

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
Meeting Minutes – September 9, 2008
5:30 p.m. – Maple Room

Board members in attendance were, Karen Reimer (Chair), Amy Vlastic, Bob Wright, Mark Mergen, Jacquie McKinney, and new board member Doug Stevens. Staff members in attendance were Chris Claxton, Kim Curran, Jeff Peterson, Brian Anderson, Dan Mahanke, Cody Kennedy, Tonia Morgan, Lindsay Youle and April Bishop.

Chair, Karen Reimer called the meeting to order at 5:57 p.m. Amy Vlastic made a motion to approve the July 8, 2008 meeting minutes and Mark Mergen seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

I. Staff Reports

Brian reported that the construction on the trail at 123rd and Mission is complete. The trail opened last Friday. Amy Vlastic asked if a lot of trees were cut down. Brian reported that trees were cut back, but not many were cut down. Amy reported that she was on the trail the other day and the area near where it was fixed seems extremely open. Brian reported that there was an area where there were small saplings that needed to be removed which worked out great. This is now a staging area where materials can be left such as gravel and the parts that were needed to build the wall that is buried underneath the slope.

Brian also reported that the parking lot was able to be saved which also worked out really well. It is a nice open area now, and there are actually turnaround spots for their vehicles when maintenance work is needed. It is a lot easier for his crew. It looks excellent and the grass is already coming out. It was nice to get it done before the heavy rain. Amy Vlastic agreed that it looks great.

Brian also reported that his staff has been winterizing the pool, basically shutting everything down getting ready for winter. His crew will be doing some site work around the maintenance building at Ironwoods Park. The city was responsible for paving the driveway up to the building. They will begin the concrete work soon.

Brian reported that his first crew of temporary workers from Labor Pros started today. This is the first time he's used this agency. During this time of year, workers are needed but the college students have returned to school. He had five workers today and they did a good job. It worked out really well. A benefit was that he didn't have to interview or pay for physicals/drug screens. Chris reported that approx. a month of work was lost with the floods and clean up. The workers from Labor Pros will be helpful to get caught up due to the measurable rains.

Brian also reported that there was some damage underneath State Line behind the trail from high waters. Some of the concrete settled and had to be re-poured.

Kim reported that she finished up the summer session of the first tee classes. The fall first tee classes will begin tomorrow. This is a well received program with huge responses.

Kim also reported that she was contacted by the Make A Wish Foundation. The pool staff taught two little girls how to swim. One of the girls is a cancer patient that will travel to Disney World and wanted to learn how to swim before she went. They were given two weeks of swim lessons.

Kim reported that she is working with the finance department on some procedural changes on payroll.

Kim reported in Brock's absence; he is away on his honeymoon, that there were 447 runners for the Labor Day run. This number is up from 2007. Kim also reported that fall classes are starting and she has been busy updating the website.

Cody reported that the lodge rentals are going really well. He is receiving multiple calls everyday and is booked most Saturdays through November of next fall.

Cody also reported that there is one final meeting with the nutritionist for Live Healthy Leawood. The program went well. He and Lindsay met recently and discussed changes for next year's program.

April reported that the Kansas Day Lecture has been rescheduled for September 16. It was originally scheduled January 29, but could not take place due to a blizzard.

April also reported that the school is really busy with scout programs. There is also a music workshop scheduled for this Saturday. If you have children, are looking for a fun event, and would like to make musical instruments please come out.

April reported that she has been busy with a lot of public art. The Blanco piece is scheduled to be installed later this fall. April also reported that Growing will be moved this month because the library will relocate to begin its expansion project.

April reported that the next art show will be November 14. Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

Lindsay reported that the pool season is officially over. It was a great summer. The total attendance was around 48,000. Lindsay also reported that she ordered a lot of new lounge chairs for the pool. Some of the chairs were broken and she'd received some complaints about the condition and number of available seating at the pool. She hopes to order more next year.

Lindsay also reported that the awnings will be replaced next year. There isn't money in the budget to do so this year but they will purchase material and use the old ones through the winter. The new awnings will be installed before the opening of the next season. They should look really nice.

Lindsay reported that the doggie dunk was held despite the pouring rain and cool temperatures. There were fifty one dogs in attendance and the rain didn't seem to bother them at all. The first night it was scheduled was storming with lightening and thundering so it was postponed to the next night.

Lindsay reported that she is working on the next big event, Freaky Fall Fest. It will be Friday, October 24, from 5-9p.m. at Leawood City Park.

