



ADVISORY BOARD
Meeting Minutes – October 7, 2014 - 5:30 p.m.
Leawood City Hall – Maple Room

Board members in attendance: Lorrie Hamilton, Dave Coleman, Amy Vlastic, Doug Stevens, David Harwood and Bob Wright.

Council Liaisons present: Julie Cain and Lou Rasmussen.

Staff members present: April Bishop, Brian Anderson, Chris Claxton, Kim Curran, Tonia Morgan, and new staff member Jacinta Tolinos.

Amy Vlastic called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

Lorrie Hamilton made a motion to approve the September 9, 2014 meeting minutes. Doug Stevens seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Kim introduced new staff member Jacinta Tolinos, Program and Facility Supervisor., She is in charge of the Lodge, Community Center, Labor Day Run, Freaky Fall Fest and Fourth of July. She previously interned in the Kansas City area and loved it. She is from Springfield, Mo where she worked at the Cooper Tennis facility.

I. Old Business

A. Outcome of Master Plan Work Session

Chris thanked those who were able to attend the Work Session last night. The ADA list and repair and replace items were discussed. The list displayed relatively new things, most unfunded. The City Administrator recommended allocating one million dollars for 2016, 2017, and 2018, which would cover roughly 2.95 million if approved during the budget process. It is important to decide appropriate staging moving forward. The Mayor was very complimentary that the Park Board focused on what needs to be taken care of first. This should be discussed further at the November and possibly December meetings in preparation for the CIP. Council will make considerations for the next cycle in January.

Chris opened the floor for feedback from Park Board members who attended the Work Session.

Chair Ward Reimer reported that she was pleased that the Council was receptive and noticed the hard work of the staff and Committee. Having the list prioritized was a benefit. It was a very good meeting with great discussions.

Chris agrees. Several meetings were spent massaging the list. Minimal concern was raised with the exception of the inclusive playground. The Foundation is expected to assist with fundraising; the Mayor expressed discussing this topic soon in order to give them leverage to announce the portion the City is willing to commit. The low water crossing and parking lot issues were also discussed. It was disappointing that the clubhouse expansion wasn't discussed more; but that falls under the "new" list. Troon has reported that the course has lost \$308,000 of potential business this year alone because of the current space. That said, there are a lot of priorities throughout the city.

Amy asked if it is being postponed due to the cost.

Chris added that this is accurate. She is hopeful Fritzel will comply with response to the planning comments soon. They haven't responded yet although they promised to do so by September 19. Completed plans are needed before the City will consider going out for bid again. This may not happen in the near future.

Council Liaison Cain reported that the procedure has detained this, not the Council. It is being held up due to lack of funds and receipt of the final plan. We can potentially move forward once received.

Chris reported that she can't foresee anything in the scope that would require spending the remaining money (for phases II and II of the master plan) on an outside consultant. She would like a recommendation tonight that all agree.

Council Liaison Cain reported that she agrees. The projects are always so far out; it would be an antiquated by the time we get there. The main concern is where the money is coming from.

Lorrie agrees. This is extra money that could be spent on other projects on the list.

David asked what was promised after Phase 1. Is there a benefit to move to Phase 2 at this point.

Chris reported that the City requested they expand the scope and evaluate the data collected in Phase 1 including identification of Capital Improvements to be made to current or newly acquired park land. She doesn't see the need for this to be done. Phase 3 specifies that the City will prioritize the list of improvements and determine a timeline. We are already doing this. At some point, when and if the City decides to move forward with developing the additional acreage at Ironwoods, the space will require it to be master planned independently of everything else. This won't happen immediately and \$55,000 may not be enough money to cover it. We aren't obligated to move forward with this consultant or any consultant.

David made a motion recommending not moving forward with a contractual agreement with the Master Plan consultants for Phase 2 and 3. Bob seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

B. Discuss Potential Time Limit for Meetings – (Tabled from the September meeting)

Chair Ward Reimer reported that the topic was brought up regarding prioritizing meeting agendas to address items that are a necessity and must be covered to be able to end the meeting by 7 pm.

