

City of Wyoming Parks & Recreation Commission

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF September 9, 2015

Present: Robert Cook, Ken Hornecker, Oogie LaMar, Dave Skinner, Aaron Velthouse, Doug Wustman, Rich Pastoor (City Council Liaison)

Absent: Doug Broek, Megan Harley, Ed McGregor,

Guest: Mayor Jack Poll

Staff Present: Rebecca Rynbrandt, Director of Community Services
Nicole Batcke, Secretary

- A. Call to order of the Parks and Recreation Commission** – Commission Chair, Doug Wustman called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Doug Wustman then introduced and welcomed Nikki Batcke and each commissioner introduced themselves, noting if they served in an at-large capacity or represented a specific school district.
- B. Approval of Agenda** – Prior to approval, an amendment was submitted to the agenda related to Item H, Pinery Park Improvements. A motion was made by Ken Hornecker to approve the amended agenda and seconded by Aaron Velthouse. Motion carried.
- C. Approval of the Parks and Recreation from May 13, 2015 Meeting** – Ken Hornecker made motion to approve the minutes from the May 13, 2015 meeting and was seconded by Oogie LaMar. Motion carried.
- D. Public Comment on Agenda Item (limit to 3 minutes)** – None
- E. Battjes Park**
- **Reith Riley Interest in City Owned Parcel** – Rynbrandt presented the Reith Riley Arial photo and showed the commissioners which parcel the corporation would like to acquire. Rynbrandt presented the (1994) original schematic design for the park along with the (1998) Phase One plans and the current Master Plan drawing. In all of these plans, the parcel in question was drawn as part of Battjes Park. However, Rynbrandt discovered that the parcel was not encumbered as part of the park through a grant application. Upon further investigation, it was found that this parcel is not legally park property.

Rynbrandt said her main goal was to educate the commission about the findings regarding the parcel in question, especially that the fact that it isn't technically park property. Upon some discussion with the City Manager, it was decided that the city has no desire to petition this parcel as dedicated park property. Rynbrandt said that if the parcel was dedicated park property, in order for the sale to take place, it would have to be put to a vote of the citizens.

David Skinner presented a question of what Reith Riley wanted to do with the property, if it was sold to them. Rynbrandt said that the company was looking to expand their business for open air storage. Concerns were brought up regarding the run-off from the trucks, and remnants of the asphalt to not only impact the surrounding environment, but how would it

impact the retention basin. The size of the parcel was brought into question and Rynbrandt said she wasn't sure of the exact size.

Doug Wustman inquired about the other businesses located within the area and upon discussion it was found that West MI Turkey, Valley City Truck Parts, and Michigan Foam were some of the businesses located there.

Ken Hornecker also questioned the fact that originally in the designs that particular area was a "potential" plan to use the retention basin to provide fishing for the area. Ken Hornecker also mentioned that water testing would need to be done in that area.

Doug Wustman brought up the information regarding Yellow Truck, which is located in the area as well, is part of USF Holland. He pointed out that USF Holland has just built a new facility on 100th Street and has relocated their business there; and being they own Yellow Truck, how long before they move out of the area? Doug Wustman said that the green space is so vital and important to the community that we may want to hold onto it and not sell.

Ken Hornecker suggested that maybe a swap could take place with Reith Riley and in exchange for the parcel they could purchase a different green space parcel, within Wyoming maybe somewhere adjacent to another park area.

Oogie LaMar pointed out to the commission, visually, that maybe we could just adjust the property line as an exchange, as a buffer.

David Skinner said that if we were to adjust the property lines, testing for contaminants would have to be done prior to it happening so that we would know if there had been any environmental damage to that area.

Rynbrandt said that she was unaware if any environmental testing, such as E1 testing, has been completed by the City Engineering Department or Reith Riley. In regards to the possible "exchange" where Reith Riley would purchase another parcel in Wyoming, Rynbrandt said the only area that has been identified as a possible acquisition is adjacent to Ideal Park.

