

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR THE
MEETING OF

April 13, 2011

Present: Jim Austin, Rhonda Buck, Bob Cook, Eric Hartfield, Jerry Hopkins, Dan Lavengood, Rod Van Oeveren, Doug Wustman

Absent: Megan Harley, Dave Skinner

Staff Present: Nancy Parent, Rebecca Rynbrandt

City Council Liaison Rich Pastoor

Call to order of the Parks and Recreation Commission – Chairman Lavengood called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Approval of Agenda – Motion was made by Rod Van Oeveren, seconded by Rhonda Buck to approve the agenda. Carried.

Approval of the Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes of the February 9, 2011 Meeting - Motion was made by Rod Van Oeveren, seconded by Doug Wustman to approve the minutes of the February 9, 2011 meeting. Carried.

Public Comment on Agenda Item (limit to 3 minutes) – None.

Staff Training – Suicide by Gas Concerns – Information on this was included in your March packet. Becky wanted the Commission to be aware of this unfortunate trend. People are killing themselves using chemicals in their cars to create a situation similar to the gas chambers of WWII. Often times these suicides are in parks. We have sent staff to training so they can respond if the situation arises. The trend has hit in Michigan.

DNR Trust Fund Grant 2011 – Acquisition for Ideal Park – Part of trust fund process is to get two appraisals which, for this property came in at \$60,000 and \$65,000. Based on the appraisals we offered \$62,500. When the offer was presented the owner did not want to sell it for this amount. They wanted a minimum of \$80,000, well above appraised value. We are no longer pursuing this acquisition because the property owner has withdrawn.

Ferrand Park Master Planning – The need for a master plan to re-develop Ferrand Park is included in the 5-year plan. In light of budget constraints, we have selected this park because it is less than \$3500 for this process. We are having it surveyed and getting a detailed counting of each tree on the property. Because of deed restrictions, we are not permitted to remove a tree from this property unless there is a need to do so limited to public risk (dead, or dying tree). A forester will come in and do an analysis of all the trees looking at species and the tree health. We are looking to have a public input meeting in July. We will have a concept for them to consider and find out what improvements they would like to see in this park. Becky will bring the recommended concept for Commission review at the September meeting. This will include the construction cost estimate.

Census Information – A handout was included in the packet noting the changing demographics of the community. The results were not a surprise to the Parks & Recreation Department. We have added staff that are bilingual and we have had Latino events at our parks.

Rich Pastoor received a call from a person concerned about the geese in Lamar Park. We are monitoring the geese problem and we do have a harassment program. Everyone needs to remind individuals not to feed them. There is a federal Migratory Bird Act that specifies requirements on how we can handle the geese.

Facilities Merger (incl. staff retirement announcement) – Parks & Recreation is working on a merger with the Facilities Department. Jeff Anderson, the current Facilities Manager, was promoted to a Park Maintenance Supervisor and has been meeting with Dave Coates on a daily basis. In 2012 the departments will still function as separate teams with one supervisor. By 2013 we will have full integration. We will still receive income from the general fund for Facilities. Dave Coates has announced his retirement. His last day is Monday June 27. Becky will invite Jeff to the May meeting.

FY 2012 Budget Update – Budget was discussed at the January and February meetings. Basic operations must be covered by the operating funds. Becky reviewed the budget eliminations and financial highlights. In response to citizen evaluations and the current market, we have not raised fees and are not recommending any increases at this time. Eric Hartfield suggested raising the fees for the Lamar shelter by the splashpad because Millennium Park charges \$200 to rent their shelter and then charge to get into the splash pad. Becky will make a note to look at these fees again. Fee proposals will be made in the fall to all for a December 1 implementation for reservations accruing after January 1.

Capital Projects Update

Oriole Park Grand Re-Opening – The ceremony will be at 1:30 p.m. on May 26. Becky would like any Commissioners that can attend to be there by 1:00 p.m. The ceremony will only be 15-20 minutes roughly as we are planning on having over 300 children there. As both the Chairman and Vice Chair can't attend, Rod Van Oeveren will attend and speak for the Commission.

WSC Phase II Renovation – Ground has been broken for this project. We are running a week behind. Our goal is still to do the grand opening the end of June or right after the July 4 holiday. We are hosting a Kent County Senior Millage resource fair this summer (July) which will bring many people through the center.

Housekeeping/Informational Items – Becky met with Ken Krombeen from the City of Grandville as they are reaching out to us because of what we have done in our parks with ADA accessibility.

Commissioner Concerns and Suggestions – Question was raised as to what happened to the wheelchair swing in Lamar Park. The wheelchair swing was constantly broken and we were required to remove it for safety reasons. The Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority has issued an advisory against wheelchair swings. We replaced it with an adult hammock swing.

Bob Cook informed that people are dumping garbage near the area at Lee and Roys where Grandville put a small park. That is a Public Works issue and Becky will inform them.

Rod Van Oeveren met with Dave Coates regarding motion sensors in the park bathrooms. Rod agreed with him on making the lighting universal throughout the park system.

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

Motion to Adjourn the Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting – Motion to adjourn was made by Rod Van Oeveren, seconded by Jerry Hopkins. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Recorded by _____
Nancy Parent
Recording Secretary