Dan reported that he has been very busy with soccer. The official season began this past weekend. There are 115 teams. This is the season the first graders will play seven vs. seven along with the four- five year olds and kindergartners. Next year at this time, the second graders will play seven vs. seven and then that age will stop playing this format.

Dan also reported that Brian's crew was able to convert field two into field two and three. They had a lot of work to do moving signs and changing everything at the park. He appreciates their hard work. All of the fields are different now; every field is up one number. This is an adjustment for everyone; the fields have been the same for twelve years.

Dan reported that everything is going well despite all of the rain we've had. Today is the first day teams can practice in over a week.

Jeff reported that he has two new snakes. One is an albino red sided garter snake which is a celebrity. She's had her tail snipped for genetic testing and has already had babies. The other snake is a milk snake.

Jeff also reported that attendance was really up in August but when school started it declined. The scout programs are going strong. One is scheduled for today and ten more scheduled in the near future. Jeff reported that birthday parties and the challenge course are busy. There are two more open climbs on September 27 and October 25 from 10a.m. – 3p.m. The cabins are going well, and the new bath house opened last weekend.

Jeff reported that most weekends at the cabins are full with the exception of two-three dates in September and October.

Jeff also reported that he's had many volunteers planting in the garden. Four eagle scouts have worked hard with litter pick-up. Jeff reported that 300 people visited the nature center during party in the park.

Chris reported that party in the park was a huge success. Thanks to all the staff for working so hard. The weather was favorable. A lot of people that attended had never been there before which is one of the reasons for having the event. This will become an annual event.

Chris also reported that the next 60th event will be a party at the lodge November 7. The party will begin at 6:30p.m. The cost is \$25.00 per person. There will be activities and story boards to promote conversation. Invitations will go out within the next 2-3 weeks.

Chris reported that the parade will be the next day, Saturday, November 8, at 10:00am. They are looking for people who would like to enter into the parade. A press release will go out soon. There are currently over 20 entries with a variety of people participating. Hopefully the weather will hold up for this event.

Amy Vlasic asked if scout troops are welcome. Chris reported that they are. The theme of the parade is Homecoming to Leawood.

II. Update on Ironwoods

Brian reported that the contractors are near completion of the new buildings. The only thing remaining is some final grade work. The area needs to be dressed up behind the playground restroom. There is actually a swale so the water will move around the building and over to the drainage system.

Brian reported that the restrooms were actually opened this past weekend for people at the playground and the shelter.

Brian also reported that the shower building doors have a separation; there are doors to go into the shower area. It is a traditional bathroom area when you enter with lavatories and stools. Every cabin renter chaperone will be issued a key when they rent a cabin. The shower doors will always be locked. The only people who will have access to them are staff and renting parties.

Brian reported that the maintenance storage building is ready to go with the exception of a few things that he agreed to do to keep within the budget. His crew will put the road up there. He also needs to get the communication line to the fire alarm. He will also add a new sidewalk and put a new gate into the challenge course. There are new restrooms on the exterior of the building that will serve the challenge course. People can access it a lot better than the Johnny on the Spot or the nature center restrooms.

Chris reported that it has been eight years since Brian has been waiting for the maintenance building. It is nice to finally have it done.

III. Update On Gezer Park

Chris reported that the governing body officially terminated the agreement with Ball Designs and Dennis Reynolds last night at the council meeting. Arrangements have been made to begin working with Phelps Engineers. They've done work for us in the past that enabled us to retain a lot of the subcontractors we had which is good because we are on a very fast track.

Amy Vlastic asked how soon they will dig. Brian reported that the timeline is to approve the new design teams contract by September 15. After which, the building plans will be taken back to the planning commission no later than September 23. On the 26th of September, the bid opening will be held of Phase I which will start in October.

Amy Vlastic asked how many phases will be finished by April. Chris reported that all of Phase I will be complete and most of Phase II including the shelters.

Amy reported that she asked because there is a group of football players that practice there and is aware that this is a touchy subject, but the team doesn't understand why the fields can't be used for football practice if it will be torn up soon. There are a lot of parents (approx. 50) that would like somewhere to practice until it is torn up. Amy also reported that she knows exactly who brought the lawnmower and cut the grass to make a practice field. Chris reported that she doesn't want Amy to reveal who it is because she would be forced to issue them a \$500.00 fine. The mowing issue was not a good thing to do. They also spray painted lines to make a field. It was extreme. Amy reported that she will talk to him about doing this. Amy also reported that her son and husband are a part of the team.