Bob reported that he brought this up because the meetings are long and topics should be able to be discussed and end by 7 pm. If Committee members are willing to extend past 7p.m. this is fine but the important agenda items should be done earlier in the meeting.

Chair Ward Reimer reported that additional time wouldn't be needed if the agenda is reviewed subconsciously and items that require a vote and important items are addressed at the beginning of the agenda and conversation points and time are used wisely. The second portion can be allocated for additional topics in case someone had to leave.

Council Liaison Cain reported that she serves on five or six committees and this one runs longer than any by far. An hour and a half is reasonable. Other Committees runs no longer than this if not shorter. Meeting lengths can be controlled. It is important to be respectful of volunteer's time.

Council Liaison Rasmussen reported that he also serves on other committees and it's never been a problem.

Chair Ward Reimer recommended trying this on a trial basis beginning in November. She doesn't see any reason why it wouldn't work. She suggests Tonia send the agenda out for Committee approval after coordinating with Chris who has knowledge of items that need to be discussed. It will be one more thing to look at but will help in the long run if everyone responds to Tonia that they accept the agenda.

II. New Business

A. 2015 Proposed Fees and Changes

Chris e-mailed the fees to all Committee members earlier today for review prior to the meeting. Kim gave an overview of the proposed fees and changes.

Kim reported that family passes at the Aquatic Center were eliminated in 2011 and replaced with individual passes. . Most pass holders have been positive. A \$2.00 per person increase is being proposed to help cover the increased cost of chlorine, wages, and utilities. The swim team will also receive a \$5.00 increase across the board for MoKan sanctioning fee increases.

Kim added that a \$125.00 fee per fifteen minute increments is being proposed for Lodge patrons who extend past their rental time.

Chair Ward Reimer asked if charging \$125.00 is enough.

Kim replied that it is; a group will be charged \$500.00 per each hour their event runs over, which would be more than the hourly rate.

Kim added that the Outdoor Recreation Specialist proposed eliminating the two hour team building program as they are becoming obsolete. Most use the four hour, half day or full day program. He is also requesting a \$10.00 resident and \$20.00 nonresident increase to bring it in line with the giant swing fearless Friday prices.

Kim reported that the Community Center is a nice alternative to the Lodge but people aren't beating the doors down to use it.

Chair Ward Reimer asked what they are beating down the doors to use.

Kim reported that the Lodge remains busy. Every Saturday is booked from Valentine's Day to Halloween in 2015, with the exception of the day before Easter.

Chris reported that the Community Center is also gaining repetitive meetings using space during the week. It can be difficult at times when classes have to be rearranged due to limited space.

Council Liaison Cain asked if the Justice Center offers rentable space. The Conference Room has a smart board that would be nice for meetings.

Chris and Kim replied that we don't reserve space there and are uncertain if the community room is being used or not. Chris is unsure how the Justice Center space is being advertised.

Lorrie asked if the increase in people using the Community Center for meetings is due to promoting space availability for businesses.

Kim reported that several companies have rented space for years. It is also a nice alternative for smaller budget weddings.

Council Liaison Cain asked if we advertise on the Chamber website.

Kim and Chris reported that events are but both are unaware if rental information can be advertised.

Council Liaison Cain reported that the Chamber provides The Sustainability Committee a link.

Chris added that we are active with The Chamber; this is something that should be considered. Staff will check into this.

April reported that it would be nice to schedule another Chamber after hours event next year. This was educational for a lot of the members.

Chair Karen Ward Reimer asked if fire pit rentals are advertised. She thought rentals were going to be very busy when it was built and dedicated but never sees it being used, many people have expressed that they aren't aware it even exists.

Chris reported that it is advertised in the program guide and on the website. The Jewish Federation has had several events there during the year and Boy Scout Troops use it for ceremonies.

Tonia reported that she has reserved it a lot. It has been used for birthday parties and company picnics. There have even been wedding receptions held there.

