



**ADVISORY BOARD**  
**Meeting Minutes – April 12, 2011**  
**5:30 p.m. – Leawood City Hall – Maple Room**

Board members in attendance: Karen Ward Reimer (chair), Mark Mergen, Doug Stevens, Rod Crawford, Amy Vlastic, Jacquie McKinney and Bob Wright.

Council Liaisons attending: Julie Cain and Lou Rasmussen

Staff members attending: Chris Claxton, Kim Curran, Dan Mahanke, April Bishop, and Tonia Morgan

Chair Karen Ward Reimer called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m.

Amy Vlastic made a motion to approve the March 8, 2011 minutes. Rod Crawford seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**I. Old Business**

**A. Soccer Partnership Interviews/Recommendation**

Kim reported that she initially sent seven proposals out, she expected a return of four, but only two responded. Interviews were held March 22. Committee members sitting in were Karen and Doug along with Dan, Kim and Chris. The Legends Soccer Club and the Puma Futball Club were both interviewed.

Kim passed around the scoring criteria used during the interviews to better understand the selection process. The rankings were completely anonymous.

Kim asked Karen, Doug and Dan to share what each club had to offer.

Council Liaison Rasmussen asked if the two received were either one who complained before we were only talking to one originally.

Kim reported that they are not.

Karen and Councilman Rasmussen agreed that this was interesting. Karen asked Kim had she heard why they didn't submit.

Kim reported that she hasn't heard from anyone. The person, who complained, sent e-mails and also spoke to Chris, did not submit or contact us further.

Dan reported that both clubs interviewed were well represented. They both brought coaches; one of them brought children to model the uniforms. In his opinion, the Legends would be more beneficial to work with as a premier partner. They have a program called Happy Feet, with several hundred players, held at the Jewish Community Center via rented fields. The program is run through the schools.

Dan reported that the Happy Feet program consists of two - five year olds. Our recreational program is four years old - eighth grade. This will be a natural progression for players who choose to join our league. This could be an advantage for both of us.

Dan reported that their coaches seem eager to work with us and our current coaches. They offer clinics to get information directly to Coaches. By doing this, it means coaches are teaching the right way to play soccer as well as sportsmanship. This will help our recreation program too.

Dan added that it would be a natural transition if a player decides they want to play premier to go from their program to ours, and back to their program for premier. Puma may be able to do the same but currently they only have six teams. They are not a bad choice but The Legends were more open to working with our kids and our program in a more organized way. The Legends will also provide an open night on Friday's called The Academy where they work with the children in the program. When Puma was asked if they would be willing to work with the coaches, they responded that they would only be willing to do so on a limited basis.

Chris reported that in her opinion, The Legends were able to provide a manageable transition, coupled with staff ability, and diversity in number. This is beneficial because we don't have a large sports staff available to do the additional work.

Chris added that working with Puma would need a lot of staff to assist with day to day work. It would be difficult because they are newer and smaller.

Chris added that they discussed the viability and stability of both organizations. A huge concern was the possibility of Puma folding with only six teams.

Chris reported that the ability to enhance our current program was also very important. As Dan mentioned, The Legends offer Happy Feet, camps and clinics, which they have been doing for many years.

Rod reported that his child participated in Happy Feet. His son really liked the program. It was well run. He was impressed with the quality of the staff and coaches were great.

Chris reported that they also discussed, in no particular order, the professional image and brand along with marketing capability. We must be able to encourage people to come into the program and participate if they want to, if not, this is fine too. It is merely an additional opportunity. In her opinion, even without the Happy Feet program, they will be able to provide what we are looking for from a premier program.

Karen reported that she asked the Legends if they can change, fix, or improve one thing about their organization, what it would be. Without hesitation, they replied, communication. She thought this was very open and honest. What large organization doesn't need to work on communication; everyone does. She appreciated how up front they were.

Karen reported that she was impressed that they offered to add an additional staff member to their team to work solely with Dan. She was impressed by this gesture as well.

Doug reported that he agrees. The Legends have an organized established process. The capacity they offer is quite different with a much larger staff compared to the other organization. They also bring a diversity of coaches and teams, as well as opportunities.

Doug added that their knowledge and the investment they currently have in their program, along with the long duration of experience, is really impressive. Their National recognition in regards to

their branding and marketing efforts seems really important. Although both interviews were good, The Legends Club stood out. This should be a manageable transition.

Council Liaison Cain asked if The Legends shared what attracted them to us now since they have been around for so long as a well respected organization. Is it the use of our fields? In her opinion, it made sense that Puma was getting started and were growing, and needed the fields; but The Legends are rock solid.

