

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Thursday, July 21, 7 p.m.
ARC Meeting Room, 1701 W Ash

DRAFT MINUTES

Commission Present: Dan Devine, Sue Davis, Chad Henry, Paul Morrison

Commission Absent (excused): Ted Farnen, Meredith Donaldson, Brendon Steenbergen

Commission Absent (unexcused):

Staff Present: Gabe Huffington, Zach Nikin, Cavelle Cole-Neal, Tammy Miller

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm.

AGENDA

Agenda was approved on a motion by Henry, seconded by Morrison. Motion passed 4-0.

MINUTES

Minutes were approved on a motion by Morrison, seconded by Henry. Motion passed 4-0.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Recreation Superintendent Cavelle Cole-Neal shared these highlights from June: total participations have increased at this point in the fiscal year substantially, from 292,945 to 383,311.

Devine asked about staff?

Cole-Neal said staffing has been a little stretched for summer camps, but the three summer interns are assisting where needed.

Park Services Manager Zach Nikin shared highlights: Horticulture spent 180 hours working at Philips Pavilion and watering, Forestry spent 142 hours watering trees and clearing cedars along Football Field 5 at Cosmo and Maintenance spent 394 hours with general maintenance and aquatic inspections and maintenance.

Morrison asked about tree removal near the Whitegate property?

Nikin said it was a Water and Light project and mainly involved diseased ash trees, Bradford pears and less desirable trees.

Morrison commented on the Mid American Open Aug 5-7 and said the disc golf courses are looking good.

Monthly report was approved on a motion by Morrison, seconded by Davis. Motion passed 4-0.

PUBLIC HEARING

Capen Park improvements

Acting Director Gabe Huffington said the project would include the expansion of the parking lot from 32 spaces to 55 spaces, as well as entry road repairs, improve stormwater controls, add one parking lot light and add electricity needed for events and planned future restroom. Funding will be provided by the Capen Family Trust.

Huffington shared a map of proposed improvements that would include a portion of the mulch site to dedicate to parking. He also showed a photo of overflow parking at Capen, which is a common problem during high-use times.

Devine asked about the mulch site and need for space?

Huffington said staff has met with Utilities and they are in agreement on the site.

Devine opened the public hearing and closed it with no public comments.

Henry made a motion, seconded by Morrison, that the Commission recommends to City Council approval of the proposed Capen Park improvements. Motion passed 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Commission meeting August date change

Huffington reminded the Commission that the August meeting would be held a week earlier than previously scheduled, on Aug. 11. Since the meeting will be earlier than normal, staff will not be able to compile the July monthly report in time, so the Commission will have two monthly reports to review (July and August) for the September meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Virtual meeting update

Huffington informed the Commission that City Council approved an ordinance allowing the Disabilities Commission and the Youth Advisory Commission to have virtual meeting participation. The City will send a report to City Council for the Aug. 15 meeting, outlining the feasibility for other boards and commissions. The legal department is mainly concerned with how the public would be able to interact with boards virtually, by offering public comment. The technology is in place but meetings would likely have to be held in Council chambers. Huffington said once the Council discussed again, staff will put this item on the September Commission agenda for an update.

Neighborhood park plan / trails plan update

Staff is planning updates to two portions of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the neighborhood parks plan and the trails plan. The overall master plan will not be updated until 2027 but there is a need right now to update the two other plans due to land acquisitions and the renewal of the Park Sales Tax in 2021. Public input meetings are scheduled in August and September and staff plans to present drafts of the two plans to the Commission in November. Meetings will be held at these locations:

- Ward 1 - Clary-Shy Park (Saturday CFM) - August 20
- Ward 2 - Albert-Oakland Park - August 23
- Ward 3 - Indian Hills Park - September 1
- Ward 4 - Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary - September 14
- Ward 5 - Jay Dix Station - September 21
- Ward 6 - Waters-Moss Memorial Wildlife Area - September 27

There will also be means of offering online input via BeHeardCoMo, the City's new online portal for capital projects and planning projects. Staff will also meet with interested partners including the Sierra Club and Columbia Audubon Society. They will also present to other City boards including Planning & Zoning, Bike and Pedestrian and the Disabilities Commission.

REPORTS

Council Items

Huffington informed the Commission of recent and future Council approvals:

Approved:

- Boone County Family Resources agreement
- Amendment to agreement with CPS for Hickman Pool heater

Next Two Council Meetings:

- Northeast Regional Park feasibility study agreement
- Columbia Sports Fieldhouse Phase II SFS Architecture Agreement

Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission Report

Staff provided this update from the July 20 meeting:

- The Bike and Ped Commission plans to submit an application to the League of American Bicyclists (LAB) to renew Columbia's designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC). Columbia was awarded a silver-level in 2018. The BFC submission deadline is Feb. 15, 2023.
- Staff provided information regarding the strategy and timeline for updates to the 2013 Trails Plan and 2013 Neighborhood Park Plan. Commissioners will have an opportunity to review and comment at the October 19 meeting.

Capital Project Report

Nikin shared updates on the following projects:

Philips Park tennis and pickleball courts, Rock Bridge Park, Indian Hills Park, Vineyards Lake Park, Lake of the Woods cart shed, Northeast Regional Park, Philips Pavilion, Hickman Pool heater replacement, Antimi fields, Cosmo Park football field #5, Gans Creek Recreation Area, Magnolia Falls Park and Harmony Bends at Strawn Park.

Recreation Services Report

Cole-Neal shared programming updates for:

Fire in the Sky (more than 10,000 attendees), Camp CoMo Kidz, Splat, ARC closing of Water Zone for maintenance from Aug. 13-21 (triple loop slide closed from Aug. 13-Sept 15), Adapted Recreation, Aquatics, Community Recreation, Golf, Life Enrichment and Sports.

Morrison asked if Fire in the Sky would stay at Stephens Lake Park?

Huffington said it likely would, it was well received though there were just a few complaints about noise.

Devine asked about food trucks, as there seemed to be lines?

Cole-Neal said staff is considering the layout of the event and may also add trucks.

STAFF COMMENTS

Huffington shared a proclamation from the Mayor declaring July as Parks and Recreation Month.

Devine asked how the Mayor's Bike Ride went in June?

Huffington said that it went well, there was good participation.

COMMISSION COMMENTS TO STAFF

Davis said that Fire in the Sky was fabulous, she thought the location and event was better than in the past.

Devine agreed and added that he attended Splat with his grandchildren and it was great. He also mentioned that monarch butterflies were just put on the endangered species list. He asked about staff efforts to preserve butterflies?

Huffington described the no-mow areas and milkweed planting that staff did. He said there may be increased efforts now with that news.

Henry asked about the beavers in Bear Creek, how staff is handling that problem?'

Nikin said there was discussion of trapping but that would not be effective.

Huffington said that beavers get acclimated so trapping and relocating does not work.

Morrison said he had call from a kickball team in the co-rec league, asking how trans participants' registrations are handled?

Cole-Neal said staff allows participants to identify as they wish when they sign up, staff does not question them.

Huffington added that recreation staff have discussed those issues and will continue to do so.

Morrison said he has also heard great comments from teams in the E softball league who like the home run rules for that league. He suggested marketing the leagues that way.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

NEXT MEETING DATE

August 11, 7 pm at the ARC

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm on a motion from Morrison, seconded by Davis.