

MINUTES
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
CITY COMMISSION ROOM
May 3, 2021 - 4:30 P.M.

Present were the following members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Mr. Ed Klimek, Ms. Sue Maes, Mr. Darell Edie, Ms. Marcia Rozell, Mr. Dave Schafer, and Mr. Mark Bachamp.

Absent: Ms. Katrina Lewison.

Employees present: Mr. Eddie Eastes, Director of Parks and Recreation; Mr. Wyatt Thompson, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation; Mr. Randi Clifford, Recreation Director; Mr. Casey Smithson, Park Superintendent; Mr. Alfonso Leyva, Park Planner; Mr. Scott Shoemaker, Sunset Zoo Director; and Ms. Susan Adams, Flint Hills Discovery Center Director.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was received prior to the meeting.

MINUTES

Mr. Klimek called the meeting to order. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on April 5, 2021. On vote, motion carried 6-0.

FUTURE BUSINESS

Mr. Eastes commented the Naming/Renaming Brochure and Parks and Recreation Foundation will continue to be on Future Business until Staff has time to address these items.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Eastes stated there are still a few items to be completed at Anthony Recreation Center and Staff is in the process of moving in. There is a grand opening/ribbon cutting ceremony planned for Friday May 21, 2021 at 3:30pm at Anthony Recreation Center. There will also be an open house on May 22, 2021 from 9am – 4pm.

Mr. Clifford shared the facility will be available to the public for drop in use however a CivicRec account with the free Rec Center Membership is needed in order to be able to check in every time someone visits the facility. Anticipating Staff to start taking reservations in early June once everything is set up correctly in the system. Mr. Clifford mentioned if a child is 11 or younger, an adult must accompany them to the Rec Center. The public is able to check out sports equipment to use or they can bring in their own. Information regarding the Rec Centers will be posted on the Parks and Rec website for the public to access.

Mr. Eastes gave an update on the Eisenhower Recreation Center. The facility is now fully enclosed, and the Kirkwood Road extension is making good progress.

Mr. Eastes wanted to provide the Board with a Parks and Rec staff recruitment and summer programs update. Last month the Board had questions regarding hiring seasonal staff. Mr. Eastes commented recruiting staff is low and is not just happening in Manhattan. Staff has increased efforts to try to recruit new staff through newsletters, radio ads, social media posts, and KRPA job postings.

Mr. Eastes commented the Flint Hills Discovery Center will have a Kidscape Project going up on the 2nd Floor being fully funded through the FHDC Foundation. Summer Camps are also being held at the Flint Hills Discovery Center and the Sunset Zoo this year with reduced numbers to stay safe. The Sunset Zoo's Expedition Asia Exhibit should open in mid-October.

Mr. Eastes, Mr. Thompson, and Mr. Smithson shared some updates on park and construction projects to the Board. Mr. Eastes stated the naming of the Stonehaven Park and Bayer Pond will go to City Commission as an agenda item at their meeting on May 4, 2021. Mr. Leyva gave an update on the Roger Schultz Park.

Mr. Eastes shared the 2021 revenues remain unpredictable as the 2020 revenues did not come in as predicted therefore Staff was asked to save money. This caused some changes to be made with programs. Mr. Eastes presented the programs and activities that Recreation Staff is able to offer this Spring/Summer. Some programs are dependent on staffing levels like Little Apple Day Camp. He also went through the programs and activities that are not being offered this year.

Mr. Eastes shared some temporary service reductions for Aquatics and City parks due to staffing levels.

Mr. Klimek asked about Arts in the Park. Mr. Eastes stated Staff recommended a 50% reduction to the Arts in the Park budget of \$48,000. Staff was also able to secure \$20,000 in additional funding so that program should be able to be restored to 100%. Mr. Clifford shared the schedule is up on the website and occurs every Friday in June and July.

STAFF REPORTS

Ms. Adams shared the Flint Hills Discovery Center has been doing well and attendance has been increasing. The temporary exhibit has been switched out from Run! Jump! Fly! to Hands on Harley Davidson. FHDC has partnered with the Evil Knievel Museum in Topeka who will be bringing a commemorative bike and some memorabilia. FHDC also partnered with Russ Briggs who will be bringing a bike as well. FHDC received a grant to help support virtual programs to any classrooms in the Flint Hills. FHDC is doing a program called Flint Hills Experts. Instead of doing the Flint Hills Festival, the Discovery Center will be doing an Explore the Flint Hills event and will have activities for people to do.

Mr. Klimek asked if the Flint Hills Discovery Center was hosting wedding receptions. Ms. Adams answered they are but only for groups of 75 or less per the City's guidelines.

Mr. Shoemaker commented the Sunset Zoo's Expedition Asia construction is on course to open in October. The Zoo continues to do virtual programming and birthday parties. Zoo is planning to start in-person programming on June 1st. School groups have been attending the Zoo during the Spring. Zoo hosted their Party for the Planet Earth Day celebration on April 24th and had around 850 people in attendance.

Ms. Maes asked if the Zoo would consider staying open later one night a week to accommodate the parents who work until 5pm. Mr. Shoemaker stated the Zoo did that in the past but discontinued that program due to low attendance. Staff has discussed revitalizing that program to see if there is a way to stay open late one night a week.

Mr. Clifford shared his appreciation for his Staff and their willingness to adapt and the ability to take on new roles and jobs. Waterparks are in the process of opening and lifeguards are being trained. Waterpark Season Passes are on sale now and Northview Waterpark can be rented before or after hours starting in June. Spring adult sports are wrapping up and Summer sports are getting ready to start. Arts in the Park will start June 4th. Youth sports has had a good response to Baseball/Softball/T-Ball. Staff is getting ready to open the Anthony Recreation Center. Eisenhower Recreation Center is tentatively scheduled to open in August. Youth Outdoor Adventure Challenge had 255 kids enrolled. A new event called "Junk in the Trunk" occurred on April 24th in City Park where 60 vendors signed up to sell items out of their vehicle like a garage sale. Tournaments continue to go well. A few more seasonal Staff have been hired for Little Apple Day Camp so hopefully more kids can get enrolled as the waitlist is extensive. Staff is still in the process of hiring seasonal workers to help with more programs. A few programs have been planned but the Staff needs to be set in place and trained before the activity is opened for the public to register.

Mr. Smithson commented a few groups and individuals volunteered to help the Parks crews in the Spring keeping the parks and trails clean. Parks celebrated Arbor Day and planted a tree. Planning to plant a few trees near the Douglass Activity Center.

Mr. Thompson shared he has been working with Theresa Mueller and Vivienne Uccello on social media, website, marketing, and campaigns for the Douglass Activity Center as well as the Anthony and Eisenhower Recreation Centers to promote the products and services. Worked with them on the advertisement on the recruiting efforts as well. Met with the artist Eugene Byrd III who will be painting the mural at the Douglass Activity Center. The mural will be unveiled at the Juneteenth Celebration.

Mr. Leyva stated the Clarendon Trail project construction will start at the end of July or early August. Plans are almost complete for the Anneberg Park Mitigation project. City Park Playground will go to bid soon and be completed before school starts.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Eastes stated the City Commission approved the Parks and Recreation Resolution with the rental fees that were recommended by this Board. Setting fees administratively and increasing cost recovery were also approved by City Commission.

Mr. Eastes shared the Stonehaven Park Master Plan will be on the City Commission agenda at the May 4th meeting.

Meeting Adjourned.