



Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 09, 2024 at 5:30 PM

The Tom Hardin Room – 100 Public Square, Mount Pleasant, TN

1. Call to Order

Mrs. McWilliams called the meeting to order.

2. Pledge of Allegiance / Invocation

Mrs. McWilliams led the pledge of allegiance. She asked Mr. Grooms to give the invocation.

3. Roll Call

Mr. Grooms performed the roll call to verify all were present except Ms. Anna Arnold.

4. Approval / Correction of Minutes from Prior Meetings

Mrs. McWilliams stated there was an error on the agenda. The minutes from the last meeting should be September 11, 2024, not September 10, 2024.

A. September 10th, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 11, 2024 meeting. Ms. Knowles seconded the motion and the vote in favor was unanimous.

5. Completion / Review of Unfinished Business from prior meeting

A. Coaches Background checks

Mr. Grooms stated there was a lot of discussion on the policy for background checks on coaches. With the help from the police department and Mrs. Henson, we have provided some information in the packets on this policy. He reviewed the background check policy with the recreation commission. He pointed out the criteria for the background check policy was approved by the commission in August of 2015. After speaking with Mrs. Kori Jones, City Attorney, if this board wants to amend the background policy, Mrs. Jones recommended we make our recommendation to the Mayor and Commissioners which should include this background study documents presented tonight.

Mr. Grooms stated Chief Hay is present at tonight's meetings because he does have some recommendations for this commission to consider and he wants to share his thoughts on this matter.

Chief Hay stated he did research the background check policy and the criteria which would prohibit someone from coaching on city property. He spoke to representatives from Columbia and Lawrenceburg on their current policy. He also collected some data from other cities as well. The City of Dover and Springfield, their background policy mirrors Mount Pleasant's. Columbia and Lawrenceburg's policy is much stricter than ours. Columbia and Lawrenceburg's policies is if you have anything in your background, besides a traffic citation, regardless of the time lapse, that person will not be able to coach.

Chief Hay recommended to the Recreation Commission that the current policy not be changed. He was deeply concerned reducing the number of years on a felony or misdemeanor charges would create some liability issues for the city.

Mrs. McWilliams verified that if the person has a charge of any type of a sexual nature, then that person would never be allowed to coach. Felony charges, other than a violet charge, it would be 10 years with no history. Misdemeanor charges, there is a 7-year clean history period.

Chief Hay said that if something does show up in a person's background, then we do contact the district attorney's office to see if the person is eligible to have that record expunged. Afterwards, we will notify the person or the league of our findings.

Mr. Grooms suggested the members of the commission to take some time to review all the documents that have been presented to them on this background policy before making any decision to recommend any changes.

Mrs. McWilliams stated she did not want the responsibility of something happening to a child upon her recommendation that this policy be changed. She said she would vote not to make any changes.

Ms. Knowles agreed with Mrs. McWilliams. She thinks the liability is too great.

Chief Hay and the Recreation Commission discussed the background policy in more detail.

B. Haunted Trail and Chili Cook off

Ms. Busby stated the plans for the upcoming Haunted Trail & Cook Off are coming right along. We have people signed up to help hand out candy. We have filled most of our spots. We do have a few more spots available if anyone wants to join us. We have 5 people signed up for the chili cookoff.

Ms. Busby stated she needs one more judge for the chili cookoff. She currently has 6 judges.

Ms. McWilliams asked what help she needed with this event.

Ms. Busby asked if anyone has some decoration we can use for the event.

Mr. Smith stated he would come Saturday to help decorate. He suggested we pick up the best costume contest that normally takes place at the annual BBQ festival. That was a popular part of the festival, and he hoped we could pick up that tradition at the annual haunted trail.

Mr. Smith stated this year Crews Connection will be hosting an event at their store the same time of Haunted Trail. They will be having a costume contest for the children at their event this year.

6. Special reports from other City Departments or Committees if applicable

Mr. Grooms stated the city is going to partner with the Mount Pleasant Rotary Club to replace the roof on the shelter at the park on First Avenue. He said he took the pictures the commission are seeing on the television screen of the shelter today. This is the largest shelter we currently have within the city.

Mr. Grooms stated we have received some quotes on replacing the roof. The cost will be under \$10,000.00 and the Rotary Club has committed to pay approximately 30-40%.

Mr. Smith stated he was glad to see this improvement getting done. He noted the improvement work was a part of their 5-year plan.

Ms. Busby stated this park and shelter are one of the most used facilities we have.

Mr. Grooms stated he hoped to have this work completed soon.

Mr. Smith agreed with Mr. Grooms, the cost to build this large of a shelter today would exceed \$50,000.00. Therefore, we definitely need to make sure we keep the current shelter properly maintained.

