



**ADVISORY BOARD**  
**Meeting Minutes – February 11, 2014 - 5:30 p.m.**  
**Leawood City Hall – Maple Room**

Board members in attendance: Karen Ward Reimer (Chair), Lorrie Hamilton, Amy Vlastic, Dave Coleman, Bob Wright, and Dave Harwood.

Council Liaison present: Julie Cain and Lou Rasmussen

Staff members present: Chris Claxton, Kim Curran, Brian Anderson, April Bishop and Tonia Morgan.

Chair Ward Reimer called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.

Amy Vlastic made a correction to the January 14, 2014 meeting minutes regarding an incorrect spelling of Boy Scout member Christopher Ables, who attended the meeting. His last name is Angles. David Harwood moved to approve the minutes as amended. Dave Coleman seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**I. Old Business**

**A. Dog Park Update**

Brian reported that the final official transfer of land from Hallbrook was approved and accepted at the most recent Council meeting. His staff has finished clearing the dead trees and undergrowth in the wooded area. They were able to get rid of two loads of woods waste. The lumber for the fence has been received.

Brian added that he toured several dog parks and off leash areas in the Johnson County as well as Leavenworth and Lee's Summit and took pictures of how they have been established. He passed around photos for the committee. Lee's Summit is the most established of all he visited. He noticed that all have turf in poor condition as a result of wear and tear. He anticipates ours will do the same depending on if heavily used.

Council Liaison Cain reported that she took her dog to Heritage Park in Johnson County this past week and all entrances to the park were closed due to the weather expect the dog park area. Many were taking advantage of it despite the weather. Do we ever close our parks.

Chris reported that we do. They were also closed due to the weather. She follows Johnson County Park District on Twitter and saw a message that all parks in Johnson County were closed to vehicular traffic, but open to pedestrian traffic due to the snow.

Council Liaison Cain added that we won't be able to block traffic from accessing our dog park in the event of snow due to its location being tucked in.

Brian added that staff removes snow as quickly as possible. Certain areas with high traffic and public needs are cleared first. The Lodge and Nature Center were done next after the recent storm.

Dave Coleman reported that he noticed on a sign in the pictures Brian passed around that Lee's Summit requires dog license and vaccinations to be allowed in their dog parks.

Council Liaison Cain reported that Council Liaison Rasmussen suggested this at a previous meeting that Leawood should require the same.

David reported that he also recalls this but it was determined that we shouldn't do it without staff to enforce it.

Brian reported that it could be enforced if Animal Control periodically checking the dog park.

Amy reported that it was also discussed that this would limit use by Leawood residents only. We didn't want to do this. But, this is essentially what Lee's Summit is doing.

Chair Ward Reimer reported that she likes the idea of requiring current vaccines.

Chris added that we haven't determined signage for our park yet but we have acquired many examples from other agencies/facilities.

## **B. Ironwoods Restroom Update**

Chris reported that the notice to proceed has been received. They will break ground soon. They are optimistic to be done by the first week in July.

Chair Ward Reimer said she would like for Committee members to receive updated information moving forward about the progress.

## **C. Signage for Gezer Park**

*Chris passed around examples of possible signage to be displayed in Gezer Park.*

Chris reported she has been working with Alan Edelman and Stacey Belzer from the Jewish Federation and Alice Hawk of the Leawood Foundation on the signage.

Chris reported that the main signage (main and 3 educational) will not have pictures but the suggested virtue signs would be smaller and low to the ground at seven locations.

Chris added the example shown will have a slightly different font and will connect different symbols to the virtues.

David asked if specific locations have been determined for each sign.

Chris replied that the suggested placement is as follows:

- Respect – In the Garden
- Responsibility – The Fire pit
- Compassion – The West Shelter
- Courage – Stones & Steps
- Perseverance – The Vineyards
- Self-Discipline – The Harvest Calendar
- Honesty – Playground

She also received correspondence regarding three educational signs but that wasn't discussed originally.

