

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES FOR THE  
MEETING OF

September 14, 2011

---

Present: Jim Austin, Rhonda Buck, Bob Cook, Megan Harley, Dan Lavengood, Rod VanOeveren, Doug Wustman

Absent: Eric Hartfield, Jerry Hopkins, Dave Skinner, Rich Pastoor (City Council Liaison)

Staff Present: Rebecca Rynbrandt, Gloria Pelton, Jeff Anderson

**A. Call to order of the Parks and Recreation Commission** – Chairman Lavengood called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**B. Approval of Agenda** – Chairman Lavengood asked that the agenda be amended to include 12 Wyoming Public Schools Sign Request and to remove Election of Officers. A motion was made by Rod VanOeveren, seconded by Bob Cook to approve the agenda as amended. It was decided that the Election of Officers would be held at the October meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**C. Approval of the Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes of the June 8, 2011 Meeting** - Motion was made by Rod VanOeveren, seconded by Megan Harley to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2011 meeting. Carried.

**D. Public Comment on Agenda Item (limit to 3 minutes)** – Robert Duck from Alpha Players LLC commented on two of the Frisbee Golf holes at Lamar Park. He feels that they are unsafe for others in the area. Alpha Players designs courses and has a desire to relocate the holes in question at Lamar and also suggested the possibility of a new Course in Pinery Park. They recently built a course at Cornerstone College. Robert is also the owner of Ducks Lawn Care.

**E. Secretary, Park & Facilities Maintenance Supervisor Introductions** - Gloria Pelton was introduced as the new Commission Secretary following Nancy Parent's departure from the City. Gloria is the secretary of the Wyoming Senior Center.

Jeff Anderson was introduced as the new Parks and Facilities Maintenance Supervisor. Jeff has been with City of Wyoming for 25 years, actually starting out in the Parks & Recreation Department. He replaces Dave Coates who retired. Rebecca shared with the Commission that supervision has been consolidated between Park Maintenance and Facility Maintenance; however, the service areas continue to operate independently. A full consolidation is expected within the next year to year and a half.

**F. Ferrand Park Master Plan Recommendation** – Rebecca provided background information related to the master planning process and need. Ferrand Park is located on Byron Center Ave between 44<sup>th</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Streets. We have been working on a Master Plan for the park with the assistance of consultant's MC Smith Associates. Based on citizen input from the adopted 5-Year Community Recreation Master Plan and citizen meetings held specifically regarding Ferrand's new master plan, the consultant came up with the Design Concept Plan. The deed on the park is restricted so no trees can be removed unless they are an imminent danger. The ground is very acidic from the oak trees and the depth of tree canopy limits our ability to improve the turf. The public forum was well attended by families surrounding the park. Approximately 30 people were in attendance. Rebecca handed out the original draft plan and compared it to the revised concept developed from the public comment. Significant items of concern were the

crushed stone and ADA equipment. Citizens recommended investing in a colored concrete path, maintain benches, improving the lawn (long term), a desire to have picnic shelter, and a change of the walk design. We will need to maintain the maintenance access as it is the only street access for staff. As trees die off, we will be able to create more green space. They would like to see a new play structure with more swings, including adaptive swings. Citizens prefer natural colors versus primary colors for the equipment. Rod voiced a need to elongate the denser buffer zones along the west side of the park. The Commission recommended extending the buffer to south on the west side. The motion was made by Rod VanOeveren for commission to recommend moving the plan to council. It was seconded by Rhonda Buck. Motion carried unanimously.

**G. Lamar Park Disc Golf** – Rebecca reviewed the history of the current course. The course was created as an Eagle Scout project and was not designed to be a competitive course. The intent is for it to be a second priority to reservation usage. Pinery Park is full to expansion and would not be a possible site for a disc course. The Commission concurred that Pinery Park, based upon its current development, is inappropriate for a disc course. Rebecca would recommend Ideal or Gezon for future consideration when the master plans are developed. There has been some recent concern with a “for profit” league being run at Lamar without the City’s approval and also alcohol consumption which is illegal in the park. The Department has reached out to organizations who may be abusing the course with no response from them.

The course at Lamar is a nine-hole course. It is used by many at lunch time, evenings, and weekends. Doug was recently at Riverside Park where the sport is played and said that he was impressed with the variety of ages and how social it was. He recommended that the commission stay open to the idea. Rebecca stated that one approach was to meet with golfers and have a casual conversation to address concerns and the second approach would be to step back and look at the need to change the course which would be a formal process including bidding for consultant services. Megan asked if there had been any reports of injury or incidents at Lamar and Rebecca reported that there hadn’t been any injury reports filed. Based upon current park design and the extensive use of the park, Rebecca could not support expansion beyond 9 holes. If there is a desire to expand the level of disc golf in the community, then other parks should be considered in the future planning. Gezon master plan is already done but could be considered if that master plan is re-opened. It is more of a corporate park versus a neighborhood park. Ideal Park is another location to be considered if citizen demand warranted it.

