

RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES

March 22, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Irene Pate, Ryan Stanford, Brantley Pittman, Rod Lawrence, David Miles

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Sherisse Malone, Carl Brown, Jeff Battles

VACANT POSITIONS:

District 1, 2, 3

CITY STAFF PRESENT:

Holli Browder, Tommy Groce, Josh Carter and Ryan McCann

A meeting of the Recreation Advisory Board was held on Wednesday, March 22, 2023 with the meeting being called to order by Irene Pate at 12:20 pm.

ROLL CALL WAS COMPLETED by Ryan McCann

Holli Browder- greeted all present, mentioned box lunches and gift bags. Thanked for service to Board.

STAFF UPDATES:

Aquatics (Josh Carter):

Stated swim lesson season is coming and expecting a good turn-out. Working to get Double Churches Pool ready. An Easter event is planned and ready. Treat bags will be passed out. Some swim meets have been held recently with 2 big ones to be held between now and July.

The designs for the 3 pools under reconstruction are basically finalized. Designs are just slightly different to encourage people to try them all out. Holli mentioned that all of them will have basketball hoops and slides. The slides will be slightly different from one another. Partially due to the topography of the pool areas.

Josh said there will be several awning-covered areas at all pools. Bench seating is to be installed to increase overall seating capacity. Shade coverings will also be over the shallow entry points

for little ones and parents to afford additional protection. A splash pad has been approved for Carver Park with a 2nd location to be named soon.

Holli said the bathrooms will all be unisex. Lazy Rivers will be a feature of all the pools along with lane swimming. Cabanas and pavilions will be rentable. The number of guards needed is still not final. All pools are scheduled to be open by April 2024.

Brantley asked if splash pads need staff in attendance the whole time they're open. Holli said it is intended to have remote monitoring of the splash pads with the ability to turn off the pumps and lights so as not to require full-time staffing. With year-to-year staffing reductions in the department, it's a challenge getting the personnel to cover the

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

Correction officer positions for clean-up crew management are still difficult to fill due to certificate requirements; a 5-week program. Employee quality has been a challenge since COVID-19. New equipment is coming in slowly, allowing for more efficient work. Irene recognized the monumental task of having kept up with as much as what we did with limited personnel and equipment.

Director (Holli Browder):

Holli is looking to board members for support from council regarding the budget finalizations and personnel pay rates. She mentioned the disparity between staff of similar job responsibilities in Public Works and Parks & Recreation. It would be much easier to get staff for our department if the pay rates were equalized.

Out of \$9+ million Parks & Recreation asked for in FY24, we were asked to prioritize \$3M-\$4M worth of projects. Irene expressed feeling that several council members may be out of touch with practices and policies of the department. She said some of them expressed understanding that Parks & Recreation charges a fee for usage of all facilities and services. She suggested the council go on a bus tour of the facilities to see first-hand the conditions of the facilities.

Tommy said the price increases of supplies are a real challenge as well. He said a filed marking paint order took 5 months to be delivered and the price increased from \$14k to almost \$28k for the same quantity. They really had to spread it thin to cover the area needed.

Holli mentioned that many of our sports are year-round now, but when planning was done and budgets established, the same sports were only a few months of the year. There is a distinct need for increased numbers of facilities and funding to care for them.

Many of the trees in South Commons have been removed due to age, debris and deadfall. Several shade structures are going up to replace the shade offered by the trees.

The Rigdon Park playground is in the planning stage. The department has applied for a state grant for 3 playgrounds and has made it through the first round. We are also planning for converting the lighting at Memorial Stadium to LED lighting.

David Miles noted that some water fountains had been removed and wondered what the plan for replacement was. Holli said bottle fillers are the best option due to COVID-19 concerns. It was also expressed that blowers are not preferred to using paper towels.

Tommy asked if the locations of the planned splashpads had been set yet and if they were going to be fenced off. Holli said they weren't sure yet on locations or fencing.

David Miles asked why converting the Woodruff Farm Soccer complex lights to LED had not been set yet. The last quote he saw was around \$300 per light pole. Georgia Power is using a 3rd party vendor to do lighting projects. Holli indicated that the city is using Musco as the vendor for lighting projects.

Adjournment:

With no further discussion, Irene Pate made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by David Miles and the meeting was adjourned at 1:10 pm.

Minutes recorded by Ryan McCann.

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