

DRAFT

ZOOM MEETING

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

February 11, 2021

Members Present: Bridget Moss, Jeffrey Fracher, Shawn Strubbe, Anne Hemenway, Ned Michie, Hosea Mitchell, Jennifer Slack Member(s) absent: Lashundra Bryson-Morsberger

Staff: Todd Brown, Vic Garber, Chris Gensic, Sarah Blech, Andrea Ross, Algreatus Batton, Riaan Anthony, Matt Moffett, Michelle Christian

Guest: Jason Grigg, Sean Tubbs

Advisory Board Member Introductions

- Todd Brown welcomed board members to meeting.
- Reported that Lashundra Bryson-Morsberger was under weather and would not be @ the meeting,
- Reported that Jeffrey Fracher was reappointed to the Advisory Board

Motion to Adoption Minutes – March 12, 2020

- Ned Michie made two corrections, change thermal walls to wells @ Smith Pool, correct name to Krebs
- Motion made by Jeffrey Fracher with corrections, Bridget Moss second, motion was unanimously approved

Election of Officers

- Nominations: Hosea Mitchell nominated Ned Michie for Chair, no other nominations were made
- Motion for Ned Michie as Chair made by Hosea Mitchell, second by Anne Hemenway, motion was unanimously approved
- Nominations: Jeffrey Fracher nominated Anne Hemenway for Vice Chair, no other nominations were made
- Motion for Anne Hemenway for Vice Chair was made by Jeffrey Fracher, second by Bridget Moss, motion was unanimously approved.

Resolution – Llezelle Dugger

- Jeffrey Fracher read resolution for Llezelle Dugger to recognize her time and work on the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
- Motion to approve resolution made by Jennifer Slack, second by Bridget Moss, motion was unanimously approved.

Updates on Parks and Recreation position with COVID-19

- Vic Garber reported that not much has opened in Parks & Recreation since Todd Brown's written report on December 21st to the Advisory Board.
- Closures/Openings – all parks, open spaces, trails, shelters (with no reservations) are open, Golf course & Skatepark open – restrooms @ these two facilities are open following COVID-19 guidelines
- Recreation centers, pools, spray grounds remain closed, Parks & Recreation administrative downtown office remains closed to public, Restrooms in parks remain closed as well.
- Programming
 - ❖ Vic Garber stated he thanked staff for their creativity, positive outdoor experiences, Skatepark, golf course, successful delivering programs
 - ❖ Goal is to stay connected to the community
 - ❖ Popular programs – basketball skills, healthy hikes, bird walks, virtual fitness classes,
 - ❖ Skatepark – canceled group lessons to keep #s down, conduct only one on one lessons, the Skatepark is in high demand
 - ❖ Athletics are @ a standstill
 - ❖ Reported that Little Leagues will be requesting for City Council to go with the Governor's guidelines and allow their games to be played. Presently only practices & scrimmages allowed.

Adaptive Program Presentation

- Sarah Blech, Adaptive Recreation Manager reported the following on the program:
 - ❖ Have been conducting virtual programs
 - ❖ Staff consists of (2) Recreation Specialists
 - ❖ Program is partially funded by Albemarle County
 - ❖ Reported an increase in attendance w/virtual programs. Over 1,000 participants in program, only conducted one in person event for Halloween
 - ❖ Participants come back time after time
 - ❖ Planning to do virtual camp in spring & summer
 - ❖ Outdoor programs planned
 - ❖ Access Arts – school outreach virtually, work w/county schools, Post High
 - ❖ Musician – pre-school program virtual
 - ❖ Publish poetry magazine online
 - ❖ Spa night
 - ❖ Growing experience – participants & staff
 - ❖ Facebook page invite to Board members

Project Updates

- Tree Care – our parks have needed & received a lot of tree care with 160 trees planted, The Emerald Ash Borer is causing the majority of the tree removals
- Housing sites (Greenstone, Westhaven, S. First Street & Friendship Court) have been closed but staff continue to provide meals at each location including Buford Middle School where the Boys & Girls Club assist students. Total of 2,743 meals were served in December & January
- Special Events – this Saturday will be the Valentine Craft Giveaways @ Pen Park providing Valentine crafts for 150 staggered vehicles. Another successful first time event was the Drive in Movie @ CHS which sold out
- Park Wellness – staff are on patrol each weekend & holidays. Monitor & report on park sites for safety & educational purposes. Look for cars in parking lots, trash, signs down, use of shelters, social distancing, etc.
- Meadowcreek Golf Course – has shown tremendous growth with several record months in the past year. A good year is 3,300 rounds, expecting to hit 4,000 rounds
- City Market – Winter market open through March @ Key Center.
- City Hall Ambassadors – staff assists @ City Hall, M-TH, daily escort public in and out since August, wipe down areas of transactions.
- Hosea Mitchell asked what the cost to remove trees. Todd Brown replied that the ash trees are going to die, would be a 4-5 year process, estimate hard to get, priority is to take care of ones in dangerous areas first.
- Chris Gensic reported that people are cutting & stacking ash trees in barns, could offset costs, this was a nationwide problem
- Smith Aquatic & Fitness Center– still in process of revamping HVAC system, a little ahead of schedule , approximate May completion
- Ned Michie asked if a lawsuit was considered for Smith, Todd Brown replied that he had not heard of talk. Ned Michie stated that he would like staff to ask City Attorney. Anne Hemenway gave an example of YMCA who had problems w/the building of their pool and brought a lawsuit against their installer
- Crow Pool – refurbish so it would be backup for Smith, used for training, has been updated w/painting, new flooring & partially updated locker rooms & bathrooms, unable to open due to COVID-19
- Carver Recreation Center – Teen Center equipment has been moved to upstairs @ Key Center, replaced new floor & painted in old Teen room will be used for additional group fitness classes. Still not open.
- Tonsler Park Center – facility upgrades, new floor in conference room
- Washington Park Center – will be future Adaptive Recreation headquarters
- Spray grounds – there have been numerous leaks @ Forest Hills, Belmont & Greenleaf, are being repaired. Plan to open May 15 if Center for Disease control allows