Kim reported that The Legends has a Future Legends and Junior Legends program, which are recreation based. They practice with The Legends coaches but play another recreation league. Dan currently has three teams from the Legends playing in our recreation league. It will be a natural feeder system as a designated place for them to go. When a player comes out of Happy Feet and into league play, they will come to us. If they choose to stay with our Rec league or progress to a premier league, they can.

Dan reported that premier teams begin in third or fourth grade. The Legends work with children at a really young age when they are too young to play premier. So when the time arises and they are looking for a place to continue they have that option. The Legends have played at Johnson County and Heartland. That alone would bring us more recreation teams.

Council Liaison Cain added that this will be fabulous for us.

Dan reported that The Legends stressed that they have an established program; they don't need our fields. They also use different schools, such as Kansas City Christian.

Dan added that they seem open to work with us. They gave the impression that they may use our fields on Friday only.

Chris added that this would be good because our recreation program doesn't practice on Friday.

Kim reported that our recreation players can take part in it because it is in the same area.

Dan reported that in his opinion the Legends would love to partner with Leawood because naturally they will acquire teams that are recreation teams that maybe aren't Happy Feet kids. These kids may come from another school that has an interest in playing premier but we've lost them to Blue Valley. It will be a natural if we have a partner with a respected premier program.

Council Liaison Cain reported that it is very fortunate for the City to be able to partner with them. She thanked Dan for his efforts.

Council Liaison Rasmussen asked if questions were raised regarding sharing revenues.

Chris reported that they discussed structuring and how The Legends saw the potential partnership but the exact dollar amounts and percentages weren't discussed. But; the RFP stated how the collection of fees would occur. These are staff issues that will be determined when an agreement is drawn up. At that point, the agreement will be brought to the Council.

Kim added that it was originally set up that all participants will register with the City of Leawood but this will need to be discussed with a group the size of the Legends. If Puma were chosen, it would have been manageable because they have six teams. We will definitely find the best way to make it work.

Chris added that they tried to figure out what the Legends were charging and were able to obtain this information. They also discussed a determining factor of what the City will provide and

where the break may be. It isn't to say we will or should consider it, but it will be negotiable with either group.

Chair Reimer reported that if we decide to partner with the Legends, and discuss the final aspects of the contract, they may decide it isn't in their best interest to partner with us due to the finances etc. She doesn't get this impression, but it should be considered.

Dan added that the Legends currently have fifty-five teams, during initial discussions regarding using the fields; they don't have intentions on needing our fields for their premier teams. We will benefit greatly from the participants from the other programs as teams sign up with our program. This should be a good outcome for us because the additional recreation kids will be a natural feeder into our program.

Dan added that it would be different if Puma was chosen; they need our fields, and our children to increase their program. This doesn't mean that they can't get a team playing at Overland Park because they certainly can. The advantage is that The Legends don't need us as much as Puma does. The Legends will probably benefit us in more ways than the premier side only.

Rod Crawford reported that this appears to be an accurate statement. Puma may need us more than The Legends.

Chris reported that when The Legends were asked the top two benefits for joining Leawood, they responded that they would like to establish a place to put the Happy Feet players; the best real estate; and to strengthen their premier teams.

Chris added that The Legends read previous Parks & Rec. minutes prior to the interview and were astute about all of the prior conversations we've had regarding wanting the fees to work and looking for a partnership that will enable us to maintain our approach to recreational soccer.

Rod Crawford made a recommendation to suggest that staff enter into negotiations with the Legends Soccer Club for the purpose of obtaining an agreement that can be presented to City Council.

Bob Wright abstained from the vote as he missed the portion of the meeting pertaining to the interviews.

Doug Stevens seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Chris reported that it will be presented at the May 2, 2011 meeting.

## **B. Gezer Park Construction Update**

Chris reported that the pond is being drained. It is running fine, but the wadi began having hiccups due trash blowing into it. There were plastic bags and algae that bloomed with the early spring. It should be finished draining soon and will be cleaned and refilled immediately. Eleven people were cleaning today. This gives us an opportunity to remove a lot of perimeter rocks that kids have thrown in. They will try to wedge them in better to prevent this from happening again. This is the first time it has been drained since it's been filled. There was an amount of silt that came down from the wadi during construction.

Chris reported that the playground is under construction. The pieces are assembled and placed in a trailer daily so no one has access to them.

Chris added that they excavated all of the retaining walls for the fire pit, the pad for the shelter as well as the Havdalah Garden. They should begin with the structure in the near future. They are on target despite the weather we've had.

Chris added that we were able to use a lot of the spoils from the project because Public Works needed it.

Chris reported that the gas line went in today for the fire pit.

Council Liaison Cain asked if draining the pond was part of the plan. What is the cost each time the pond is drained?

