

Park Advisory Commission

Meeting Minutes

September 22, 2021

Zoom/City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Sue Arnold and Mike Fleishhauer

Members Present by Zoom: Ken Kwantes, Susan Wrasmann, and Andrew Meggitt

Absent: Larry Thomas

Others Present: Floyd Jernigan, Stan Busch, Felecia Dixon, and Julie Rodgers

1. Call to Order

- Mr. Kwantes called the meeting to order at 5:11 p.m.

2. Presentations

- Felecia Dixon and Line Dancing at Eugene Northern
Ms. Dixon specializes in tax debt resolution. She is a member of the Veterans Park Board. Ms. Dixon would like to teach line dancing classes at Eugene Northern Community Hall. She has an interest in bringing an activity to the community. She will teach adults only, allowing no one under the age of 14. She reasoned that there are dance studios in town who teach kids. She wanted to give adults something to do. She offered the idea of a two-hour class, 6-8 p.m., on Wednesday evenings. The first hour would be for all participants. The second hour would be dedicated to a performance group. It would be for people who are more serious about dancing and who would be interested in performing in public, such as for senior citizen group homes or centers or for other service type gatherings. She would like to eventually teach specialized group classes which would train participants for weddings, etc.
Mr. Kwantes opened the floor for discussion or if there were any questions. Sue Arnold made a motion to accept the proposal by Felecia Dixon. Andrew Meggitt seconded the motion to accept proposal for dance classes. Motion passed.

3. Approval of Minutes

- Sue Arnold made a motion to approve the July 28, 2021, minutes. Andrew Meggitt seconded approval and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

4. Review of financials

- Finance reports are included in board member packets. Mr. Jernigan noted that Park Expenses in August this year appeared better by \$11,000 vs last year, but insurance did not hit yet.

5. Narrative

- SplashZone did better this year. Mr. Jernigan said people were looking for safe things to do. Rentals were up, as were daily and night swim attendance numbers. One night swim had 87 people attend. We weren't dealing with COVID this year as badly as last year. Revenue was up, but expenses were up, too. We had a good group of guards. We had more guards this year and we paid them more this year as many had been with us in previous years. We had weekly in-services for the guards.
Canine Plunge did better this year with around 55 dogs, up about 10 dogs from last year. We finished the last of the winterization today.
We look forward to hiring a full-time person to run SplashZone next summer. We hope to be able to do more programming.
- Ribbon cutting for BerJuan All Inclusive Playground is Thursday, Oct. 7, at 4 p.m.
- There was another S&T group for headstone cleaning in the cemetery last weekend. We did 14-15 headstones.
- City Council didn't agree with recommendation of allowing a walking trail in the cemetery, voting it down 9-3 at the Sept. 7 meeting. Several members thought it was disrespectful and that dogs and bicycles would be a problem in the cemetery. It was pointed out that walkers, bicycles, and dogs, as well as other wildlife, from deer to turkeys, are already in the cemetery. Mr. Jernigan said it actually has a greater positive impact for the right kind of traffic to be in the cemetery and that this curtails unwanted activity. This may be re-addressed with council at some point in the future.
- A group of S&T biology students wants to put up a bat house. Mr. Jernigan passed the MDC recommendations on to them, which included where and how high.
- Another S&T group has inquired into removing an invasive species of Japanese Honeysuckle. We are waiting to hear back regarding the date and location.
- RMU contacted Mr. Jernigan regarding removal of a tree near a pole.
- Andrew's wife, Kirsten McIntyre, is a Master Gardener. That group held educational classes on using native plants to enhance and attract Monarch butterflies and bees. The Master Gardeners created additional pollinator beds in Ber Juan Park. The chamber helped coordinate a ribbon cutting for the new, repurposed area.
- Mike Fleishhauer asked about the clearing of the brush above Ber Juan Lake. Stan Busch said homeless people were congregating there, so we cleared out brush to discourage that.
- Budget includes \$45,000 of the city's ARPA funding, which was to offset loss of revenue. This is derived from revenue numbers as well as expense numbers provided by staff for cleaning, materials, and extra personnel hours, etc.
- A filter media replacement at SplashZone is due and is also included in next year's budget. Sand will be replaced with glass beads.
- Equipment replacements in the budget include a mower. A backhoe is included in the 10-year budget replacement plan.
- An ADA sidewalk at Larry Wilson Field is once again in the proposed budget. It was in the budget for the prior year, but it was taken out due to changes prompted by COVID.
- Park staff has been opening and closing all bathrooms daily, due to constant issues with homeless vandalism and drug paraphernalia at night. There were homeless people sleeping in

the parks, creating more trash to collect daily. Sleeping in the parks also goes against Rolla City Ordinance.

- The Parks Department was approached by Rodney Bourne, RMU Director, to discuss the possibility of placing a universal charging station for electric cars in Buehler Park. DNR identified Rolla as one of four cities needed in the state to be able to provide electric vehicles with a charging station. Mr. Bourne said they looked throughout Rolla for possible locations, and ruled out places for various reasons. The group discussed location of a station in the park. There was concern regarding a change in slope to make it ADA compliant and for tree pruning or removal.

Mr. Fleishhauer asked if it would cause a lot more traffic to come into the park. It could be a negative to bring strangers into the area and it might mean more upkeep to the parking lot.

Mr. Jernigan asked who would be liable for damages to the stations. He contacted Mr. Bourne and discovered that RMU would be responsible for it, since they would have the insurance coverage for the station.

Mr. Kwantes said that with more usage in the park, it would be more sets of eyes for the area, and people there for positive purposes, which could prove to be a favorable impact.

Andrew Meggitt made a motion to support approval for development of these charging stations in the western portion of Buehler Park. Susan Wrasmann seconded the motion. All were in favor, with none opposed.

(RMU later decided to utilize a location on Bryant Drive for the potential charging station.)

- Mr. Jernigan said the Parks Department is a centralized point for people running events in Rolla, not just for events happening in the parks. All activities on city property require a special use permit, which is approved through Parks. For example, the Chamber submitted a SUP, which was discussed thoroughly. Through concerns raised, there was an agreement that no alcohol be served and there will be no heavy vehicles on the chip and seal parking lots. When groups submit a permit application, it allows all parties to know what is going to occur and what is acceptable and then be able to come to an agreement. The second reading for approval of the Big Bam event was this past week and it was approved by City Council.

6. Review of tentative 2021-22 Parks & Recreation Budget

Mr. Jernigan noted that the proposed 2021-22 budget has been submitted but he has not met with Mr. Butz yet for our department's budget discussion. Mr. Jernigan said if there are any changes, he expected they would be slight. Mr. Jernigan will send an updated budget to the committee when it has received final approval.

7. Commission comments

Mr. Jernigan said the next meeting will be on Nov. 17, at 5 p.m.

8. Adjournment

- Mike Fleishhauer made a motion to adjourn. Sue Arnold seconded. The meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.