- Chris Gensic reported on the following:
 - ❖ Parks & Recreation has acquired a donation of 3+ acres of forested land @ the corner of Rio Road & Agnese Street (north side of town near all the holiday lights) for open space/forest preservation that might put a nature trail connector in it to Holmes Avenue
 - ❖ 8th Street (Westhaven area) small park is nearly complete & ready to open soon
 - ❖ Land/easements on the horizon include the Dominion Power donation by Hydraulic Rd/250, 5th Street Station (Wegmans shopping center) and an acquisition of portion of parcel on Moores Creek as well as trail easement on adjacent property to complete RTF trail corridor from Sunset to McElroy
 - ❖ Naming of Parklands – Advisory Board recommends names to City Council
 - ❖ Land acquisitions – coming to closing – Moore’s creek, Ragged Mt,
 - ❖ Drop in volunteers – starting to come back
 - ❖ Ragged Mountain – very busy, parking issues
 - ❖ Trail – McIntire park – between Botanical Garden & Skatepark – working to finalize design, & funding
 - ❖ The Kneeder/Eben Smith trail bridge project @ Meadowcreek in nearly ready for bid & DCR may be offering an additional \$125,000 in grant funds to assist w/funding reaching the cost estimate
 - ❖ Staff are working on the Rivanna River Bike/pedestrian bridge feasibility study process with TJPDC/VDOT – Woolen Mills/Riverview Park area to Pantops
 - ❖ Trail behind YMCA – designed, need to find funding
 - ❖ Towe – Ned Michie asked about lighting, Vic Garber replied that lighting was on hold – project would cost approximately \$925,000, in discussions with County, will revisit in the summer
 - ❖ Riverview Park bathrooms – flood issues discussion, may have to move location
 - ❖ Bike Ramp Connector – Washington Park – in final plan review
 - ❖ Stream restoration – Meadowcreek Gardens behind Bodos & English Inn
 - ❖ FY22 budget presentation was made to City management along w/CIP requests. Staff followed instructions of flat budget requests and CIP projects remaining the same as previously funded. Some alterations were made to funded and unfunded CIP projects to complete trail and facility projects.

Future Plans

- Based on conversations with City Manager, and with City Council involved, are planning to open all facilities with guidelines. At this point, we don't know what it will look like but are preparing to open all facilities
- Preparing to hire temp/seasonal staff soon
- Recreation Centers – open May 1 possibly
- Aquatics - Spray grounds – open May 15 if Center for Disease Control allows; Onesty & Washington Pools – open Memorial Day, Smith Pool open Memorial Day
- Adult & youth sports – on hold
- Staff strongly supports re-openings
- Board supports to opening up, Ned Michie suggested sending a letter representing Board to go to City Council in support of opening Parks & Recreation facilities
- Adaptive programs will be mostly hybrid
- Day camps – plan to offer 6 Day Camps with a lower capacity, working w/schools to conduct our camps at Walker, Jackson Via, Clark & Greenbrier but these sites are presently being discussed with school administration. Also offer @ Key and Carver Centers. Don't know what field trips would look like
- Jennifer Slack asked about Camp staff being vaccinated? Vic Garber replied that Parks & Recreation staff are on list to be vaccinated
- Skatepark lighting project – staff are working with the Skatepark ad-hoc Advisory Board to raise the needed \$325,000 to light the Skatepark. Still have the BAMA match grant of \$100,000, now have the Perry matching grant of \$35,000 and presently have \$52,000 raised funds. With the matching grants, will need an additional \$135,000 for the LED lights. Several fund raisers are being planned by staff & volunteers
- City Market – requesting to keep the City Market @ its current leased location (100 Water Street) to maintain City Market continuity for vendors & customers. At this time, the Tenant can only commit to a sub-lease for the 2021 market season. Approval of this sub-lease for the 2021 season will provide the City time to secure a renewable sub-lease or determine a different long range plan for the City Market location. Approval of the sub-lease will be on City Council agenda next Tuesday, if approved, plan to open April 3 but do not know what format the market will operate in @ this time.
 - Ned Michie suggested Advisory Board meeting monthly to catch up; asked to send naming packet to Advisory Board

Chairman's Matters

- Ned Michie stated he would like to hear from board members on what they would like to have on upcoming agendas
- Unfinished projects – would like to hear next meetings
- Hats off to staff for carrying on through COVID-19 this past year, thanked staff for all their hard work

Board Matters

- Bridget Moss asked about the emails that the board has recently received, asked staff to copy board members on responses
- Jennifer Slack stated that the closing of playgrounds was crushing

Director's Matters

- Todd Brown reported that the Botanical Gardens & Bennett Village groups want to present to board @ an upcoming meeting

Motion to Adjourn

- Anne Hemenway made a motion to adjourn meeting, Ned Michie second, motion was unanimously approved.
- Meeting adjourned @ 7:12 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Daly
Secretary to the Advisory Board

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