Other concerns by Ken Hornecker were where the sale funds would go if parcel was sold. Rynbrandt said that the money would go back to the original fund that the money came from to acquire the property, which would not be designated to the Parks & Recreation Fund.

- **Clarification of Dedicated Park area** – Doug Wustman asked Rynbrandt to discuss this area and she said that it was actually already discussed with the Reith Riley information and that she just wanted to educate the commission that the parcel in question was not legally park property.

- F. **Stage Rental Policy Change Recommendation** – Rynbrandt has been working with all staff and is finding that the demands have been increased in all areas, however no additional staff is planned to be added. Rynbrandt asked staff to suggest different ways to possibly alleviate some of the demands, especially when it comes to looking at overtime. One recommendation came from the maintenance crew regarding the stage and limited its service area.

Rynbrandt did informed the commission that the stage is 18 years old and currently have differential pricing allowing the stage to be delivered within Wyoming, within 20 miles of Wyoming and from 21-50

miles outside of Wyoming. Staff is suggesting that we reduce the delivery area to, at the most, within 20 miles of Wyoming. This would reduce wear and tear upon the stage, particularly traveling on highways, and reduce staffing and equipment costs related to extended stage delivery and set up, as well as redirect staff hours to local needs.

Oogie LaMar questioned the frequency of the 21-50 miles deliveries and Rynbrandt mentioned that it happens regularly throughout the spring to fall seasons. We deliver to Muskegon, Belding, Belmont, and Holland to name some of the cities.

Ken Hornecker said why not rent it out at a higher rate; it is either collecting dust or making money.

Doug Wustman said he agrees with Ken Hornecker, especially the fact that he is able to see the use within the City of Wyoming and throughout the community. However, Doug Wustman suggested that maybe we should reevaluate the fees and possibly look at upgrading those items that may need replacement on the stage.

Rynbrandt said she appreciates wanting to keep the delivery area as it is, and will look into changing the fees and charges.

G. Ideal Park Master Plan Redevelopment Update

- **MDNR 5-Yr. Community Recreation Plan Amendment-Status of State of MI Review-** Rynbrandt updated the commission regarding the amended version of the 5 year Master Plan that was submitted to the State of Michigan, which included the Ideal Park redevelopment Plan. She said that while the amended version has been submitted to the state, they replied that they were “too busy” to look at it. The State of Michigan said that they would not be able to review or approve it until the end of September. Rynbrandt said that she hasn’t heard from them yet, so she will be checking back with them towards the end of September to see if they have had a chance to review it.
- **GWCRRA Ideal Park Restoration Fund** - A fund has been designated for people who would like to donate monetarily to the restoration of Ideal Park. Doug Wustman inquired whether we have had any donations and Rynbrandt said that we have had 2, one was from CSX Railroad for \$2500.00 and the other was from a private citizen.

H. Capital Projects Update

- **Tennis & Basketball Court Maintenance & Repair** - Rynbrandt said that on Tuesday night, Council awarded the bid for the crack repair and resurfacing of tennis & basketball courts at multiple parks. The total cost of the project that was awarded was approximately \$190,000. All of the parks scheduled for this repair and resurfacing should be complete by this fall, so the courts are available in the spring. The designated parks are Lamar, Lemery, Pinery, Kelloggsville and Jackson Park.
- **Frog Hollow Resurfacing** – The resurfacing of the rubber safety surface at Frog Hollow began this week and should be completed within two weeks. Once this is completed, the park is scheduled to open for the remainder of the season to the public.

- **Pinery Park Improvements** - At the city council meeting on Monday, city council also approved the amount approaching \$70,000 which was left from a CDBG grant for some additional improvements within Veterans Park and Pinery Park. These dollars were approved to purchase the 3rd arch for Veterans Park as well as to purchase new exercise equipment that is located in various spots on the Pinery Park trail.

