



ADVISORY BOARD
Meeting Minutes – August 11, 2015 - 5:30 p.m.
Maple Room – Leawood City Hall

Board members in attendance: Karen Ward Reimer (Chair), Amy Vlastic, Matt Block, Steve McGurren, Lorrie Hamilton, and Bob Wright.

Board Members absent: Doug Stevens

Council Liaisons present: Lou Rasmussen, Julie Cain

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

Chair Ward Reimer called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

Amy Vlastic made a motion to approve the July 14, 2015 meeting minutes. Matt Block seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

I. Old Business

A. Revisit Addition of Dog “Play” Amenities LEAWOOF Dog Park

Chris reported that the Parks & Recreation Department is hosting a first time event called Barktoberfest near the Dog Park on October 2 and the department would like to purchase and install the agility pieces in a specific location in the dog park prior to the event.

Chris stated that \$8,000 is available through private donors which will allow the city to purchase 8-10 pieces of equipment.

Councilwoman Cain inquired if the donations were received through the Leawood Foundation.

Chris replied that the donations were raised by Councilman Rasmussen and she believes they did go through the Foundation but will check. We are also going to continue to seek donations that will go through the Leawood Foundation moving forward.

Karen Ward Reimer inquired about how park users are able to make donations

Chris stated that representatives from the Leawood Foundation may be on site during the event to talk to potential donors. She also stated the following needs for the dog park; an additional shelter with a bench and a fountain with a dog bowl extension in both the big dog and little dog area. She stated that the Leawood Foundation has received donations for the dog park but she is unsure of the exact amount received to date.

Karen Ward Reimer inquired if there is an opportunity to have a board listing names of donors.

Chris stated that advertising has been discussed with staff and a message board has been placed at the entrance of the dog park. Using the back of the message board to list advertisers and donors could be considered.

Karen Ward Reimer stated that she does know a couple people who would like to donate and were inquiring about how they would be recognized.

Steve McGurren inquired if there is a general policy on placing names on donations, parks, etc.

Chris stated that there is not a set policy on naming items after people but it is not something that has been done in the past.

Steve McGurren stated that at one time there was signage at City Park recognizing donations from Joyce Hall and the Kroh Brothers. He also mentioned that the sign was not present after the park was renovated.

Brian commented that this was before his time with the department.

Chris stated that in regards to donation signage, the department would prefer to not have overpowering signage at the park. She mentioned that benches that are donated usually have small plaques on the back of the bench or in the concrete pad. The department needs to set guidelines for donation levels.

Brian stated that the agility equipment will be located in the north section of the large dog area and will occupy approximately 12,000 square feet

Amy Vlastic inquired if the equipment will be in view when dog owners enter the park

Brian answered that it will be located in the north part of the dog park and the area flattens out so you won't see it right as you come around to the entrance.

Chris included that there is some shade in that area, which will be a benefit for those watching theirs, or others, dogs.

Lorrie Hamilton commented that it is away from the entrance and will move traffic that way. She thinks it is a great idea.

Chris stated that the location is out of the flood plain. The color of the equipment is the same as the items we currently have in the park. The features will blend in and will not interrupt the large open space where dogs run.

Councilwoman Cain inquired about future additions to the park.

Chris stated that a shelter will be added next year and we currently have the money for the agility equipment which includes; weave posts, climbing ramp, hurdle, jump tire and sit table.

Steve McGurren inquired about the material used to construct the equipment.

Brian stated it will be powder coated steel.

Chris stated that she would like to have the equipment installed for Barktoberfest and the additional shelter before the spring season. She also mentioned that a sidewalk is being installed from the bullpen to the shelter by the pet station, as this has become a worn path that holds water and mud.

Brian stated that his crew dug a canal along the trail and we put the dirt in the low spots of the dog park and eliminated standing water spots out in the open areas.

Karen Ward Reimer asked Councilman Rasmussen what the donors would like to see as far as the equipment.