Chair Ward Reimer asked if it is used fifty percent of the time.

Bob asked if shelters are busy and if so, is the shelter used fifty percent of the time.

Chris reported that the shelter is busy and reserved nearly twenty percent of the time; some only want to reserve the fire pit without the shelter. This is a special item not many places offer and we can't justify not charging for it, especially with the accountability on cost recovery. It is expensive to operate and requires two members to provide the wood, light the fire and stay the entire time and put the fire out

Chair Ward Reimer asked if enough fees are being allocated.

Chris reported that the fees are fine.

Brian reported that it often takes two staff members six hours overtime to operate, which takes them away from other duties during a reservation.

Chair Ward Reimer reported that it is neat and unique in Kansas City and should be in the forefront and promoted more.

Dave suggested putting a picture of the fire pit on the cover of the next program guide.

Chris reported that it may be a good idea to add it to the front page of the guide but believes the next two covers have been selected. She understands it should be promoted more but if so, additional staff will be needed. It depends on how it is marketed and how the marketing is managed. Tonia does a good job trying to sell it; she is consistently offering it to patrons.

David reported that it is another amenity to enjoy in the City of Leawood.

David asked if there is a standard or methodology in establishing resident vs. nonresident fees. It seems arbitrary as far as the percent difference between the two or the amount. Has any thought gone into what that may or may not be developed on.

Chris reported that this information is in our pricing policy. It depends on what the classes are. It is important to look at the differential between an \$8.00 class regarding what the percentages are based on and not so much the cost, but combination of the cost plus the activity. She is happy to e-mail this information to the Committee again.

David reported that he is concerned about the rental differential in the report which reflects ball field rentals are a 50% difference and tennis court rental, 100% difference and volley ball is a 30% difference. They don't average out.

Chris added that there are a lot of variable expenses that go into determining fees and there is no hard and fast matrix that works for everything.

Dave reported that he is also concerned, he looked at the numbers and for example the individual pool passes reflect a 43% increase and the seniors a 60% increase. He researched other entities and

Blue Valley has a flat 25% rate difference between resident and non-resident; except their pool where one price is charged.

Chris reported that Blue Valley's funding mechanism through the school district is different. There are a lot of variables why you do what you do, and who you answer to. They aren't looking at the same outcome as we are expected to. Since she's been here residents always come first that is true however; we have established a pricing policy that defines our approach. This may be different between Leawood and Blue Valley. We have our direct costs and they have theirs, which are assumed to be different.

Bob asked if there is a minimum differential between residents and non-residents.

Chris reported that the minimum would probably be 20% if classes were removed.

Kim reported that she agrees. Classes are a different animal.

Chris reported that you can't use the same strategies if you don't have the same costs and maybe even a different philosophy..

Dave reported that he doesn't see a difference in the philosophy as a user. His family participates in a lot of Blue Valley's classes/programs as well as Leawood. As a resident of Blue Valley and Leawood he is interested in what each recreation department has to offer his children.

Chris reported that he won't notice the difference as a user. The way they are funded and how they are expected to cover their fees is different than how we cover our fees. We research other fees in the area annually but don't set fees across the board.

Kim added that a lot of it goes back to cost recovery (based on direct and indirect costs) that most won't see.

Chris reported that the dynamics are different depending on who they serve; Blue Valley serves a bigger population and variables play a part in this. If not, we'd (all park departments in Johnson County) would all charge the same fees.

Dave reported that their difference regarding being a resident or nonresident is 25% on everything. He too doesn't see a standard policy of what we charge residents vs nonresidents.

Chris reported that another variable is facilities. For example, Blue Valley soccer is not through Blue Valley Rec, they pay field rental fees but not the fees that go along with it. We depend on non-resident fees to fund many opportunities for Leawood residents. If we didn't resident fees would be much higher because we are not a large community. We depend on Overland Park, Blue Valley and Prairie Village residents to use our facilities because we need the fees. In some cases it's better to have differentials to stay in the market.

