

RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES

November 17, 2021

(PENDING BOARD APPROVAL)

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jeff Battles, David Miles, Irene Pate, Ryan Stanford, Brantley Pittman

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Lonnie Boyd, Carl Brown, Sherisse Malone, Jay Wilkoff, Rodney Lawrence

VACANT POSITIONS:

District 3

CITY STAFF PRESENT:

Holli Browder, Becky Glisson, Tommy Groce, Carson Revell, Matt Lensch and Ryan McCann

A meeting of the Recreation Advisory Board was held on Wednesday, November 17th, 2021 with the meeting being called to order by Irene Pate at 12:08pm.

ROLL CALL WAS COMPLETED by Ryan McCann

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

Ms. Pate called for a vote to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded by Jeff Battles and a vote was taken to ratify the minutes from the meeting held September 29, 2021. The vote was unanimous, 5-0, voting in favor of accepting the minutes as distributed.

STAFF UPDATES:

Aquatics (Matt Lensch): Matt stated they are averaging 200-300 young swimmers from various schools and teams each evening at the Aquatics Center. They recently had a swim meet with 30 teams in it. Staffing shortages are still an issue

Athletics- Includes Cooper Creek (Carson Revell):

Registration for basketball is ongoing and they are hopeful for a good turnout this season.

Community Schools (Samantha Thies):

No updates were provided

Park Services- Includes Memorial Stadium and Golden Park (Tommy Groce):

GreenPower Racing events are coming soon. The junior division will be the first to meet. With the arrival of fall they have been able to start catching up on park clean-up, and landscaping. However, they are still very low on the personnel needed to do the clean-up. They are fielding a higher-than-normal number of citizen complaints about conditions.

Irene Pate asked if there was a program like the Adopt-a-highway program that we could use to help with the park clean-up. Holli responded that groups like the Chattahoochee River Conservancy might do a little to help. She has called on various civic groups over the years and the primary obstacle is the physical ability of group members to get out and help with clean-up. Brantley suggested looking into getting groups (like neighborhood HOA's) around certain parks to help since it is more of their local neighborhood community.

Recreation Services- Includes Britt David and Lake Oliver (Teresa Snellings):

No updates were provided

Director (Holli Browder):

Holli called on Becky Glisson to cover info from the staff meeting held earlier the same day. Becky said Community Schools had to cancel their fall camp because they only had 3 households sign up. They're hoping for an improvement in the next scheduled camp. The BOOST grant has been applied for. Columbus Parks & Recreation was asked to be one of the "monitor" agencies over the grant plan.

Teresa was absent from the RAB meeting because she was at the Help the Hooch meeting.

Irene asked if we were aware of the suspicious person that had been seen around Britt David Pottery Studio. Becky reported we were aware and that CPD was stepping up patrols as a result. Irene mentioned she felt the building was left too unsecured and it allowed for too free an access for unauthorized people.

Becky stated Teresa had been attending job fairs to try to recruit staff for her 100+ openings. Holli said staff shortages are an ongoing issue in Recreation Services and council is aware of the issue. Brantley asked if any of the current openings were for seasonal people that might not be needed in the fall/winter. Holli said they were year-round positions with the exception of sports officials that fluxed up and down based on the seasonal sports at the time.

Holli advised the board that Carver Park is still closed and there is no definite opening date. Security cameras are an ongoing concern city-wide and there is a bid process underway to address it on a city-wide level. P&R has a need for 300+ cameras by itself.

Holli thanked everyone for their support of the SPLOST. The \$48 million that P&R is slated to receive will be spread out over 10 years. Repairing/replacing pools is the top priority at the moment. Due to the deteriorated condition of many pools several structures will have to be demolished, but the buildings that can be saved and rehabilitated will remain. A more comprehensive plan will be worked on probably starting in January 2022.

Irene brought up the topic of holiday sales at the Britt David Gallery. She said she was approached by some members that wanted to advertise the sale on the Britt David Instagram account, but weren't sure what the rules were regarding this. **Holli requested Becky get with Teresa to find a definitive answer to the question.**

Brantley asked if there were any recruiting incentives offered to CCG employees to help recruit for the openings. Holli said she was aware that monetary offers could not be made, but there might be another way to incent employees for referrals. **She will speak to Human Resources and report back.**

Brantley asked if just new pools were the plan. Holli stated the current direction included a combination of splash pads and pools based on the community feed back around each pool area. Irene asked if the staffing requirements were the same for a splash pad and a typical pool. Holli responded that employees were needed at the splash pads to ensure chemicals were balanced correctly, but no actual lifeguards were needed if the deepest water was below a certain number of inches.

Brantley asked about the status of the restrooms located near the splash pad downtown and under the 14th Street pedestrian bridge. Holli indicated that although P&R owns the pedestrian bridge property, Uptown Columbus is the entity that opens and maintains those restrooms. Lack of attendants continues to be a reason the restrooms are closed so much. Holli went on to say CCG is looking at pre-fabricated restroom buildings that are designed to reduce the need for attendants and to prevent vandalism. Some features included stainless steel toilets, timed locking on the entry doors and automatic lighting with motion sensors to show when someone is inside, and exterior sinks so they can be seen by more people to prevent vandalism. Although they are typically more expensive they last longer and are less costly to repair over their life span.

Ryan Stanford mentioned the number of lights that are out on poles around Britt David Park. He said there are areas that several lights are out creating a dangerous dark spot for people walking in the evening. He wanted to know how to report them for repair. Tommy Groce responded that Georgia Power owns the poles the lights are on, but repairs are completed by a 3rd party. He suspects that the repairs are done when a certain number of lights are out in a given area to reduce costs. The best way to report the outages is to get the pole number of the burned out light and contact Park Services who can forward the report. In the event the pole number is missing Park Services ties a ribbon around the pole to mark them. The repairs are usually done during the day so the burned out units are harder to spot unless they're marked.

Call for New Business (Irene Pate):

Ryan McCann brought up the issue from the agenda concerning attendance of members. He reported that the District 1 member, Lonnie Boyd had not attended a single meeting since his appointment to the RAB. Ryan has emailed and called Mr. Boyd numerous times regarding the RAB meetings with no response to any of the contact. Ryan advised the board the policy regarding attendance stated members could be removed from the board after missing 3 consecutive meetings and that Mr. Boyd's attendance fell into these guidelines. Irene Pate made a motion to vote to vacate Mr. Boyd's seat on the RAB. Brantley Pittman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, 5-0 in favor of removing Mr. Boyd.

Ryan McCann advised the board that there were now two vacancies on the board from District 1 and District 3. **Ryan McCann will contact the clerk's office to advise them of the vacancies.**

Adjournment:

With no further discussion, David Miles made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Irene Pate and the meeting was adjourned at 12:49 pm.

Minutes recorded by Ryan McCann.

NOTE: Items written in **RED** require follow-up by the party's as indicated in the narrative.