



**ADVISORY BOARD**  
**Meeting Minutes – April 14, 2015 - 5:30 p.m.**  
**Leawood City Hall – Maple Room**

Board members in attendance: Karen Ward Reimer (Chair), Amy Vlasic, Lorrie Hamilton, Bob Wright and Doug Stevens

Board Members absent: David Harwood and Dave Coleman.

Council Liaisons present: Julie Cain and Lou Rasmussen.

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

Karen Ward Reimer (Chair) called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

Amy Vlasic made a motion to approve the March 10, 2015 meeting minutes. Doug Stevens seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**I. Old Business**

**A. Dog Park Use**

Chris reported that nothing has changed since the last meeting. At that time different possible access options were discussed and it was suggested that users should obtain a Leawood license and gain entry by a card reader system. Cost for either hasn't been determined. She is uncertain if there is a way to determine charging a fee; if so, what is its purpose, to potentially minimize the use, help pay for maintenance costs, or both.

Chair Ward Reimer asks the amount to do this.

Brian reported that he doesn't know the amount but remembers Council Liaison Rasmussen recommended contacting K.C.P.L., which he did, and was told a service drop off could be established due to power running near the dog park. He is uncertain but thinks a phone/data line will be needed for a card reader communication.

Doug asked if the idea is that access will be granted by purchasing a card or paying a licensing fee.

Chris added that Grandview has this system and felt it was a good way to be certain that dogs are immunized because this information must be produced when they receive a card.

Council Liaison Cain asked if Grandview has used a card reader system from day one.

Chris added that she is uncertain.

Council Liaison Cain asked where this is coming from. Is there knowledge that instituting a reader card system is indeed going to reduce attendance.

Chris reported that she is unaware if this can be proven.

Council Liaison Cain reported that this is her point. She doesn't understand why we are considering doing this when we haven't tried other things.

Chris replied that staff is not necessarily proposing this.

Chris added that the condition of the turf isn't anything staff didn't expect due to heavy traffic. Many users are from Missouri, which is fine, but heavy use will continue to have the same results. A few complaints have been received regarding users leaving the gate open and small dogs getting out through a portion of the fence; both issues have been addressed. She is uncertain what will happen in the event of a flood.

Brian reported that there are standing puddles of water due to the rain. Adding dirt in the low spots may not be the best option. He's considered installing drain tile in these areas. The gate issue was researched before construction. Initially, a door spring closure was used but it didn't have the force to completely close the gate. He will contact a locksmith soon to research additional options that will swing it closed with more strength.

Lorrie asked how much is our responsibility to make sure the gate closes.

Chris reported that in her opinion none of it is our responsibility, if the closure is working properly. Dog owners need to be diligent.

Lorrie agrees. Dogs use the park at the risk of its owner. It has been stated many times at previous meetings that dog parks are self-policing. The City should not spend money on an owners laziness regarding entering and exiting the dog park. People should learn how to close the gate.

Amy added that she is there all the time and people are very complimentary. Turf will never grow in the high use areas and many people aren't bothered with this. Those who are concerned shouldn't take their dogs to the park after it rains and they should leash their dog if they fear it will bolt when entering the dog pen. She suggests tabling this topic until it has been open one year and revisit it at that time. It can be addressed sooner if a lot of complaints are received.

*Committee members were in consensus of this suggestion.*

Council Liaison Cain asked if the cost of a second entrance was researched if the current entrance is the biggest problem.

Brian reported that staff recently considered splitting the dog park in half to rest a portion at a time, but this option may not work due to the park receiving the same amount of visitors. One side would still suffer turf loss by putting more dogs in a smaller space. Closing it and reseeding will take a year to grow and establish and once reopened it will be bare dirt again in the heavy traffic areas in a month. If pursued a second entrance was pursued, lumber would be needed to match the existing fence and finding a way to actually separate the sections would cost an estimates \$7,000.