Chris reported that it was not planned to drain the pond but it was budgeted if needed. The cost is not known but she suspects it could be \$7,000 to \$8,000.

Council Liaison Cain noticed scouts picking up bags a couple of weeks ago.

Chris said that she will watch over the contractor to make sure they stay on task. The Jewish Federation has an event scheduled May 22, and a Pancreatic Cancer run is scheduled April 23. They will start and end in the park going north on Pawnee. Currently there are three to four hundred people registered.

Rod reported that he is participating in this event.

### **C. Discuss Cost Recovery**

Chris asked if everyone received the e-mail she sent prior to the meeting. She asked the City Administrator to move this to the September 19th Council meeting due to the timing of work being done on current budget by both Finance and Parks.

Council Liaison Rasmussen reported that in previous Parks & Recreation Committee meeting discussions, we weren't getting into the actual fee structure. We were trying to give the Council our suggestions of the overall principals. The fees should not include debt issues because people usually vote for the parks which means it is already built into their taxes. He would like to discuss the fee schedule for the soccer fields, swimming pool, etc., as well as the overall principal of how much and what we expect the users to pay. This is a user fee. Having a user fee gives people the choice to buy or not to buy. We also have the choice to provide it or not, at a price.

Council Liaison Rasmussen reported that it is more appropriate for the Committee to come up with a recommendation for the City Council as to what the overall principal should be rather than interfering with Chris and her staff trying to figure out if it should be \$5.00 or \$10.00. Currently the writing in the policy is very vague.

Chris reported that they have done both. Staff prepared a policy in 2006; she will print this before the end of the meeting for Committee to take home and review. The problem with the report is it was never presented to the council as there was no outcome when Council held their work session. They both stalled. We have continued to follow the policy because it's what we've always done, according to best practices.

Chris added that the report breaks everything down and describes exactly what Lou is inquiring about. It explains what a community event is, and how is it different. It also explains what a user fee is so people can understand.

Chris added that the 2012 fees will be presented to the board in October and sent to Council for approval in December.

## **II. New Business**

### **A. Staff Reports**

Kim reported that the first tee class began this week. All sessions are full with the exception of one which is three from meeting its maximum. The summer player level class is also full.

Kim added that open climb starts this month at the Challenge Course. It is held the fourth Saturday of each month from 10-3.

Kim also reported that summer registration started March 11. We are in full swing. Webtrac is also busy taking care of online registrations.

Kim reported that the trail clean up was held March 27. Despite the snow and cold weather Jeff still managed to have 140 participants. There are a few scout groups who were unable to make the event but have contacted Jeff to reschedule an opportunity to help in the future.

Kim added that the Nature Center will be giving away seedling trees the week of April 26, in celebration of Arbor Day.

Kim also reported that pool passes go on sale May 2. All passes will be sold on an individual basis.

Kim added that she submitted the 2012 budget for the recreation department.

April reported that the Gate to I-Lan sculpture is currently being installed. This will be finalized with the next several weeks. An artist reception will be held for Jessie Small at the park, the next time he is in town. A date hasn't been determined but she will notify the Committee when a date is set. They will officially dedicate the piece the next time the delegation from I-Lan is here.

April added that the school has been busy with spring approaching and she has been busy with scout groups trying to fulfill badge requirements before the end of the school year.

April reported that The Leawood Stage Company had their first production the first weekend in April, "Down on Memminger". The playwright did a writing workshop on Saturday morning which was very well attended.

April added that the State of Kansas is celebrating their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary and she was asked by someone from the County to write two articles for the Sun newspaper. A different municipality was featured weekly. The articles were: 1) an overview of the history of Leawood and 2) history of choice. She took the opportunity to write how Leawood was built by volunteers. The Committees and the people make a difference in the community. Council Liaison Cain reported that it was a well written article. She learned a lot.

Doug thanked April for doing the article.

April added that she was also asked to come to the County Commission meeting in costume and do a presentation. She received a certificate of recognition for the Leawood Historic Commission, which she presented to the Mayor. She will also do the presentation at the May16, Council meeting. All are welcomed to attend.

April added that she has a lot of events coming up. “Medical Practices on the Trail” will be held at the school house this Saturday. One person will present the medicine portion and the other will provide an overview on the trails that cross through Leawood.

Council Liaison Cain reported that it would be nice to put the presentation on the website and also in the program guide.

April replied that she will see what he is willing to offer as they are volunteers.

April reported that Taking Tea with Shakespeare will be held Sunday. There are six seats remaining. Anyone interested should confirm tonight.

April reported that Chamber member Jim Mathis will present a history of photography lecture May 7th at the schoolhouse. In addition to the lecture he will provide a guided photo shoot in Ironwoods Park.