Councilman Rasmussen stated the donors were willing to fund a championship course and the Governing Body did not think it would be a good fit. The donors wanted the staff to

have absolute say on manufacturer, pieces, location, etc. The donors mentioned that the challenges should be the same as in a championship course but they didn't want to get into selection.

Chris stated that staff has received some information from the USDA and the AKC but they don't give specifics.

Chris asked the Board if everyone was in agreement with the proposed location.

Amy Vlasic stated that she doesn't want it to disturb the view of the dog park when guests enter the park.

Chris stated that all of the equipment will blend in.

Brian stated that it is going to be a tight time frame to order, receive and install the equipment prior to Barktoberfest. He estimates that it will be 4 weeks to construct, 3-5 days to ship and last week of September to install.

Matt Block inquired if the equipment is anchored in concrete

Brian stated yes, posts are set in concrete.

Steve McGurran inquired if there are regulations on how far the pieces are located from one another.

Brian stated that there are regulations on distance between objects and number of obstacles varies by level of dog (novice, advanced, etc.).

Councilwoman Cain inquired if the equipment can be moved once it is set.

Brian stated that the equipment can be disassembled and relocated if necessary.

Amy Vlasic inquired if more benches will be added with the shelter.

Chris stated that one bench will be placed with the shelter and there is a possibility to add additional benches in a couple more locations, depending on funding.

Amy Vlasic stated that many older people use the little dog area in the evening and need additional seating.

General consensus was received from the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board to move forward with the purchase and installation of dog agility equipment.

B. Review of Upcoming Capital Projects

Chris stated that the ADA project at City Park will be going out to bid in the near future. A sidewalk to allow access to the soccer fields and lowering concession counters at the Aquatic Center and the Lions Shelter will be included in the project

Brian stated the bid opening will be on September 2. The bid will also include remodeling the restrooms on the south side of the Aquatic Center. They will be 2 unisex bathrooms instead of one man's and one woman's.

Karen Ward Reimer inquired if both restrooms will be ADA Accessible

Brian stated that they will be ADA accessible and changes will need to be made to the handicap parking and a ramp will need to be built to access the restrooms. Handrails will also be added. Modifications will need to be made to the sidewalk to access shelters A & B as the current path does not meet ADA requirements.

Chris stated that the trail improvements from Tomahawk Park to Roe are scheduled for 2016. The current trail will be replaced with concrete.

Councilwoman Cain inquired if the replacement trail will be 8 feet wide.

Brian stated the trail will be 10 feet wide to match up with the existing bridges and the trail may need to be moved slightly away from the creek in some areas.

Councilman Rasmussen inquired how we could fit our system in with the county to be included in any money they may be receiving.

Chris stated that the money may be going to Meadowbrook to fund the park improvements in that area but that is an assumption. Brian will check to see what opportunities may exist.

Councilman Rasmussen mentioned shared programs such as SMAC. He inquired if the county will share the burden to expand the network

Brian stated that another opportunity to expand the trail network is to create access from the Town Center Crossing shopping area to Tomahawk Park. The bicycle and pedestrian master plan recommended widening the 5' sidewalk to 8-10' feet wide along College Boulevard between State Line Road and Mission Road. To help accommodate this, Public Works made one lane slightly smaller to be able to accommodate a wider sidewalk when they re-paved and marked College Boulevard earlier this year.

Chris stated repairs to the access road between the Lodge and Nature Center, the retaining wall and drainage behind Nature Center as well as the low water crossing on the trail near Town Center Drive are all scheduled for 2017.

Brian stated that the low water crossing at TCPY and Town Center Drive would be eliminated by adding a pedestrian bridge. The current low water crossing accumulates mud and silt during the summer months and is treacherous in the winter when snow and ice accumulate.

Chris stated that \$15,000 is for a preliminary engineering study to figure out why the middle lake isn't retaining its water level.

Matt Block inquired if the money for the retaining wall behind the nature center could be used in a better way rather than terracing, which seems expensive.