Council Liaison Cain replied that she isn't considering a dog park separation; she is suggesting a second entrance only to take the stress off of the main entrance. They aren't mutually exclusive. What is the cost of this option.

Brian added that he will look into this. The cost may need to include an ADA accessible trail. The area near the first shade structure has taken a pounding. A permanent path may be needed to protect this high traffic area.

Chris reported that they looked into adding crushed granite to the worn areas 8-10 ft. from the concrete.

Amy asked if it will wash away during a flood.

Chris reported that it might wash away in a high water event, but is inexpensive to replace.

Brian agreed. It can be reapplied quickly if it washes away.

Chris reported that Brian inquired about the cost to purchase a tracker like the one on-loan to us from MARC. It isn't very expensive and we may be able to use it in other applications such as trail monitoring. It would be nice to track the dog park use until October so we have a full year of data.

Lorrie reported that will be helpful if people want numbers especially if asked to donate money.

Chris agrees. They often ask about usage.

Chris reported that she was contacted by potential dog food truck vendors but suggested they obtain a license. She also advised them that neither the trucks nor sales are allowed inside the actual dog park.

Bob reported that he has been there on a busy Saturday for soccer and the dog park has definitely had an impact on parking. Have complaints been received.

Chris reported that she hasn't received any complaints.

Council Liaison Rasmussen asked if a decision was made regarding changing the locking mechanism at the unleashing area at the dog park, yes, no, or leave it alone.

Chris reported that the consensus was to leave everything as is until a year of the dog park operation and revisit it as an agenda item in August or September.

Council Liaison Rasmussen reported that it is fine if it is the consensus of the Committee to analyze the dog park after a year but he wants it on record that the park itself is taking a good beating and certain issues need to be addressed. Committee members visit the dog park and are aware that these things are happening and aren't going away. The Committee passed a fee policy accepted by the City Council and Council reviews recovery costs in June. He estimates the cost is nearly \$50,000 per year for labor cost, fringe benefits cost and the 4-5 hours it takes weekly due to the beating the park takes. He doesn't want staff to wind up in June with Council looking at the recovery rate now and question why it isn't being treated like soccer and receiving some recovery. He would like to be prepared in June as the Liaison of the Committee that we decided to wait although we understood it is happening.

## **B. Further Discussion – Dog Park Sponsorships**

*Chris passed around a handout for Committee members to review.*

Chris reported that more benches and waste receptacles are needed. Dogs are unleashed prior to entering the park and use the restroom between the first station and the actual entrance.

Council Liaison Rasmussen reported that someone placed a paper sign next to our sign and bag dispenser requesting dog owners pick up after their dog which is basically saying the same thing.

Amy reported that the worst area is the path from the parking lot into the dog park. A can and bags are provided and people won't pick up after their dogs.

Chris added that a split rail was installed to prohibit people from shortcutting the trail which has worn all the dirt off the hillside.

Council Liaison Rasmussen reported that another bag station is needed. He is aware staff is doing the best they can but the dog waste bags run out often.

Brian added that there are 200 bags per roll but he's been short staffed until a vacancy for an evening position was recently filled. They should be filled daily moving forward. An additional dispenser will be added to the gate inside the bull pen as a friendly reminder to use them.

Chris reported that she would like to address the sponsorship requests. A few agencies around the country put out RFS (request for sponsorships) once a year and put a full package together for all of the facilities and events.. For example, levels of sponsorship can be established. She researched and found industry information, which is also included in the packet. The difference between sponsorships and advertising is important.

Chris also reported that the kiosk at Gezer Park will be moved soon. Advertising could be the same with different color card but the same size. We should determine the length of advertising (time), value and if there is a renewal rate. The website and newsletter will also be utilized.

Council Liaison Rasmussen added that he was asked about the possibility of having a dog food truck in the park. There is a lot of interest to take advantage of the volume for commercial purposes.

Council Liaison Rasmussen also reported that the City needs to consider when a bench, etc., is contributed that it shouldn't be in perpetuity. The Committee needs to determine how long plaques should remain when the equipment has run its useful life and needs to be replaced.

