**Parks Advisory Commission**

**Meeting Minutes**

*January 23, 2020 • 5:30 p.m.*

*4 th Floor Conference Room – City Hall*

**Members Present:** Larry Thomas, Susan Wrasmann, Sue Arnold, Mike Fleishhauer & Andrew Meggitt.

**Others Present:** Floyd Jernigan, Parks Superintendent Stan Busch, Marie Crowley, Steve Hargis, and Victoria Rodgers.

1. Call to Order

* Andrew Meggitt called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

* A motion was made by Larry Thomas to approve the minutes of the October 23, 2019 meeting. Sue Arnold seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Financials

* Mr. Jernigan presented the financials covering year to date differences. Personnel expenses are up and down depending on department. Administration is up due to two part-time positions being added this year. Conversely, maintenance personnel is down mainly due to the decision at budget time to move Parks Foreman Simon Yoakum’s salary entirely to Parks, where it had been split between Parks and Maintenance (Eugene Northern). Personnel cost was also affected by not having a Recreation Supervisor for outdoor recreation as well as the change in minimum wage. Parks seasonal workers saw roughly a $2 pay increase and concession workers saw a little over a dollar increase to stay competitive. Four seasonal workers were also kept a little longer than usual this year in order to complete projects such as painting, renovations to Eugene Northern, helping with the GPR at the cemetery, bathroom replacements and renovations at the complex, and irrigation (once the weather starts cooperating). Additionally, some full time employees had to be pulled in as maintenance during the interim time back in the fall for softball, instead of a slightly above minimum wage worker as usual.

It was noted by the Parks Director that there was a swing in real-estate taxes for December 2018, compared to 2019. Tax collections and expense items like insurance is impacted by the ebb and flow of postings to the financials by the finance department. Meaning that it may be for one month in one year and a different one for another, an example being the dog park expenses, where most of the revenue was incurred in 2018 and most of the expenses took place in 2019.

One significant impact on this year’s revenue was the $1,100 drop in revenue from SplashZone. This was due to cooler and wetter weather that deterred visitors from coming, despite advertising and marketing the fact that the pool uses a boiler to help keep the water warm.

4. Narrative

* The director touched on several areas in the report. An open house with Public Works on the transportation development district will include Parks February 13th at the Centre from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. The Parks will be displaying what it spent, not just year to date but resolution to date for Prop P (where the money has gone, the projects, how much has been spent on each project, etc.). There will also be a board of the planned 2020 projects and a list of suggested projects by both staff and the public. Press releases about the open house will be sent out to the newspapers as well as posted on Facebook and other social media websites.

Mr. Jernigan also mentioned that the Parks Department finalized and submitted its Tree City USA application in December. At the time, the department did not have the RMU expenses. Even so, between the Public Works and Parks, the city was well above the required per capita spend required. RMU expenses will be included next year, which should help the city submit for the next tier.

The Parks Department itself plas on planting 30 new trees (some replacements and some new ones) along the trails and in the parks. Ten of those are a part of an agreement with the Chamber of Commerce. The chamber recognizes an ambassador who earns 1,000 points in the previous calendar year for various chamber hosted public events, with the chamber purchasing a memorial tree in that person’s honor.

The parks is also in the process of applying for the award of excellence. Kirkwood got it last year, so the director hopes there is a good chance Rolla could get it this year.

Weather delayed Coventry Playground as well as the pickle ball court finishes (with now both targeted for spring). The Director will be meeting with the homeschool gardening class to discuss a possible specialized bed at Schuman. S&T students are stocking grass carps as part of their senior seminar project, they don’t have a date yet but it will most likely be in the spring as well.

Mr. Fleishhauer had questions regarding the Tree City USA application, asking who would be enforcing the ordinance. The Community Forrester (which defaults to the director currently) would in this instance be enforcing the ordinance, which focuses on the city’s public tree canopy.