Dave reported that he isn't insinuating that the way it is done in Leawood is wrong; he took a pole in Overland Park, Prairie Village, and Johnson County to determine how fees are set and found that there is no rhyme or reason how this is done.

Chris reported that she was happy we were able to come up with a fee policy. She is uncertain how Blue Valley attributes their fees. They may say 25% across the board but she would be curious to see what they have beyond that compared to our detailed policy. Our hierarchy within the policy, the more specialized the class the more expensive it is.

David reported that certain facilities in the City, which we discuss periodically, being impacted by overuse and require additional services; and accounting for that are we using the nonresident pricing structure to manage the impact on facilities. Is this part of our policy. There seems to be discrepancy in how some rates are set. A lot of it is in the lower medium rates. Do the rates truly make sense if a lot of dates are being reserved by nonresidents, should we increase rates and open

different windows for residents vs non to reduce some of the impact to those facilities and more generally available to residents.

Bob reported that a timing differential is already established for residents to book certain facilities. He suggested Chris recirculate the policy and revisit the issue at the next meeting.

Chris reported that this is a good idea and a great topic to revisit. Committee members need to know and be comfortable with what's out there. It is similar to statistics that you can make them say whatever you want; we don't operate this way but it can be done with fees. A lot of time is spent on budgets every year. She tries to operate an enterprise budget within a tax base, charging users as much as possible to diminish costs to those who don't use the service. Kim knows what to expect at budget time. Staff starts from scratch every year. We have labor increases, supply increases and the need for new equipment. and we are in a competitive set here. Lee's Summit doesn't experience the same competition because there isn't any agency directly next to them. Whereas here there are six to seven other entities that offer swim lessons, etc. . Fees and service levels are what differentiate you from another place.

David reported that we've discussed the parks general plan and talked about holding things that we need to pay for and improve and the pool and all of the needed upgrades and his concern is when we discuss impact on facilities, our facilities are degrading and need to be upgraded and we are going to the general fund from the tax payers who reside in Leawood to pay for this. Do our fees reflect being able to accept the impact that we are having on our facilities and are nonresidents contributing in a manner consistent with the use.

Chris replied that she believes they are in regards to day-to-day operations. It is very rare to find a municipal agency that expects you to recover your construction debt or capital improvements through fees.

Bob reported that this is similar to the community center when discussed several years ago that was to be funded by the taxpayers of Leawood; but the goal was for it to operate neutral to the budget. It is a facility that will degrade over time and the policy memo states that it will operate fairly budget neutral. Tax payer dollars are intended to pay for the facilities. It may be worth considering charging higher nonresident fees to reduce the burden of Leawood taxpayers.

Chris reported that it could be a problem if the volume is reduced. Again, there is a market out there as to what people are willing to pay.

David reported that he will compile an example of that he is thinking.

Chris reported she will forward the policy accepted by the Council to the Committee to review. Staff worked hard on it. She is open to discussing this further if there is a desire to revisit it again.

Bob asked if we've received feedback or complaints regarding fees being too high or low. He remembers soccer fees were too low in the past and people noticed that we were the cheapest in town.

Chris said that she and Kim discussed this during the budget cycle last year. .

Kim reported that we are in line. The only thing that may have been low is the resident senior pass at the pool, but they haven't complained. It comes down to how high you can go before you lose people.

Chris added that when the entire package is compiled and minimums and maximums for the budgeting justification sheets are factored in; and we always budget for the maximum on expenses and minimums on revenues, you come up with a fee to make the program go. Most do it that way. There are a lot that we don't charge for like using the tennis courts. They are expensive to maintain and we only charge one dollar to cover the expense for having lights on but trails are also expensive to maintain and we don't charge fees for that.

Council Liaison Cain reported that we are spending \$28,000,000 on curbs and \$38,000,000 on corrugated pipe replacement so we should be able to afford to keep up our parks facilities.