*Committee members were in agreement.*

Brian reported that tree donations will be replaced for a period of five years.

Amy reported that she and her neighbors purchased a bench at Deanna Rose Farmstead in honor of her dad when he passed away and a letter was sent asking if she wanted to renew it after a certain period of time. Benches do wear out and will need to be replaced.

Brian reported that the donation benches on the trail system have resilient bronze coating that doesn't wear out but the wood does. Staff lightly sands them and adds new protective coating so they don't wear out.

Amy suggested contacting the Farmstead to discuss different options. This may be beneficial.

Chair Ward Reimer asked the Committees thoughts on what was presented.

Lorrie reported that this is a good start.

Council Liaison Rasmussen would like to have time to review this at home.

Bob reported that he is opposed to a lot of signs and banners cluttering up the nature of the park. There needs to be a limit. It seems appropriate to have a sign on a trash receptacle that has to be there anyway.

Brian reported that this a good point. He's been contacted by people wanting to donate benches and request placement in a specific area but there are so many benches that they aren't needed. This may be an option.

Chris reported that the kiosk can be used as a point of advertising and if it fills, people will have to wait until a spot becomes available.

### **C. Twitter Report (Continued to May 12 meeting)**

Chris reported that she hasn't had an opportunity to speak with Scott, City Administrator to see if he's amenable to a conversation. Kim provided good information outlining the dynamics of Twitter and Facebook and how they are very different, as well as the significant changes on Facebook, which is making it an undesirable tool.

Council Liaison Rasmussen asked if one of the David's is an expert on this topic. He remembers he offered to provide a presentation at a previous meeting. This was discussed extensively.

Chris reported that David and Dave will be leaving the committee after the May meeting. . David will move to the Bicycle Committee, they meet bi-monthly. Dave is moving to the Planning Commission. Both will begin their new Committees in June. New Committee members Steve McGurren, and Matt Bloch will join Park Board in June as well.

Council Liaison Rasmussen asked about the results of Facebook.

Kim replied that there are 480 "*likes*". It is almost a thing of the past; the more stuff is *shared* and *liked* the higher it goes on someone's news feed, which is taking away the ability to put out timely information such as field closures; sometimes it shows on the feed a day later.

Chris reported that the dynamics of Facebook has changed. It now displays a lot of ads and videos. Twitter would be a better option as an additional source for social media. She will send out what Kim prepared and ask for a recommendation before talking with the City Administration.

Council Liaison Rasmussen asked if anyone is against using Twitter. He asked Council Liaison Cain for her specific input.

Council Liaison Cain reported that she doesn't recall that the Committee unanimously wants Parks and Recreation to utilize Twitter. We touched on it, but is the committee recommending this.

Amy reported that Facebook hasn't been overwhelming used in Leawood and isn't getting the message out. Twitter and Instagram are being used much more.

Council Liaison Cain reported that she understands this but doesn't recall that this is the directive.

Amy reported that we talked about it with Kim at the last meeting.

Council Liaison Cain reiterated that she understands it was discussed but to Lou's point what was the directive.

Kim reported that she thinks it may have been because she researched information and forwarded it to Chris.

Amy reported that she was to look into it and if possible it may be a good thing. The Committee didn't say everyone wanted it.

Chair Ward Reimer reported that a motion wasn't made but Kim was asked to look into it.

Bob reported that it is a reasonable broadcast tool for information. There is value in it. Committee members would have no objections or endorsement to it if the staff wants to try it. People should have the option to follow youth soccer, or Parks and Recreation in general if they like. There is an option to unfollow information that doesn't interest you and start following again if you like. For example, some may only want to follow us during soccer season.

Kim reported that if used, both Facebook and Twitter would be linked together.

## **II. New Business**

### **A. Staff Reports**

Brian reported the following.