David asked the material type for each sign.

Chris reported that they will be digitally installed on Pannier signs embedded into the fabric similar to historic, general park, or museum site signs. They are made to be placed outside.

April added that they are similar to the signs at Ironwoods discussing the history of the area.

Chris asked for Committee input, question, and comments.

Council Liaison Cain asked if she missed the meeting where the virtue concept as opposed to educational. For example, what is a Havdulah garden. When did we move from “what is it” versus the virtues.

Chris reported that those signs are also available but the virtues are suggested to be incorporated for the educational program. She is certain this was discussed at previous meetings.

Council Chair Cain asked if anyone remembers this being discussed.

Many Committee members agreed that they do not remember this being discussed.

David reported that he remembers talking about the sign but doesn’t recall coming to a conclusion on the educational versus the virtues.

Chris reported that she thought she showed examples before.

Amy reported that it was discussed that people weren’t aware of what things were and their significance.

Chris reported that this will be explained by the educational signs. They will also have QR codes. There are three-four separate educational signs: at the wadie, vineyard, calendar and the west side.

David reported that it would be nice to have a site plan of the park and the locations.

Chris reported that this has been done.

David asked about the weathering pattern. At some point will they fade and need to be replaced.

April replied that some have a sixty year guarantee.

*Chris gave a brief overview on a map of where all signs will be located in the park.*

Chris reported that we are minimalist when it comes to signs.

Chris reported that they have struggled a little with the art work. It is being done by an artist in Israel. She does the work in water color.

Dave asked if the signs are mandatory.

Chris added that they are not but they have been working with the Federation to incorporate these if desired and needed. We are in a holding pattern for approval from this Committee.

Lorrie asked who is funding the signs.

Chris reported that the Women’s Club gave \$4000.00 for signage. The total cost could be \$5200.00 for all signs, educational and virtue. Stacey Belzer suggested the incorporation of the virtue signs because they are already instilled in the Blue Valley School District and people could relate to them.

The biggest issue she’s had is she isn’t sure how the artwork will translate here. The QR code will explain that it is original art.

Chris added that she doesn't have an issue with the intent but is concerned about the actual signage pertaining to the design.

Council Liaison Cain asked if the signs are bilingual in Hebrew and English. It should be. We already spent a lot of money on the large Leawood stone signs and the signs displaying the rules, now seven more? She is not in favor of adding more. It will be too many signs for such a small park.

Chris reported that the tablet is designed to be bilingual. It is the only thing in the park with Hebrew language. An educational sign is proposed at this location, to translate the Hebrew to English. If we move forward with the additional (virtue) signs they will be kept low and small, probably close to one foot off the ground.

Council Liaison Cain reported that she hopes the tablet displays where it was actually found- the oldest archeological dig site and the significance of the region.

Chris replied that they plan to incorporate all of the education pieces they've collected.

Chris reported that this is the time to comment about the possible addition of signage. She expressed that signage needed to be discussed by the Park Board prior to moving forward.

David asked if we have issues with vandalism in the park pertaining to the religious and cultural significance; do we anticipate issues with these signs as a result.

Chris reported that these signs gear more towards virtues rather than religious connotations. We haven't had problems in the past but it doesn't mean we couldn't in the future. It is understood that we have to be mindful of getting close to religious connotation. This has always been the message. We want to educate people about the region and the relationship with our sister city.

David reported that he likes the signs, what they represent and understands the significance of the art and appreciates it. They help give a sense of perspective and expression. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. They won't detract from anything. The areas they will be placed will have plantings around them and other things to incorporate them into the natural feel of the park.

Chris reported that if the signs are used as designed, she would change the font and make it different color (brown) so the colors mesh.

Amy reported that has always been in favor of the educational signs and feels this has been lost to most people; how the whole thing was incorporated. But, if these signs are added it will turn into a museum. It is a park with a playground. Everyone should respect everyone; a sign isn't needed to remind people of that. She is not a fan of signage. It should be free play time in the park.