David would love to have a conversation with the Council Liaisons to discuss curb replacement. He recently found out about this when they came through his neighborhood. He researched this and in his opinion it was a huge mistake to spend such a large amount of money.

Council Liaison Cain reported that she respectfully disagrees. A lot of smart people are doing a lot of work in this regard. She would be happy to meet soon.

Chris reported that all of this regarding our fees is good conversation that can be discussed further at a future meeting.

Dave asked why we charge for tennis court lights. He met with Brock regarding this last year.

Kim added that the amount is minimal and puts the lights on a timer system to control use.

Amy made a motion to approve the recommendation for increases and changes to the 2015 fee schedule. Lorrie seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Chris reported that a Work Session will be held November 3, 6:00 p.m. to discuss fees and cost recovery policies.

B. Staff Reports

Brian reported the following.

- A soft opening for the dog park was held October 1. It has been busy. The rain resulted in a large wet area at the large dog entrance causing it to stress but the areas under the trees are holding well. He is pleased that people are actually picking up after their dogs.
- Amy added that the dog park is beautiful.
- The Bike Walk to School Day event will be held tomorrow; six schools are participating. Members of the Sustainability Advisory and Bike Committees will help with this event. The Police Department will also provide extra patrol for safety.
- The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan is complete; a link is available on the website. This will be on the October 20th Council agenda.
- There has been a problem with organized use of the trail, although an ordinance is established that this is not allowed without approval of a Special Use Permit. The users have polluted the trails with a lot of marked lines. Lorrie is an avid user of the trail and noticed some users wearing sponsored run shirts and spoke with them and they were unaware it isn't allowed and apologized that they won't do it again. A lot of people who use the trail may honestly think it is approved and it is not. It may be helpful to add this information to our website.
- Amy added that this could be classified as vandalism. Recently nearly one thousand riders rode past her house participating in Tour De BBQ.
- Brian recently rode the trails and noticed people aren't as courteous as they should be.

Lorrie reported that most bikers she's encountered are inconsiderate to trail walkers.

Chris added that it is a safety concern. They aren't riding single file and ride at an excessive speed. Crossing the roads can also be dangerous. Events mark the trail several days prior and it is difficult to remove and takes a long time to wear off. More prominent courtesy signage should be added soon regarding trail use. She continues to receive complaints from walkers who should have as much enjoyment on the trail as bicycle users.

Kim reported the following:

- Freaky Fall Fest will be held Friday. She needs judges for the costume contest. Please contact her if you are available to volunteer. Twelve-fifteen people have signed up to participate in Trunk or Treat, more than in years past.
- She recently held interviews for the Outdoor Education Supervisor. An offer will be made soon. Hopefully by next month we will be fully staffed.
- Soccer is half way through the season with no rain outs; four weeks remain in the season.
- Ironwood is busy. The cabins are booked every Saturday through the end of the season.
- The Challenge Course season is busy with programs throughout the week.

April reported the following:

- The Schoolhouse will participate in Trunk or Treat as in years past.
- The Senior Actors performed “The Oxford Fraud” yesterday, representative the 157th fraudulent collection.
- *A Little Night Music* will be held October 24, 25, and 26. The evening of the 26th is a benefit performance including food and beverages. The other nights tickets are \$5.00. An auction will be held with prizes to bid on.
- The ballet will perform at the Lodge on November 6. It is the younger professionals. She recommends coming early for a great seat.
- The “Konoinia” art piece moved into the Justice Center today. It is a nice bronze color. Touch-up work will be done Friday.
- The base for the Paley piece has been installed in preparation for its arrival next week. A dedication will be held in April 2015, which the artist will attend.

Council Liaison Cain reported that she is excited about the chosen location in the median. The piece will look really nice.

C. Next Scheduled Meeting Date – November 11, 2014

The next meeting will be held November 11, 5:30 p.m. at Leawood City Hall in the Maple Room.

Dave Coleman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Amy Vlastic seconded the motion.

III. Misc.

The motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Claxton, Director
Parks and Recreation Department