- The Wadi was cleaned at Gezer. A lot of tree pruning work has also been done to the arctic blue willow trees that have experienced a lot of die back and some have a fungal infection. The dead ones will be replaced and the ones that were salvageable will bloom again soon.
- The pool is in its prepping stages; power washing and touch up painting for the upcoming season.
- Tree and flower planting have been completed.
- The sprinkler system has been turned on with several sprinkler heads being replaced on the soccer fields at a cost of nearly \$1500.
- He is interviewing for a full time and a thirty-two hour permanent position that are open, as well as seasonal staff.
- A work session will be held on City Trees next Monday. He is preparing for this.
- May 11-15 is Bike to Work Week. He is attending joint meeting with area cities to see what each is doing; Overland Park will create a list of breakfast stops in the area that may give a perk that week. The Leawood Fire Stations will host one daily as a stop for anyone riding their bike to allow them to stop in and have coffee, 6:30 – 8:30a.m. Corner Bakery will offer free coffee to anyone who rides a bike and makes a purchase. Elite Cycling will also provide free bicycle checks and minor maintenance. A list will be available soon of all offers for the week.

A person from the Shawnee Mission School District, who attended the HOA meeting, is responsible for coordinating everyone. The City of Shawnee, Overland Park, and Lenexa have attended. They are reaching out to others; the group will hopefully evolve more in the future. A Wellness Event will be held for Leawood City employees, on Friday, May. 15, featuring a bike ride from City Park to the Justice Center with breakfast before the work hours begin.

Amy asked for a reminder e-mail to be sent to all Committee members prior to the event.

Kim reported the following

- Eggstravaganza was held March 29 at City Park. Thanks to Chair Ward Reimer and Lorrie for controlling fields. Fifteen thousand eggs are gone in 90 seconds.
- Soccer began March 21, with 1568 participants registered.

- The spring session of The First Tee program began Monday with 30 participants.
- The trail cleanup is Sunday. It will begin at Tomahawk Park at 1:00 P.M.
- Tee Ball/Coach Pitch deadline is April 22. Registrations have been busy.
- Fearless Friday will be held May 1 at the Challenge Course. It is a nice way to ride the giant swing.
- Pool pass sales begin May 1.
- She is preparing for the Duck Derby to be held June 20. Rocking Rob will perform and there will be face painting and snacks. Bank of Blue Valley will once again be the sponsor.

Council Liaison Rasmussen reported that there has been discussion in the press regarding the sewer plant between Mission Road and the creek. He and Councilmember Jim Rawlings will be meeting with Wastewater District representatives on April 22, at City Hall at 1:15p.m. He assumes discussion will be had about the expansion of the sewer plant but is nervous that some of the park land that people think is owned by the City isn't. He is concerned about how much land will be taken back due to the expansion.

Chair Ward Reimer asked what happened to it going away. This was discussed before.

Council Liaison Rasmussen reported that this is a valid question, he will bring this up. The Wastewater District says it is cheaper for them to do the plant over than to pay KCMO to treat the water, which they have been doing for decades (1948). He can't visualize how one municipality can treat the water significantly cheaper than another. He is anxious to know if the plan is to physically expand geographically. It is hard enough to get land for parks than to give up anything.

April reported the following:

- The Schoolhouse is open weekends. The Schoolmaster; Austin Ferguson, will work again this summer for his third year.
- The ISC kick-off for the Passport to Adventure was held at the Bass Pro Shop in Olathe over the weekend.
- *Promises Promises* will begin Thursday night. It is really good show. A bus load from Grace University in Omaha will attend Saturday and a retirement group will also bring forty people. Committee members are encouraged to attend.
- A lecture by *KC Modern* will be held Saturday morning at the Lodge with a presentation about mid-century modern style.

## **B. Call for Miscellaneous Items**

## **C. Next Scheduled Meeting Date – May 12, 2015**

The next meeting will be held May 12, at 5:30 p.m. at Leawood City Hall in the Maple Room.

Lorrie Hamilton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bob Wright seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Claxton, Director  
Parks and Recreation Department