I. Pinery Park Little League (Mayor Jack Poll) – Doug Wustman welcomed Mayor Jack Poll. Mayor Poll started by briefly stating that he was there to pass along what has been happening in the discussions and paperwork deadlines with the Pinery Park Little League Organization.

Not much has changed and nothing on the list of items that needed to be completed has been accomplished. On Monday, 9/14/15, City Council has a work session and this is on the agenda. The council will decide on whether PPLL would be done and not be on the fields next year. Rynbrandt, along with her team have begun to delve into the possibility of the city developing a new league there next year. Mayor Poll said with the non-profit status of PPLL being expired, any donations that have been given to them are in violation of tax procedures, because, PPLL hasn't filed their taxes since 2009, when their accountant, Bill Phillips passed. Mayor Poll said that the city has always required certain paperwork and forms from Pinery Park Little League and it seems that every time the deadline approaches and then passes, PPLL always have some excuse, reason or setback as to why they can't provide the required information. August 31, 2015 was the deadline for turning in the information that was required and yet again, there were nothing but excuses.

In July, Mayor Poll said emails between himself and John Edgerle, became a little hostile. Pinery Park Little League, John Edgerle, said they were trying to get the taxes in order prior to re-applying for 501C3 status. John Edgerle, along with anyone else from the PPLL, has been invited to the work session for council on Monday, Sep. 14, where there will be a deeper discussion of what is going to happen. Mayor Poll said that Pinery Park Little League will not operate the same as it has in the past. Financials will not be left up to the League, the city has a registration process and the funds could be run through that process so that no money would be touched by the PPLL.

Rich Pastoor mentioned that the current problems aren't just the result of the current board, but compiled from previous years too. Mayor Poll said it really started deteriorating and coming apart, when Bill Phillips died.

Mayor Poll said the suggestion was made to Pinery Park Little League that the city would be willing to set-up the teams, arrange the practices, any related set-up, and take the registrations at no cost to the organization in order to make it easier for Pinery Park Little League to provide the service. However, Mayor Poll said that John Edgerle wants nothing to do with the city being involved with any part of their league. Mayor Poll stumbled across information that Pinery Park Little League uses the same accounting firm that the city does for audits. Mayor Poll asked John Edgerle if they would have any problems with the city checking with that accounting firm about Pinery Park Little League and any information that they could provide and John Edgerle said he had no problem with Mayor Poll doing that.

The work session for council on 9/14/15 is not to "slam" or "badmouth" the Pinery Park Little League Organization, said Mayor Poll, but to provide Pinery Park Little League and the council with a clearer process of how things will go, once the work session is over. Mayor

Poll stated that there has to be some sort clean-cut way to account for financials and organization participation.

Doug Wustman said that he feels there is a mixed feeling about PPLL and on one hand the city is stating that we will allow them to use our fields and operate; but then the city is also stating that PPLL will not operate the same next year. Doug Wustman also said he happened to be privy to a conversation with some of the parents that have children participating in PPLL, who weren't aware of his commission position with the city. Doug Wustman said that from his perception of what they were discussing, PPLL shouldn't be functioning at all and he feels the city needs to clean house by removing anyone that is currently involved with any portion of the PPLL. He says, the deadline passed and we should be diligent and be done.

While Mayor Poll said that he sees Doug Wustman's point, the city still has to be politically correct and follow specific procedures to get where the city needs to be.

Rich Pastoor brought up the fact that it sounds very similar to the former SKRA, South Kent Recreation Association, and the issues that went along with the downfall of that organization. Rynbrandt did state that though there are some similarities, there are also several differences between the two organizations.

Oogie LaMar said that while he appreciates the "non-Smear" campaign by council, this has been a point of discussion for the last 2 years. Oogie LaMar thanked Mayor Poll for taking the lead on investigating and being the liaison, but he wanted to know how to turn this mess into a celebration? Oogie LaMar brought up the name, Pinery Park Little League and the ownership, and was wondering if we have identified some outside organizations that could assist us with the best practices for operating a league.

