

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Thursday, February 20, 2014 7 p.m.

ARC, 1701 W. Ash

MINUTES

Commission Present: Marin Blevins, Sue Davis, Bill Pauls, Dan Devine, Meredith Donaldson, Linda Hutton

Commission Absent: Terry Kloeppel (excused)

Staff Present: Mike Griggs, Gabe Huffington, Erika Coffman, Becky Stidham, Tammy Miller

Blevins called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

Agenda: The agenda was approved on a motion by Hutton, seconded by Donaldson.

Minutes: The January minutes were approved on a motion by Pauls, seconded by Davis.

Monthly Report: The January monthly report was approved on a motion by Pauls, seconded by Devine.

P&R Website Overview

Huffington introduced Becky Stidham, senior administrative support supervisor at Parks Management Center. Stidham described her work with the budget, annual report, web site and on the marketing committee, among other job duties. She shared information about the department's web site, including statistics showing how the web has grown in usage as an information source for residents. It received the highest percentage from a list of information resources, from a 2011 Parks and Recreation User Survey. The web site receives more than 471,000 in annual visits. Top visited pages include the ARC and Sports. Statistics also show that the Parks and Rec web site gets visitors from all over the world.

Stidham also took Commissioners on a brief tour of the site, showing them pages that may be of interest to them and how to navigate them, including Council items, park inventory, park directory and CIP (Capital Improvement Projects).

Naming of Strawn Rd park property

Huffington reminded the Commission that they had approved the comprehensive plan and first phase of development for this property at their January meeting. The next step is to recommend a name for the park, since the Council is considering the master plan for the park. Huffington presented several names for consideration including: Harmony Creek Park or Harmony Park, Perche Creek Park or Perche Park, Harmony-Perche Park, or Strawn Park. As part of the interested parties meetings, Park staff asked the public to vote on potential park names.

Huffington shared those results with vote tallies: Harmony-Perche Park (7), Perche Park (6), Harmony Park (15) and Strawn Park (21).

Huffington pointed out that many of these names come from area creeks and the street that passes in front of the property. It is common for parks to be named for nearby natural features and streets, Griggs said, when there is no donor to name the park for. Perche Creek is located to the west of the park property, Harmony Creek will cut through the park and the property is located on Strawn Road.

Devine asked about Harmony-Strawn as a name? He asked if the main park entrance would be off of Strawn? Huffington said that it would.

Blevins commented that Perche and Harmony are prettier names, but Strawn identifies the park's location. He would favor that name.

Griggs reminded the Commission that the park will be the likely site of a championship disc golf course, so the name of the park will be used prominently in marketing and promotions, when events and tournaments are held there. He mentioned that a shorter name may be more useful when it comes to those efforts.

Huffington added that the planned overpass there over I-70 will make the location more visible and Strawn a more commonly known street name in the future.

Hutton agreed, saying the Commission could recommend Strawn as a name now, then possibly add to it later if needed.

Devine made a motion, seconded by Pauls, that the Commission recommend the name of Strawn Park to the Council for approval. Motion passed, 6-0.

Norma Sutherland Smith Park Phase I

Huffington showed a map of the 50-acre property, which is at Waco and Brown Station roads. Two public input meetings have been held to discuss both the master plan of the park and the first phase of development. The park would feature a practice ballfield, basketball court, skate spot, loop trail for adventure-style races with obstacles, shelter, playground, splash pad, and tennis courts. About \$250,000 in Park Sales Tax funds would pay for the first phase of development. Tuscany Ridge, a nearby development, will eventually expand leading to a trail connection to the park.

The first phase would feature shelter, tennis court, trail, restroom and parking lot. Other features would wait until future phases, Huffington said. He added that an open area may be used for sledding and kite flying. Huffington asked that the Commission either approve the draft master plan and direct staff to present final plans for the first phase at the next Commission meeting, recommend revised master plan and first phase plan, or take other action.

Griggs said that neighbors prefer the development to begin off of Waco Road closer to the school, rather than the original thought of beginning development closer to Brown Station Road. Plans were revised to reflect those changes.

Davis asked about the extreme fitness trail, if it would be open to the public or charged?

Huffington said it would be open and that recreation staff would likely program events there as well.

Blevins commented that the park may be an incentive for the City's development of Waco Road.

Donaldson made a motion, seconded by Davis, that the Commission recommend approval of the draft master plan for Norma Sutherland Smith Park, and directs staff to present final plans for phase I improvements at the March Commission meeting. Motion passed, 6-0.

Council Items

Griggs shared these updates:

Strawn Road approval: will be coming up at next Council meeting.

Assistant to the Director: the assistant director formerly held by Griggs has been vacant. Griggs said that with Park Sales Tax funds running low, he had concerns about saving funds in the budget. He is proposing to save some money by reclassifying the position of Assistant Director, to an Assistant to the Director position. The position would help with budget and special projects. Down the road, Griggs said as part of the Department's succession planning, the Assistant Director position would likely be restored.

Capital Project Report

Huffington shared these updates:

Waters-Moss: staff recently moved into Hillcrest Community Center. Work continues on Moss Building.

Twin Lakes: xeriscape garden boardwalk rebuilt by maintenance staff.

Lake of the Woods: cart path repairs made.

Cosmo Park: new service gates installed.

American Legion Park: rock stabilization project completed, restroom improvements ongoing.

Nifong Park: ceiling fans installed at Maplewood Barn.

Stephens Lake Park: work ongoing for Children's Grove.

L.A. Nickell Golf Course: new irrigation computer in place, new cabinets installed at clubhouse with countertops arriving soon.

Twin Lakes: new trees planted.

Oakwood Hills Park: new footbridge built.

MKT Trail: tree recently blocked trail, Park Ranger Rosanna Arens and Park Supervisor Mark Kottwitz handled removal on a Saturday evening.

Recreation Services Report

Coffman shared these updates:

ROC Run: new trail run on January 25 had over 80 people.

GetAbout Columbia: Valentines promotion held to distribute free bike taillights.

ARC Youth Boot Camp: has been successful program, instructor dresses as super hero, with kids copying.

Special Olympics: Mizzou and Columbia College basketball players recently assisted with instruction.

Community Recreation: Boys lock-in held at Armory in January.

Hillcrest Community Center: opened for business with programs in full swing.

Preschool: programs still going well.

50+: Weather has affected some groups attendance.

Sports: Carol Riney, Sports Supervisor, recently inducted into ASA Hall of Fame.

Upcoming Events: Black History Gospel Explosion and Soul Food Dinner, Film and Discussion, Boy and Girl Scout Day, New Leisure Times, Women's History Month Film and Annual Train Show.

Staff Comments

Kloeppel had expressed concern over missing another Commission meeting, and Griggs shared some information from the City Clerk's office. As long as Commissioners' absences are excused (prior notification given), then there is no problem with absences.

Coffman told the Commission that retirement receptions are scheduled for Richard Cole (April 4 from 10 am to noon, with reception at 10:30) and Carol Riney (April 11 from 2-4 pm with reception at 2:30).

Commission Comments

Pauls thanked Huffington for taking care of signage on the Bear Creek Trail. He also commended staff for the ROC Trail Run, saying he was out at Rhett's Run the next day and didn't see a remnant of the race.

Pauls added that he was interested in seeing the City invest more into the Neighborhood Watch program, saying that the program did not seem to be as prevalent as it used to be.

Griggs said he would look into it.

Davis commented that at the Bike and Ped meeting, several members were complimentary of parks staff for doing a good job clearing the trails through the snow events.

Public Comments

None.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.