Amy also reported that if there was a set time for teams to practice and they worked along with the parks department and are willing to pay a permit fee, they would be happy to do this. They are desperate because they don't have anywhere to practice.

Chris reported that this situation has gotten out of hand. Johnson County Football Association has not taken care of their groups and now they are all looking for somewhere to practice. They are taking the park over for a purpose that it is not intended. Chris also reported that she is trying very hard to work with them and is willing to accommodate Leawood residents and assist them in finding a place to practice. Chris reported that she has recently started

permitting Ironwoods fields to allow them to practice at the park. Chris reported that she has also suggested using Tomahawk Park.

Dan reported that the park staff checks the fields that we permit for safety concerns. The biggest factor for not allowing people to practice at Gezer is because the fields are not checked by anyone to assure that there aren't any nails, glass etc. This is for the safety of the children practicing. If someone gets hurt, the city is liable. Chris reported that this is why she doesn't issue a permit because once the permit is issued it is basically saying that she is agreeing that everything is o.k.

IV. Update on Porch Lights

Brian reported that he talked to the contractor today. The missing parts have finally arrived. The system came from Canada. The materials are on site now and they will meet with K.C.P.L. to figure out the best system to tap into a power source to put the lights in on the sculpture.

Brian reported that the plan is to get everything done as soon as they can. There is a preliminary landscape design plan. Dennis will give his approval of the plan and then it will be presented to the city.

Chris asked if anyone has taken a look at it. She has, and thought it would be a little taller. Jacquie McKinney asked if she was referring to Somerset in the Wind. Chris reported that she is. Jacquie reported that she will go there tomorrow to take a look at it. She is usually in that area two – three times a week. She thinks it is strange and wonders where it will all go. Chris reported that she has tried to imagine it herself.

Brian reported that he hopes the copper stays on.

Chris reported that when it is all done and the landscape work is finished, it should be really nice. She is looking forward to it.

V. Discuss Additional Work on Feasibility Study

Chris reported that a second work session was originally scheduled for October 6 but has been moved to November 3rd. This is a good thing to allow extra time. Chris reported that Gary and James asked for additional information. Gary's concern and questions are really a part of phase II. Chris reported that Bob Wright expressed some of the same concerns (*Chris passed around a copy of the e-mail she received from Bob; with his permission*). She reported that his e-mail simplifies the issue and is accurate to many of the concerns. His e-mail coincides with Gary's question of how we determine what the amenities might be. Chris reported that in reference to the e-mail it is moving into a budget which is another aspect. Chris reported that part of the market analysis will do a very small piece of the last part of the first phase. But, if we want to know this specific information we would need to request a change order for \$12,000. This will not be all of phase II but more of what was initially agreed upon.

Chris reported that if the committee is in agreement and there is also additional information needed. Her recommendation would be that the park board makes a request to approve the \$12,000 to get the additional information.

Amy Vlasic reported that it is such a close indecisive survey that they will need to find more information. A decision can not be made on the information that we currently have. The only

choices are to drop it entirely or continue to research. Amy reported that we can not go forward without more positive responses.

Bob reported that the timing is right to request more information.

Jacquie McKinney made a motion to proceed with garnering additional information in an amount not to exceed \$12,000. Kim reported that it would be for program development and operational cost.

Bob Wright seconded the motion. The motioned was carried unanimously.

Doug Stevens asked if Phase I is the survey information and programming. Chris reported that Phase I was market analysis. He also asked if Phase II would have been programming and conceptual design. Kim reported that she will send Doug the bid packet that was originally sent out.

Bob asked that by spending the additional money we will find out what it roughly cost to operate the facility with the services are generally desirable by the community.

VI. New Business

Chris reported that September 18 there will be preliminary interact meeting on the amphitheatre at the lodge. We will invite the neighboring homes associations from the area.

Chris reported that she along with Kim, Lindsay, and Brian will be out of town on October 14, the next scheduled meeting. Chris would like to request changing the meeting date to a week ahead or behind the scheduled meeting.

Jacquie McKinney suggested waiting until we are closer to the meeting to determine if it is necessary to have a meeting. This was originally discussed at a previous meeting.

Chris tentatively scheduled the meeting for October 7. A determination will be made closer to the meeting date if it will actually be held.

Jacquie McKinney made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Doug Stevens seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Claxton, Director
Parks and Recreation Department