

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR THE
MEETING OF

June 8, 2011

Present: Jim Austin, Rhonda Buck, Bob Cook, Megan Harley, Dan Lavengood, Rod Van Oeveren

Absent: Eric Hartfield, Jerry Hopkins, Dave Skinner, Doug Wustman

Staff Present: Nancy Parent, Rebecca Rynbrandt

City Council Liaison Rich Pastoor

Call to order of the Parks and Recreation Commission – Chairman Lavengood called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Approval of Agenda – Motion was made by Megan Harley, seconded by Rhonda Buck to approve the agenda. Carried.

Approval of the Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes of the May 11, 2011 Meeting - Motion was made by Megan Harley, seconded by Rhonda Buck to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2011 meeting. Carried.

Public Comment on Agenda Item (limit to 3 minutes) – None.

AAAWM Audit Results for Transportation and Stepping Stones Programs – Becky reported that our programs passed with an exceptional score and they gave us an additional \$1,000. This is the 4th year running that they gave us additional grant money.

Kent County Parks & Recreation Consolidation Study – Becky attended a brief meeting regarding this study a few months ago that was called on short notice. They didn't allow much input from the Parks and Recreation departments, with her presentation time having been limited to 10 minutes. No detailed questions were asked of her. The County then came out with a multi-paged report. We heard nothing further from them. Two weeks ago we learned that Kent County had received grant funding for the consolidation study of area parks and recreation departments. The City of Wyoming contacted Kent County Parks questioning this and we received back a letter and project outline from Kent County that was included in the packet. Becky reviewed the information. Becky and Barb VanDuren from the City of Wyoming, as well as other community (Walker, Kentwood, etc) representatives will be attending a meeting next week to learn more of Kent County's intent and to express some of our concerns. Rod Van Oeveren spoke out that he was against the consolidation because it would benefit other communities and not Wyoming. Our parks system is doing well and consolidation would bring our system down. We already consolidate with other entities. Megan Harley said it would be shortsighted of us if we entered this consolidation. Jim Austin stated this would not be to our benefit. We have some financial concerns but we are not in crisis. Can the county supersede the City? Becky wasn't sure of the answer to this. This is the type of discussions that need to be held on the committee. If anyone would like to serve on this committee, let Becky know. Doug Wustman (through previous phone conversations with Becky) and Rod Van Oeveren indicated a desire to serve if called. Becky will send out an e-mail as to whether the City is going to participate following direction by the Mayor and City Manager.

CDBG Federal Cuts, Finalized Recommendations from CDBG Committee – We received late notice from the federal government of cuts that totaled almost 17%. The CDBG

Commission, working with staff, made new recommendations to the City Council for budget amendments. Becky recommended removing the \$10,000 contribution for the Pinery Park improvements and the \$15,000 for Hillcroft security cameras. Pinery Park is covered in the Parks and Recreation budget. The CDBG Commission is recommending that \$10,000 be returned for the Hillcroft security cameras from their fund balance and invites the Parks and Recreation Commission to provide the remaining \$5,000. This will reduce the CDBG fund balance to under \$40,000. In light of national cuts, we are not likely to see any significant resources from these funds in the future.

Refuse/Debris within Park, Trail System

Kent Trails Correspondence – The Commission received a copy of the letter to residents on illegal dumping. We have heard positive response back.

Chateau Condominiums – Becky reviewed the aerial map included in the packet. The condo association called with concerns that after rain there was a significant amount of trash and a blockage in the creek. Becky asked the condo owners to participate in the clean-up efforts and adopt the area. We have also partnered with the court community services and probation department for additional manpower for this clean-up project. In light of the magnitude of creeks in Wyoming, we do not regularly perform cleanups after rain. We respond to citizen concerns, notify the Kent County Drain Commission and Public Works Department as appropriate before assuming creek clean-up. Buck Creek Nature Preserve is regularly recommended for clean-up to interested Adopt-a-Park groups.

Capital Projects Update

Oriole Park Grand Re-Opening Recap – Chairman Lavengood commended Rod Van Oeveren for the excellent job of representing the Parks and Recreation Commission at the reopening ceremony. Rod stated that he noticed the furrows under the swings and by the slide which shows extensive use already. Chairman Lavengood thanked Rod. Chairman Lavengood has only heard one “bad” thing about this renovation. One of his patients didn’t like that we were spending money we don’t have. He explained the project was grant funded and then the patient was ok with it. The park is being used a lot. We are having challenges with the splash pad which are being addressed under warranty. Currently in order to ensure operations, we have to turn it on at 8 am and off at 10 pm (continuous water run). The vendor is currently paying for the water. There is trouble with the computer’s mother board.

July and August Meetings – Determination of Need – Jim Austin made a motion, seconded by Megan Harley that the Commission doesn’t meet in July and August unless the need arises (at the call of the Chairperson). Motion carried unanimously.

Housekeeping/Informational Items

Mary Free Bed Fund Grant – Grant was received - Letter in packet.

Senior Center Project - We may have a soft opening because of some construction delay.

Commissioner Concerns and Suggestions – Rhonda Buck asked when the trail will be finished connecting Frog Hollow with the Kent County trail. A timeline is unknown as there is a significant cost because of the wetlands that must be traversed. The trail has been extended along Byron Center Avenue.

Rod Van Oeveren said he talked to the Godwin Heights Board of Education to be reappointed to the commission. Nancy Parent informed that he was reappointed in June 2010 and his term is

not up until 2013.

The Commissioners thanked Nancy for her years of service as this is her last meeting due to her position being eliminated.

Public Comment in General (Limit to 3 minutes) – None.

Motion to Adjourn the Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting – Motion to adjourn was made by Rod Van Oeveren, seconded by Megan Harley. Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Recorded by _____

Nancy Parent
Recording Secretary