Mr. Grooms stated the next item of business was to follow up on the discussion on the dedication of the Willie Baker Shelter at Arrow Mines Park. He said Mrs. Henson did some extensive research into the history into when the local Civitan club first proposed to have this shelter built at Arrow Mines Park in memory of former Mayor/Vice Mayor Willie Baker. Her research included when the building permit was obtained and the completion of the shelter. Mrs. Henson did provide the following documents she found in her research. He reviewed those documents with the Recreation Commission.

Mr. Grooms stated one concern of his was he did not want to violate a resolution adopted by the Mayor and Commissioners on naming shelters being proposed to be donated to our parks. He verified that the naming of this shelter was recommended and approved by the governing body, at that time, prior to the new resolution of the process naming shelters was adopted.

Mr. Grooms stated due to these facts, the Recreation Commission can proceed with the dedication of the Willie B. Baker shelter on behalf of the city. We did speak to Mr. Vernon Brooks, who was a former member of the Mount Pleasant Civitan Club, about being available for the dedication. Sadly, the Mount Pleasant Civitan Club is no longer a club, but he agreed that someone from Civitan could be present at the dedication.

Mr. Grooms stated if the Recreation Commission wants to have the dedication, then get with Ms. Busby and designate a date.

Lastly, Mr. Grooms reported that the proposal to construct restrooms at the Arrow Mines Park has been passed along to Chet Rhodes for the development of construction plans. Once we get those engineering plans for restrooms, the city will obtain bids for the completion of the construction. The goal was to have the new restrooms at Arrow Mines Park completed prior to the new year.

Mr. Smith asked Mrs. Grandberry to work with us on a date for the dedication.

Mr. Grooms recommended the commission come up with several dates and get with Mr. Brooks on which date works best for him.

Mr. Smith stated he would reach out to Mr. Brooks to discuss some dates that work best for him and get back to this Commission.

Mr. Grooms reported the dedication of the new shelter at Gardenia Park is awaiting on the plaque that is being done.

Mrs. McWilliams recommended that we make sure to invite everyone that served in the former Civitan Club to the dedication. I am sure it will be something they all want to be involved in.

7. New Business

(Comments from citizens may or may not be included, dependent on the issues.)

There were no citizens who wished to speak at the meeting.

A. Purchasing a new screen.

Ms. Busby stated that a new movie screen for movie night was ordered and has already arrived. Although, she has not had the opportunity to use the screen, she wanted to let everyone know we have a new 20-foot movie screen.

B. Breakfast with Santa

Ms. Busby stated she contacted Mr. Stewart on playing Santa again this year for our Breakfast with Santa event. Mr. Stewart has agreed, so she will be getting with accounts payable to cut Mr. Stewart a check for \$150.00.

C. Pickle Ball

Ms. Busby stated she had a person to come to the community center to lay out the plans for a pickle board court in both the east and west halls. She said she wanted to see how much area the pickle ball court would take in both halls. She showed the members of the Recreation Commission a drawing of an official pickleball court showing the dimensions. We can get two courts in the west hall without having the boys & girls club to move their things every day. If we decide to add one to the east hall, we only have enough area for one.

Ms. Busby recommended using painters' tape to line out the pickleball court instead of paint.

Ms. Pepe confirmed that someone would have to be at the community center during the pickleball games.

Mr. Grooms stated he did not have a problem opening up the community center to the public so they can play pickleball, but he insisted that a city employee be present. He said however that was something we can work out internally. We can get a city employee there by flexing work hours.

Mr. Grooms asked Ms. Busby to make sure this item is on the agenda next month. In the meantime, we can come up with a concept to present at the next meeting.

D. The Boys and Girls trial period is ending.

The trial period for the Boys & Girls Club at the community center has expired. She pointed out everything seemed to go well with them being operated out of the community center. She estimated in the beginning there was approximately 4-8 children in attendance. As the time progressed there were more children participating.

Mr. Grooms stated he has a meeting next week with representatives from the Boys & Girls Club to discuss the expiration of the trial period. He wants to get their feedback but also delve more into the cost associated with having them operate out of our facility.

Mrs. Grandberry stated she still thinks not enough people know about the Boys & Girls Club being at the community center.

Mrs. McWilliams suggested someone reach out to Mr. Kevin Eady at the Mount Pleasant Middle School. Mr. Eady can get the information and the application out on the new parent portal, Parents Square.

8. General comments from citizens (May be limited in time and/or number of comments.)

Mrs. McWilliams verified there were no citizens present.

9. Board / Staff Comments / Adjournment

Ms. Knowles stated since the trial period has expired, she wanted to be sure the Boys and Girls Club will be able to use the community center until ample notice is given to the parents if an agreement cannot be met with between the Boys & Girls club and the city. She wanted to be sure the parents have plenty of time to make other arrangements for their child or children.

Mr. Grooms assured Ms. Knowles and the others that would not be a problem.

There being no further business, Mr. Smith made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Knowles seconded the motion and the vote in favor was unanimous.