Mayor Poll said that from what he has heard from other leagues, what is happening with PPLL isn't uncommon. He said that we are in communication with other leagues. Mayor Poll said that several different ideas can be investigated and presented. He also reiterated that any of the Parks & Recreation Commission members were more than welcome to attend the work session and voice their opinion. Mayor Poll also said that he knows that the Pinery Park Little League board elections were posted on city Facebook pages to encourage participation.

Ken Hornecker commented that since the time he started serving on the commission, PPLL has been an issue. It seems like the city has given them every opportunity and we still get excuses; when does it end? Mayor Poll said that the absolute deadline will be October 1, 2015. Ken Hornecker asked how much time the city will need to become able to operate a little league. Mayor Poll said that the city would be able to be licensed by next year, if all processes went as planned.

Becky Rynbrandt shared her discussions with Little League International related to the process to transfer the charter, being a there is already a little league established.

Ken Hornecker wanted to know why they will be given to October 1; they have had since May, excluding all of the prior deadlines, to comply. Council can't make any promises on deadlines, because we don't know what other items will need to be done, Mayor Poll stated.

Doug Wustman asked why we couldn't operate as an independent league until all of the processes that need to be done are completed.

Couldn't we have a back-up plan like having an outside organization get involved, said Oogie LaMar. He also said mentioned we should look at the boundaries for the league and the possibility of adjusting them. Our goal is to maintain baseball/softball for children within Wyoming and have a smooth transition for the parents and children that are involved.

There are certain processes of litigation that the city has to go through, said Rynbrandt, so we need to make sure that all of the items are completed and investigated.

Mayor Poll said that the city would even utilize the general fund to make sure that quality services are provided for baseball/softball for children. Mayor Poll thanked the commission for all of their work and concerns on this issue.

Rynbrandt said that the city will take into consideration Pinery Park Little League's name and what other possibilities there could be for naming the league. Her staff team has also looked at Zeeland and Holland along with including the East side of the state, for ideas on leagues and processes of little leagues.

Rich Pastoor commented again that what concerns him is that there is too much similarity to SKRA and he wants to see softball/baseball for children in Wyoming next year.

Doug Wustman encouraged Rich Pastoor to work with the council to expedite the process with council. He stated that if PPLL doesn't comply, why keep allowing them to provide excuses; it's obvious they don't care and will not comply, just save the little league.

Rynbrandt said that the earliest that council could vote on any item decided would be on Sept. 25th.

Ken Hornecker asked if the Parks & Recreation commission could get the notes from the city council work session on 9/14/15 sent to them for review. Rynbrandt said she would make sure that the notes were provided to the commission.

Doug Wustman said that we appreciate all of the work the city and council have done, and while we can learn from the past; we need to move forward to the future.

J. Commissioner Concerns and Suggestions –

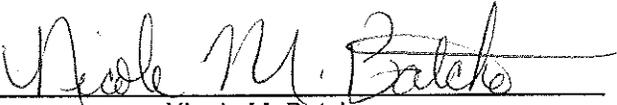
- **FY 2017 Budget Preparation** – Rynbrandt wanted to remind the commissioners that preparation for 2017 budget will be underway soon. So if there are any suggestions they might have, send them to her via email. Ken Hornecker suggested putting something in the budget for the softball/baseball for next year.
- **Recruitment of New Members** –Remember that there are 2 available seats and if any members knew of anyone, family or friend, that would be interested please encourage them to join the commission.

K. Public Comment in General (Limit to 3 minutes) – None

- L. **Motion to Adjourn the Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting** – Ken Hornecker made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Oogie LaMar seconded. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Next meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission: October 14, 2015

Recorded by



Nicole M. Batcke
Recording Secretary