Brian stated that the nature center staff utilizes the back patio and garden area as an outdoor classroom. Terracing or a retaining wall may be solutions that will be added to reduce erosion but other options may be considered as we go to design.

Councilman Rasmussen inquired if the contract for the access road repairs at Ironwoods Park will be included.

Chris stated that it would be included.

Councilman Rasmussen inquired about the Ironhorse clubhouse expansion

Chris stated that the Ironhorse clubhouse, Public Art and the spray ground replacement are all scheduled for 2016.

April inquired about replacing the stage deck at the Ironwoods Amphitheater.

Chris stated that there is currently no money budgeted for this project.

April stated that it is estimated at \$35,000 to replace the deck material on the stage.

Chris stated that the department is working with the Leawood Foundation on the inclusive playground project.

Councilwoman Cain inquired about the fundraiser that was held at AMC Theatre to benefit the inclusive playground. Was it a success?

Chris stated that it went very well. She also mentioned that the Leawood Foundation applied for a grant from AMC Theatres. Grant recipients will be announced in August.

Chris stated that \$176,000 is budgeted for the park 96th & Lee but completion will be dependent upon the construction of the new Fire Station.

Amy Vlasic inquired if the Ironhorse Clubhouse Expansion is scheduled to start a year from this October.

Councilman Rasmussen Yes, the project will be bid 60-90 days prior to the start of construction.

Councilman Rasmussen inquired if all ADA requirements will be met this year or if funding to meet ADA requirements will be necessary in the future.

Chris stated that all ADA deficiencies listed in the master plan will be addressed.

Karen Ward Reimer inquired if shelters A& B are scheduled for replacement.

Chris stated they are not currently on the schedule. The Capital Improvement Schedule only lists projects up to 2020. They could be scheduled further into the future.

Karen Ward Reimer stated that she believes the shelters need to be replaced.

Chris agreed and reminded the board that when the bond was passed for \$12.1 million dollars to renovate City Park and construct Ironwoods and I-Lan Park, the shelters were not included in the renovation, due to budget restraints.

Chris stated that \$1 million is set aside in 2020 for future park improvements, but it is not specific.

Bob Wright inquired if shelters A& B are booked consistently

Chris – stated that a lot of the time, one group will book both shelters

Bob Wright inquired if the renters are Leawood residents. Would one larger shelter or two medium size shelters be more desirable for renters?

Councilman Rasmussen inquired if the sidewalks at the soccer fields and trail will be pervious concrete.

Chris stated that it will not.

Brian added that pervious concrete needs to be maintained regularly and the pores will clog if it is not maintained.

II. Council Liaisons Report

Councilman Rasmussen asked to be kept informed regarding trail improvements and funding by Johnson County.

III. New Business

A. Preliminary Discussion – 2016 Fees & Charges

Chris stated that we need to begin the discussion on 2016 fees and that all recommended changes will be presented at the next Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting.

Chris stated that the fee policy accepted by the Council has not changes.

Councilman Rasmussen inquired about credit card fees.

Chris replied that staff builds credit card fees into our line item justification when we are preparing the annual budget.

Chris stated that she will meet with her staff to discuss fees for individual programs and the larger programs have been reviewed.

Chris stated that the fee policy dictates how fees are set; the more specialized the activity, the higher the cost. We do not count non-fee based programs against our cost recovery.

Chris stated that pool passes are increasing for 2016 because we are adding RecTrac software to the Aquatic Center and the ability to process credit cards.

Chris included that we don't use the same process to set our fees as other agencies in neighboring cities because of different funding mechanisms, different cost recovery expectations, different programs, etc.

Chris stated that as an example, we are not hosting Freaky Fall Fest in 2015 due to declining attendance and unpredictable weather during the fall.

Chris stated that she will send the current fee schedule to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board prior to the next meeting

Councilman Rasmussen inquired if there had been any discussion of a potential change in licensing fees for dogs in the City of Leawood. He asked if the Parks and Recreation staff will have enough data to review the expenses for the dog park. He mentioned that pet licensing fees have not changed in 25 years.

