

Park Advisory Commission

Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2020

Meeting by Zoom Conference

Members Present: Ken Kwantes, Susan Wrasmann, Sue Arnold, Larry Thomas, Mike Fleischhauer

Absent: Andrew Meggitt

Others Present: Floyd Jernigan

1. Call to Order

Ken Kwantes called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

Sue Arnold made a motion to approve the September 23, 2020, minutes. Susan Wrasmann seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Financials

Mr. Jernigan reminded that insurance payments and when those are paid vary by month and by year. Rarely does this show in the same month each year.

Covid still has an impact on expenses, although that will diminish during the colder months as bathrooms have been closed and winterized. Extra supplies and more frequent cleanings continue though at Eugene Northern. Vandalism from homeless has impacted pavilion lighting and reduced rentals. Relative to Covid, Mr. Jernigan noted that the Council discussed options at its most recent meeting and set a special meeting for Monday, Nov. 23, for a public hearing and possible action. Burials and the attendant payments in the cemetery have begun to increase again after a lull earlier in the year. Cemetery lot sales have also seen an increase in the last month, with 10 lots sold at a cost of \$12,000.

Mr. Fleischhauer said he expected it to be cyclical. Mr. Jernigan agreed, noting that is often family preference as to burial location.

Mr. Kwantes asked about the likelihood of reimbursement of Covid expenses from the county. Mr. Jernigan said the city is still waiting on that. All city departments, including parks, provided detailed accounting of both supplies and staff time increases related to Covid. Mr. Kwantes wanted to know which fiscal year would be impacted by the reimbursement. Mr. Jernigan said he wasn't sure but would ask at the next directors' meeting.

4. Old & New Business

Mr. Jernigan provided an update on City Council action regarding the city's efforts relating to its tree canopy on municipal land. Council accepted the TRIM grant from the Missouri Department of Conservation and also approved awarding Davey Resource Group the bid for doing a tree inventory. Earlier today, Mr. Jernigan, Parks Superintendent Stan Busch, and City Engineer Darin Pryor met with two members of the Davey Resource Group who will be doing the inventory and went over priority

areas to be included. The Davey reps said they expected the inventory to take several weeks around the holiday period, likely finishing the week after Thanksgiving. The inventory will provide data on individual tree health touching on areas of species, size, root support, tree maintenance, and any issues relating to longevity.

Mr. Jernigan said this first inventory of 3,000 trees would target the cemetery, the major parks in terms of size and usage, and other parks as ranked relating to age and numbers of trees near pavilions, ballfields, playgrounds and other structures. Trees in the downtown corridor will also be included. If possible, trees along the city's trails would be added.

He cited the possibility of a second survey to finish the process. If so, this would take place likely the following year if approvals are granted.

Other parts of the inventory process include a management plan for the trees inventoried and access to a software system that would make data such as tree species by location available to the public.

Mike Fleischhauer said he thought trees along the trail would require a different approach, noting that it would be easy to be "paying for a lot of stems that wouldn't have a lot of useful reference."

Mr. Jernigan then provided an update on the tours of the newly restored Frisco engine, oil tender and passenger car located in Schuman Park. Clearance of background checks is pending. Tentative plans call for a scheduled day and time. Mr. Kwantes wanted to know about impact of Covid and possible Council action as it related to possible train tours.

Mr. Jernigan noted it could be done via staggered scheduled times by family units. Mr. Kwantes suggested a written plan with language that would address possible concerns. Mr. Jernigan said such a plan would be modeled after approved parks and city Covid protocols already in use. Mr. Thomas asked about sanitizing between groups. Mr. Jernigan said that could be done on high touch surfaces by the volunteers and would be addressed in the plan. Mr. Kwantes pointed out that most of the tour would be outside. He added that demand could easily outpace availability. Mr. Jernigan agreed there is a lot of interest in train tours.

Touching from the narrative, he noted the enthusiasm of the S&T student groups for cleaning the pre 1900s headstones and the demonstration done by the Franklin County Cemetery Preservation Society in resetting the older monuments that had fallen. One such stone was relocated from the Phelps County Historical Society to the lot's owner family plot – Judge Henry Boyer.

The Farmers Market is continuing on Saturdays with a limited number of vendors since the weather has been conducive. The Market has a new manager and will be involved in a new operating agreement for 2021.

The remaining backstop fence replacements at two fields in Ber Juan were completed.

The last of the culvert replacements in the cemetery and the temporary patching by the street department of those areas were also finished.

Mr. Jernigan also hopes to be able to repair the concrete flooring of the parks pavilions in the future, pending weather.

5. Comments from board members

Mr. Kwantes noted the pickleball players had expressed concern about cracks that have appeared in the court. Those were going to be addressed earlier said Mr. Jernigan but weather has not been consistently hot enough to make the patches at both the pickleball courts and the tennis courts at Ber Juan. The materials are already on hand.

Mr. Jernigan noted that the flag football league had drawn seven teams and enthusiasm was high among the participants.

Mr. Kwantes asked about the next meeting, with Mr. Jernigan noting the first meeting of 2021 is Jan. 27, likely by Zoom. March may take the same approach, although if weather is better, having the meeting outdoors at a park could be a possibility.

Mr. Jernigan touched on two requests for proposals – one for a management company at Splash Zone and the other for an all-inclusive playground at Ber Juan.

Mr. Fleischhauer asked if the picture sent to the board was the possible location for the playground, which it is and was an area that the director, the superintendent and the city engineer had chosen. City crew will do a portion of the project by providing the sub surface and ground finish.

Mr. Fleischhauer asked if a fence enclosing the playground was part of the plan, which it will be, but won't be a part of what the playground contractors will be expected to provide. That will be a separate process.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.