Doug thanked Robert Duck and friends for showing up. Doug asked if it would be appropriate for him to go to the park with Robert and determine needs. Rebecca would not recommend any commissioner independently meeting with private vendors to review these types of needs. Dan reminded the Commission that when the group felt there was a need such as proposed by Doug, the entire Commission went to perform site visits.

Rebecca will make arrangements to have Jeff Anderson meet with the Boy Scout who designed the course and will have him extend the invitation to Robert and other course users to participate in a casual conversation about hole locations and course safety.

**H. Kent County Parks & Recreation Consolidation Study** – Doug & Rebecca are on the county wide Steering Committee. Rebecca is also serving on the staff committee. The staff committee has reviewed the RFP which was extended to consultants to perform a study of the current state of parks and recreation in the county. There has been one meeting of citizens committee and Doug was surprised with diverse groups in attendance. He expects it to be an interesting process. Rebecca reported that the staff committee is meeting soon to review the

submitted consultant proposals and will recommend to the Steering Committee three for interview.

**I. Lamar Park Shelter Fee Change** – Commissioner Eric Hartfield had suggested raising the rental fee at Lamar Park for the shelter/splash pad in light of its high demand for use. In follow-up rental evaluations, 96% were satisfied with the fee structure. Rebecca reviewed a proposed fee increase model. Fees need to be firm before reservations begin December 1 for next year. The last increase in prices was in 2007. A motion was made by Doug Wustman to not increase fees at this time. Jim Austin seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**I. 2 WPS Sign Request** – Wyoming Public School's Wyoming Park High School wants to upgrade the current scoreboard at the Lamar Park Grandstand. The current scoreboard was donated to the facility by Calvin College for use by Wyoming Park Baseball. WPS is fundraising to replace the scoreboard as replacement parts are no longer made for it. The City of Wyoming has committed to paying for the new scoreboard's installation. WPS has the opportunity to secure a corporate sponsor, Meijer, but they want their name on it. Rebecca advised WPS that such signage is considered offsite billboard advertising and is considered against local zoning code (law). The question before the Commission is if the Commission desired to change the law to allow such signage in the park system. If so, does the Commission want to limit such signage to scoreboards only at all parks? Is it only scoreboards or are we open to other signage? Dugouts, concession stands? Should we get input from other municipalities on if and how they provide for sponsorship signage? Rebecca reminded and reviewed with the Commission the changes made to the zoning code to allow for temporary banner signage to support fundraising efforts.

Doug Wustman made a motion to ask staff to review what other communities are doing and to keep the discussion open with further study. No one seconded the motion.

A motion was made to end the discussion and not support the expansion of signage within the park system by Rod VanOeveren, seconded by Bob Cook. Motion carried 6 to 1 (Wustman).

## **J. 2010 Annual Reports**

**Department Report Review** – Mailed in packets. No comments.

**Stepping Stones Program** - Mailed in packets. No comments.

**Scholarship Program** – This is the first year of support by the Greater Wyoming Community Resource Alliance (GWCRA) in providing scholarships to 29 families, 26 of which were used. 67 scholarships were awarded in total for a value of approximately \$900.

## **K. Recreation Facility Use Agreements**

**SKRA** – Rebecca reviewed with the Commission concerns regarding SKRA's solvency. Based upon recent meetings with SKRA, it has been determined that they have been operating by checkbook, not based upon a budget. The City of Wyoming asked them to sit down and create a balance sheet so that all parties could understand their financial situation. They have had to close a bingo and they have a significant deficit situation. They have been paying their bills on credit cards however that did not include the arrearage with City of Wyoming. It appears they will need to end their program, come up with an aggressive fundraising or find a major donor. They received a loan from City of Wyoming special assessment fund for their portion of Gezon Park improvements. They have been advised that they need to get current with debt payments to the City of Wyoming by December 31, 2011 or their Recreation Facility Use agreement will be terminated.

**Pinery Park** – Up to date on payments.

**L. Capital Projects Update**

**Oriole Park** – We are working with consultants to address Splash Pad drainage concerns and water ponding issues.

**Pinery Park North Parking Lots & Walk/Bike Path Improvements** - Work begins next week.

**Lemery Park Parking Lot Improvements** – This project is complete and came in on budget.

**WSC Game Room** – Complete.

**M. Housekeeping/Informational Items**

**KCSM Grant Proposals** – Rebecca referred to the grant application in the packet for 2012. The senior millage expects a 2-3% decrease due to declining property values. Fundraising by the City of Wyoming for match funds is becoming more difficult.

**Correspondence (General) - None**

**N. Commissioner Concerns and Suggestions** – Dan Lavengood announced that he has accepted a position in Georgia with the US Army and that this is probably his last meeting. Rhonda Buck will also be leaving the commission and moving into her home in Byron Center by the end of the year.

**O. Public Comment in General (Limit to 3 minutes)** – Robert Duck thanked the commission and wanted to express that he was not here to badger the commission but feels that the two disc golf holes at Lamar are a safety risk.

**Q. Motion to Adjourn the Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting** – Motion to adjourn was made by Rod VanOeveren, seconded by Bob Cook. Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Recorded by \_\_\_\_\_

Gloria Pelton  
Recording Secretary