Dave reported that he is a minimalist and we should put educational parts up but all of the signage could cross over to a new boundary that we haven't gone to before. What is too much. He hasn't visited another park with this much signage.

David added that the Science Museum in St. Louis would be similar; it's a nice, interactive place for kids to engage. He likes it when you bring the culture and the park together. It affords kids to get the opportunity to gain exposure. They will stop and read the information. They may not care what it is but they will have a connection it and will become part of the place they play.

Bob asked if the virtue signs would be too preachy. Is having a virtue crossing the line. An art project that has a description or a tree that defines what kind of tree it is isn't preachy but a virtue may be. Everyone may not agree with the virtues.

David reported that rules are placed in parks. They can be minimalized to a signal word and would in essence become virtues.

Council Liaison Cain reported that had she not been told that these are the seven Blue Valley virtues, it may have taken awhile to connect this information. Why are they needed in the park.

Bob asked is it important to incorporate them in the park. There a lot of children who visit the park who don't attend a Blue Valley school. His children attend Cure of Ars who have different virtues. Some may argue that their virtue should have been incorporated instead of, or other than, Blue Valley.

Chris reported that this is a good point. The explanation of the virtues was going to be in the main sign or the QR code with each sign. The argument could be why is Blue Valley more important than others and if you don't attend a Blue Valley school how you will understand the relation.

Bob asked if we are trying to mirror the actual Gezer Park. Do they have virtues displayed. Can the art be displayed on the educational pieces and be done.

Chair Reimer reported that the signage would be too large if done this way.

Chris reported that they have educational signs but to her knowledge they don't have virtues. It may be a situation where Stacey took the educational piece too far with the virtues. Expect for the main sign the educational signs will be 24 x 18 but the main sign is 36 x 24 and includes a lot of information.

Bob asked if it would disappoint the Foundation if we deny the \$4000.00 contribution for the signs.

Chris replied that the signs are needed. The Foundation would not be offended if we decide not to incorporate the virtues and retain the funds for general informational signage.

Council Liaison Cain reported that I-Lan Park has one sign that says Sister City in Taiwan. We go from no signs to twelve signs. This is out of control.

Chris reported that The Foundation is also proposing to assist with adding more signage there for this very reason. Alice Hawk has discussed this with the Mayor.

Council Liaison Cain reported that the educational signs are a good middle ground to spread love and promote a balance. This is all that's needed.

Amy added that she agrees. People should be able to develop their own feelings on when visiting a park. This is too preachy.

Lorrie reported that they are not needed. The educational signs should be very informative, there is a lot to know about the park because of the significance of the features but the virtue signs should not be included.

Chris reported that this was the concern from the beginning. They discussed that they need to be smaller if incorporated. Council Liaison Cain makes a good point to hold off and incorporate educational signs at Gezer and I-Lan at the same time. She appreciates all input and the consensus from the Board with the exception of David who is in favor of the additions. She would like to have the signage complete the first of May.

#### **D. Update on Paley Art Location**

Chris reported that at the last meeting Council Liaison Cain inquired about the installation cost of the proposed location. It was quite cost prohibited, the piece cost \$160,000. After removing the

cost of some things we could do in-house and removing some of the engineering fees, we were still unable to get it down to the 15% of the cost (\$24,000) we currently have. They regrouped and met and determined a location north of there, flat without obstacles in terms of utilities etc., in the median might be a good alternate location. Scott Lambers was concerned about the look of this in the median. It was added to the March 3 Work Session for further discussion.

Chris added that the original plan for the sculpture garden was revisited to update it for inclusion in the Council packet. It will show the original identified sites, as well as what is already placed. Open sites will also be identified. Mr. Lambers asked if the Paley piece was supposed to be the “signature piece” for the sculpture garden. She conveyed that is it. If a new site is determined, it will need to go back to the Planning Commission. If it goes anywhere else in the greenway, it will come back to the Park Board prior to going to Planning Commission.

