a guideline regarding the number of meetings that can be missed to remain on the board.

Jacque reported that this is not the committees place to take this action; this is the decision of the Mayor that asks them to be on the board.

Chris reported that there are guidelines that all committees have, it has been a while since these have been issued but she will provide the board with a copy.

Bob Wright reported that knowing the guidelines would remove the awkwardness from the chairman and the director so everyone is on the same page and if you miss an unacceptable amount of meetings you are put on notice.

Councilman Rawlings suggested Chris find some expectations for all committees and they can talk to the Mayor.

Jacque McKinney motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mark Mergen seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Claxton, Director
Parks and Recreation Department