Councilman Rasmussen inquired about a pass card system to allow access to the dog park. The dog park is getting a lot of use and he would like to review the data to see if an increase in dog licensing fees is justified. He stated that electrical power is available to run the pass card system.

Chris stated that staff will provide the data at the October meeting.

B. Staff Reports

April reported:

- The Sundays in the Park Concert Series starts this Sunday evening. If it is hot or rainy, the concerts will be moved to the Lodge.
- Auditions for British Invasion will be starting soon
- The Back to School Event at the Oxford Schoolhouse will be at the end of the month. The event will start with a Mr. Stinky Feet concert. In addition, a yo-yo competition team will be in attendance.
- Life Story classes will start at the end of September. These classes are very low key and are designed to encourage people to record and share their stories.

Brian reported:

- He submitted the Bicycle Friendly Community Application today. He received a lot of good feedback from local bike shops, schools, MARC and the League of Cycling Instructors. He stated that it is a good application and the BFC is looking for positive results.
- Staff have been cleaning up flood debris and making repairs to the trail bridge near 119th street.
- He is helping Chris with the Leawood Chamber After Hours event in the Oak Room on Wednesday. He will be providing information on how to become a bicycle friendly business. He mentioned that there are currently no bicycle friendly businesses in Leawood.

Amy Vlasic inquired about what makes a business bicycle friendly.

Brian replied that the business needs to have bike parking for employees, shower facilities and guest bike parking. Other considerations include; does the business support or sponsor bike races or provide incentives to the employees to encourage cycling to work? The Bicycle Friendly Business designation is earned through an application process. Similar to the Bicycle Friendly City designation, different levels of Bicycle Friendly Business can be achieved.

Chris inquired if American Association of Family Physicians were trying to pursue a Bicycle Friendly Business designation.

Brian replied that he gave a presentation on the topic and the organization was going to have a bike to work day but it rained. They have not pursued a Bicycle Friendly Business designation.

- He is assisting the Planning Department with the development of the tree protection and preservation guidelines. He stated there is concern about mature trees being eliminated during renovations on older homes in the city.

Councilman Rasmussen asked that the current ordinance be reviewed regarding the removal of diseased trees. He inquired if the current ordinance would cover removal or treatment of Ash trees infested by the Emerald Ash Borer.

Karen Ward Reimer asked if property owners are fined for having dead or diseased trees.

Councilman Rasmussen responded that property owners are warned but not fined. He requested that staff review the tree ordinance and see what options exist for going on private property to treat trees.

- He is working on county wide bike / pedestrian mapping app. It is in the early stages and is not ready to be publicized. It will offer local bike shop routes in addition to trails, marked and unmarked routes. It will include turn by turn navigation as well as emergency contact features.

Kim reported:

- All summer programs are drawing to the close for the season.

- The Truckin' it in the Park Food Truck Festival will be held at the east end of City Park on Saturday, August 29. We currently have 7 confirmed food trucks as well as Gordon Beirsch who will be serving beer and sangria.
- The Labor Day Run and Walk will be held on Monday, September 7 at City Park. She is looking for volunteers to help with registration.
- Doggie Dunk will be held at the Aquatic Center on Tuesday, September 8, 5:00-7:00pm.
- The Aquatic Center will be operating during the week, 4:00-8:00pm starting August 12.
- The Fall Soccer League starts on Saturday, September 12

Chris reported:

- Leawood Parks & Recreation is hosting the Leawood Chamber of Commerce After-Hours event in the Oak Room on Wednesday, August 19. We will be promoting our projects and programs. Heavy appetizers and drinks will be served.

C. Next Scheduled Meeting

Due to the Doggie Dunk being scheduled on our normal meeting date, we need to reschedule to the 22nd or 29th. Chris will be sending out an email to get everyone's preference.

Amy Vlasic made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Matt Block seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Claxton, Director
Parks and Recreation Department