Council Liaison Rasmussen asked if the proposed new locations are out of the flood plain. Has anyone taken the updates that were made by the flood plain maps and original art layout into consideration. He understands things have changed over the last decade but this is important.

Chris reported that they did not look specifically at all the open locations for the extent of the flooding but all sites are in the flood plain, including the location north of the south lake. She agrees that the flood plain may have spread and we are getting floods more frequently.

Council Liaison Rasmussen reported that what was done years ago was done with the best available knowledge but maps change.

April reported that they intended to raise them in some portion when the sites were identified. For example, *Growing* sits on a pedestal, which lifts it out of the flooding. But, the original place shown would require a lot of fill.

Brian added that moving it out of the flood plain is the reason for the price increase. The advantage of the median is that it is flat and out of the deeper part of the flood plain. It may receive backwater but it’s not damaging.

Council Liaison Cain added that when April discussed this at the Art meeting she was unaware that it was in the actual median. Is there any way to bring it closer to the sidewalk or near the edge.

April reported that it is as close as they can get it. There is a required ROW.

Brian reported that he understands the concerns about the location. The deer are also in a non-convenient area. It was very difficult trying to get people to it when he did his bike tour.

David agrees. It was really uncomfortable going up to it when he tried.

Council Liaison Cain asked if committee members remember the discussion regarding mocking the piece up in front of the Justice Center site. Is this is the flood plain.

Council Liaison Rasmussen reported that this location was raised 2.5 feet out of the flood plain.

April reported that this should definitely be discussed at the March 3 meeting. Another location in need of art is the circle area in front of the entrance doors of the Justice Center between the courthouse and the police. It is a stunning piece that should be treated well.

Council Liaison Cain suggests someone Photoshop it in to gain a sense of scale in all potential locations to view as options. We own this signature piece and it has to be placed in a good location.

Dave reported that he and Lorrie attended the Parks Master Plan Work Session. What is the next move. Was there discussion after the meeting about moving forward.

Council Liaison Rasmussen reported that he is glad he brought this up. He asked all to read the original plan regarding the recommendations. He hopes all have had a chance to do that but he cannot support some of them; but he is only one out of eight Council members. The Committee should move forward with their thoughts on the recommendations. He recently brought up to Council that for example, it has been recommended that the width of the trails increase to twelve feet. We went to ten feet years ago and decided to try to go to ten feet with basic reasoning, as we tried to expand the trail systems there will be ROW troubles. He would prefer to have a guideline to be within federal standards and not a mandate to make sure we are accommodating to traffic we face; being walkers, bikers, etc. and also wheelchair accessible. There are recommendations in the first phase that are expensive and may not meet the best needs of our City over a projected time. Committee input is important.

Committee responsibilities are to look at the recommendations and decide if we are in favor of or against them. The question of the phasing of the second study has a lot to do with money in 2014. Scott Lambers wanted to get a cost for the feel of implementing recommendations in the first phase before moving forward. He and Council Liaison Cain are eager and looking forward to the final. The Committee needs to provide input.

Dave asked if a timeline by Council for the committee to make recommendations has been established. When attending the presentation he didn't feel as though the next step had been determined.

Council Liaison Rasmussen reported that the next step is laid out regarding the scope and objectives. He understands Scott Lambers position to want to be sure if we move forward to Phase II will the recommendations from Phase I be accomplished and; to have the consensus of the Council. Money adds up. There are issues in the first Phase to address before moving forward with Phase II.

Council Liaison Rasmussen also reported that he recommends a session be held with Park Board members to list recommendations to outline the opinion of the committee.

Chris reported that Scott directed staff to research the ADA issues suggested. They met recently and found that they have several questions that need to be addressed. One of the recommendations that came about was the addition of restrooms. Three have been submitted but unfunded in the 2015-2019 CIP.