Jacquie McKinney asked if participants should bring their own camera.

April reported that each person must provide their own camera. Pre-registration is not required.

April added that the Oxford Township history sign will be dedicated May 21. Refreshments will be served.

Council Liaison Cain reported that Council Liaison Azeltine will be performing in “Bye Bye Birdie” this summer. His daughter is also in the production.

Council Liaison Rasmussen asked what has happened to the “Splash” art piece.

April reported that sadly Dennis Oppenheim passed away. They have inquired if there is a piece already constructed to purchase. They are in the negotiating phases but it hasn’t been determined if this is feasible now that he is deceased.

Karen asked if any money exchanged hands prior to him passing away.

April reported that no money was exchanged.

Dan reported that it snowed all day the first game of the soccer season. They lost fourteen games. The number of participants increased this year with over fifteen hundred kids registered. Although soccer season is still in session, we’ve already received a lot of t-ball registrations. The deadline is April 27. Normally we have more than forty teams, but thirty-six teams is the ideal number. This eliminates byes and the season carrying over until August when school starts if we receive a lot of rain.

Council Liaison Cain asked Dan if he knows how many children reside in the City of Leawood. She is asking out of curiosity. How many soccer players are Leawood residents out of the fifteen hundred registered.

Dan reported that he can go through all of the registration forms to find this out, which he does when end of year activity reports are completed. T-Ball and Coach Pitch will generate six hundred players. The numbers flip flop when it comes to soccer and baseball. It is normally 80% residents, and 20% non residents. T-Ball is approx. 70% Leawood, 30% non residents.

Council Liaison Rasmussen asked if it can be determined from the fee structure if some are paying the discounted rate.

Chris reported that this information can be tracked very easily.

Chris added that she hasn't checked with planning, but the last census reflected 30% of the population of Leawood have children nineteen and younger. We can also track nonresident vs. residents through our registration program.

Kim reported that seventy percent residents and thirty percent non residents is usually the general rule with the exception of soccer. This is the same for pool memberships, and classes.

Chris reported that some children reside in Leawood but play Blue Valley soccer. There are too many participants in the area for either agency to take them all.

Council Liaison Rasmussen reported that it comes down to what is the reasonable differential in the fees between the resident and the nonresidents. In his opinion the Parks and Recreation Committee should make a recommendation regarding this.

Amy reported that this has been discussed in the past.

Chair Karen Reimer reported that she has noticed parents dropping children off on the busy side of the bridge on Lee Boulevard on several occasions. This is dangerous. What can be done to notify parents to let them off in the parking lot?

Mark Mergen asked if signage would help.

Dan reported that parents have the option to drop their children off in the parking lot, but they choose to let them out on the busy street. He will notify coaches that this is happening.

Dan added that a paved trail is being installed that leads directly to the baseball field from the parking lot. This won't prevent everyone from dropping off on the busy street, but hopefully it will help.

Chair Karen Reimer reported that she agrees with Mark, signage may be best. The signs could read, "No Unloading" or "No Stopping to Unload".

Chris passed around a brochure for the Spoke-N-Art event. It is a ten mile ride with stops along the way to view the pieces of art.

Bob Wright asked if there is a nonresident fee for this event.

Chris reported that there isn't a separate fee. All participants will pay the same amount. There are a few events where the prices are the same for all. Labor Day Run also has one price. This is a typical format throughout agencies for these types of events.

Chris reported that Brian assisted with the route. It is limited to one hundred riders. This is a new event and needs to be manageable.

Council Liaison Cain reported that the Arts Council will be at the art pieces explaining each piece as people stop to view the piece.

## **B. Misc.**

Chris reported that since our last meeting, she received a letter from Fred Logan, the attorney for Hallbrook on behalf of Mr. Lavrey. They are ready to quit claim deed 13.25 acres north of 435 & west of State Line. This is a nice wooded area near our trails. The area is the triangular piece

bordered on the east of State Line and the South area of 435. The creek runs there, as well as park land.

The other potential dog park area being discussed is eight acres; three of which is open space located to the south. They gave us the land nearly nine years ago for the trail used for mountain bikes directly off the bridge.

Council Liaison Rasmussen reported that the battle is going to start for this land quickly.

Amy asked if all of it is in the flood plain.

Chris replied that most of it is in the flood plain area, which is fine.

Chris reported that she met with Joe Johnson, Public Works Director and they explained to Scott last week that the water can't be retained in that area. It would have to be treated on their property first.

Chris reported that Patty will work on the deed and see what the next step is with the other issues. It is with the CIP but unfunded.

### **C. Next Meeting Date/Agenda**

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 10.

Bob Wright made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Amy Vlasic seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Claxton, Director  
Parks and Recreation Department