5. Old Business

* **Meeting Changes**

Chairman Kwantes suggested at the last commission meeting that the group meet six times a year, essentially every other month, instead of only quarterly, citing better communication and being more up to date on happenings in the Parks and Recreation Department. The meetings will still be taking place on the 4th Wednesday of the month at the same place (City Hall) and time (5:30 pm) they are currently. This excludes March, where the meeting was moved to the 18th due to schedule conflicts. A motion was made by Sue Arnold. Larry Thomas seconded and the motion carried unanimously. A schedule was sent out following the meeting. The board also discussed how they would proceed with meeting as the Tree Board, where the decision was made to make tree items part of the parks agenda.

6. New Business

* **Introducing Marie Crowley**

The Parks Director introduced Marie Crowley, who is going to be the Parks new Recreational Supervisor. Jernigan gave some background information about Crowley’s job at the Center prior to coming to the Parks before letting the council know what she will be working on once she fully shifts over. Crowley expressed her excitement about joining the Parks Department as well as the potential she sees with programing the parks doesn’t currently have.

* **SpashZone**

There are currently two SplashZone proposals. One is for sandblasting and painting the pool. There is two bids, one from Capri Pools out of Edwardsville, Illinois and the other from Westport Pools out of St. Louis. After meeting with both companies at SplashZone and conversing with them the Director as well as the aquatics specialist from the Centre recommended Capri. This was due to it being less expensive, a better warranty, and extra features such as the mushroom and the SCS being included. Sue Arnold motioned to accept. Andrew Meggitt seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

The second proposal for SplashZone was for the grates, which needs to be replaced before re-opening the pool due to federal law (the Virgina Graeme Baker Law). There were 3 bids, the recommendation from the Director and the aquatics specialist from the Centre being Westport. After the Director gave further information about why the grates needed change, what grates were for, and what would be required to do to replace them he opened to floor to the board for questions. Larry Thomas asked whether the grates had to be done before or after the sand blasting, as well as why the bids were not bundled together in one proposal. Jernigan’s response to the first being that grates would most likely need to be done before the sanding blasting. As for the bids, Jernigan said that they could have combined the project into one, but they had several reasons as to why they chose to separate them. One being that the aquatics team mentioned that they have worked with Westport on nearly all of their aquatics needs and trusted them to do the grates correctly. However, they also wanted to give Capri a chance with the sandblasting, since they haven’t done much work with them before. After further discussion, and calling the Centre Interim Director Marci Fairbanks (former Aquatics Manager) to elaborate more on their thinking, the board came to the general consensus to go with the recommendations of the Director and aquatics team. A motion was made by Susan Wrasmann, seconded by Sue Arnold and carried fairly unanimously.

* **Steve Hargis**

Steve Hargis opened up with getting the board up to date with what was going on with trees. This included topics such as continuations of current projects, tree-scape planning for street work coming up (most likely in the fall), and what landscaping trees (also called street trees) were going to be used for some of these projects. Hargis then shared his ideas for a Skills Park on approximately 4 acres of land the City had recently acquired near the Deible Loop of the Acorn Trail. The City has recently reached a bronze level for being a Bicycle Friendly Community. What the City needs to do to more on education in order to move up to the next level, which he hopes to do through the Skills Park. The Skills Park would include a toddler (or “striders”) section where kids can learn how to ride a bike, a pump track section (paved) where kids learn how to ride on rough terrain, and finally a mountain bike section (also paved) where people can practice mountain bike skills before going to more secluded areas. Rules requiring helmets and other safety procedures will also be posted (much like those posted in the skate park). Additionally, Hargis has be authorized, by the city, to be able to pay for some of the teachers at the local school to get certified as bike instructors. This will allow them to teach the children how to properly ride bikes at/through the school. The plan is to get a grant to help pay for the building of the park. The main thing he ask from the Parks Board is their support with going forward with this project and setting aside that land with this purpose. A motion of support was made by Larry Thomas, seconded by Sue Arnold and carried unanimously.

7. Commission comments

No additional comments or questions were made. Motion to adjourn was made by Susan Wrasmann, seconded by Larry Thomas, and carried unanimously.

8. Adjournment

* The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Victoria Rodgers and Director Floyd Jernigan prepared the minutes.