Chris agrees with Council Liaison Rasmussen that committee members need to meet to discuss recommendations and prioritize the needs. She recalls when they first talked about the large list for Ironwoods, there was some consensus from the group that the first consideration should be taking care of what already exists, as opposed to building anything new. There are some things that came out or may need to be upgraded. For example, the tennis courts resurface; this needs to be done and it's been unfunded for several years. There are however; many things from all departments to consider for funding.

Council Liaison Cain remembers the pool house is in definite need for upgrading.

Kim reported that she agrees. It isn't functional and is outdated. It was built in 1974. A lot more could be done there such as selling pool passes etc. if upgraded.

Chris reported that some things were upgraded with the pool renovation in 1997 but unfortunately the bath house wasn't upgraded enough.

Brian reported that the trail on 123<sup>rd</sup> Mission will remain at 10ft; it will not be expanded.

Lorrie reported that a ten to twelve foot recommendation was made at that meeting, not a mandate. The simple solution is for everyone to read the material and come prepared to a Work Session of the Park Board. She recalls it was recommended at the meeting that ADA modifications need to be made. This isn't up for discussion really but this is where the Work Session should start.

David asked if the Committee can see the minutes from the Master Plan Work Session.

Chris reported that minutes were taken but may not be transcribed yet. She will make them available once completed by the City Clerk.

Chair Ward Reimer reported that a Master Plan has been done in the past to no avail. Nothing is ever done to move forward. Money was spent and nothing comes to fruition. She doesn't want that to happen again. She isn't opposed to Scott's desire to take a look at it before moving forward but she doesn't want us to be overlooked. A lot of work has been done prioritizing. She agrees that a Work Session should be held soon to prioritize needs.

Amy would like to know what staff thinks, they would know the needs best.

Chris reported that if there is an expectation as to what should come out of the meeting it should be identified.

David suggested all Committee members receive an electronic copy of all documents to be discussed to make sure all are together in one packet.

Council Liaison Cain reported that it will be nice to know what is on the C.I.P. and what is funded and unfunded. Moving forward may be impossible if monies aren't available. She too, agreed with Scott when he determined that it should be put on hold. It should be taken into consideration that the Ironhorse remodel has added at \$1 million+. This changed everything. This is also important to discuss at the meeting. A priority list had already been established prior to this.

David added that the Ironhorse update will have a return on investment. This infuses in future years funds back into the program. We can count on seeing revenue coming back in. If Council deems it important to set aside a certain amount of money to accomplish prioritized objectives from the Parks Master Plan it should be considered.

Council Liaison Cain reported that she agrees but the money will need to pay up front. The trail at 123<sup>rd</sup> & Mission needs to be finished, demolition of the Old Police Station (\$80K) needs to happen, the restrooms at Ironwoods (\$700K), the new Dog Park (\$201K). All are in the queue and will be funded. There is also the unfunded items, the priority list and then the ADA list.

Chair Ward Reimer reported that a Work Session will be held April 8 as part of the regular monthly meeting. The entire agenda will be discussing the Master Plan in conjunction with the Project List from several years ago. That was also important. Both reports could be combined in one.

Chris reported that all materials will be sent electronically to the committee members no later than March 11 to allow a month to review.

## **II. New Business**

### **A. SAB HOA Event 2/27**

Chris reported that a good program is planned. It will be held February 27 at the Lodge. Committee members should check with their HOA to see if you are represented. Good booths displaying great information will be present.



## B. CIP 2015

Chris reported that the CIP and Budget were discussed previously in the meeting. There are quite a few Parks projects moving forward. A portion of the CIP is Arts but they have their own funding. She and April are on the same page that realistically, except for temporary art, it is not feasible to do a piece annually. It will be best to hold off a couple of years after the current projects are situated.

Chair Ward Reimer asked if the money continues.

Chris reported that it does. April is working on researching all of the installations we've done in the past ten years to see what the average cost was and; is the money we are putting aside reasonable at 15% or are we always going over and if so, by how much.

April added that it depends on the size of the piece. The parks crew moved *Introspection*, which was very reasonable. A good example is when *Prairie Lessons* was installed, the cheek wall was created and the huge stone brought in, which was expensive.

Chris reported that as we continue to grow, there are only so many Parks Dept. crew members available to do installation. Timing is also an issue. Sometimes it is best to outsource some projects. What needs to be considered is how much money will be saved coupled with the timeline.

## C. Budget 2015

*Chris also covered this agenda item in the above report.*

Staff is currently working on the budget with a 2% ceiling.

## D. Staff Reports

Brian reported that his staff has been busy working on the following projects:

- Snow has been their biggest priority lately. They worked a lot of hours.
- 123<sup>rd</sup> Street has moved slowly due to the weather. They were able to get a large portion of the ready rock wall sections finished. They will soon remove the remaining soil that was brought up from the buried wall sections. Once complete the landscape will be done and the hard surface of the trail.
- The Bike Pedestrian Planning group will have a meeting February 28, in the Main Conference Room, with RDG Consulting to discuss the Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan. Council Liaisons Cain and Rasmussen both expressed interest at a previous meeting. He hopes both can attend. A Steering Committee meeting will be held after that meeting. A substantial draft drawing will be available at that time.

Brian asked if anyone has experienced problems with street trees in their HOA. He received a new tree list for the Kansas City Region made by local experts with information for many different types of trees and the types of trees to avoid using. It also shares recommendations.

Council Liaison Cain asked Brian to have the pamphlets available at the upcoming HOA meeting.

Kim reported that her staff has been busy with the following:

- Soccer deadline has past. Fifteen hundred-sixty two (1,562) players are registered.
- Daddy Daughter Date night was held February 1. A huge thanks to Lorrie for helping with the event. One hundred eleven (111) participants attended; an increase from last year.

- Swim and Dive Team registration is March 3. It is always a busy time with many registrants.
- Staff has been busy working to submit Program Guide information and discussing the 2015 budget and expendable equipment needs and wants.
- Brock has been busy working on Spring Break camp field trips.
- We partnered with Mid-Town Tennis Club for the summer program. Their instructors will provide all of our outdoor lessons this year. This will be a definite bonus, saving us money yet still providing great instruction.
- The heaters at the Lodge aren't working but replacement heaters have been ordered and should arrive soon. Temporary heat is being used until it is repaired.
- The Lodge floors will be refinished soon by Brian's staff. It is much needed and will be very noticeable once complete.

April reported that she has been working on the following projects:

- "Love in Another Key"; a senior production will be held this weekend in the Oak Room.
- Arti Gras will be held the following weekend. It is a free event. Fifty five (55) adult and forty (40) children's artistic works will be on display. The adult artists are invited to attend opening night. The children's reception will be held Saturday along with an award ceremony. Volunteers are needed to help serve beverages.
- "Watch on the Rhine" rehearsals will be held soon.
- Auditions for "Hello, Dolly" will be held the first weekend in March.

#### **E. Misc.**

Dave reported that at the last meeting the Leawood Chamber event was planned for the next day. He is curious how the event went.

Chris reported that it was a terrific event. Sixty-two (62) people attended. A lot of good conversation was had. Many viewed the boards that were displayed. Dennis Jones, in charge of the challenge course, received several serious interests for team building events. We would definitely participate again. A same type event will be held at the golf course once renovations are complete.

David asked if there is a reason we don't embrace sledding on the hill by the library. The large signage is a turnoff. His children recently went sledding there with friends and really enjoyed it.

Chris reported that we do embrace it but our insurance company said the sign is necessary, as the space is being used for a purpose that was not intended.

Brian reported that bales of hay are placed at the bottom of the hill to prevent hitting the trees.

Chair Ward Reimer reported if there are any additions to the agenda moving forward to please notify her or Chris prior to the meetings to get it actually on the agenda.

#### **F. Next Scheduled Meeting Date – March 11, 2014**

Dave Coleman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. David Harwood seconded the motion.

The motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Claxton, Director  
Parks and Recreation Department