

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes  
December 7, 2004

Members Present: Jerry Wilinski, Patricia Klein, Garrylee McCormick, John Hilliard,  
Lance Ferraro

Guests Present: Pat Vinge, Frances Jewell, Todd Pryor, Mary Ann Ampersee

Chair McCormick called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm and asked those present to introduce themselves.

John Hilliard offered a motion that the minutes of the November 2, 2004 meeting be approved. Lance Ferraro seconded his motion which was unanimously approved by the Board.

The group then discussed the 2005 proposed Parks and Recreation fees and charges. Ms. Jewell stated that the fee structure had been submitted as part of the 2005 budget. Ms. Jewell informed the group that the security deposit had been eliminated as no damages had been realized in 2004. She also stated that fees for additional picnic tables and/or trash receptacles had been eliminated as there would be no staff available to move tables and that this service would discontinue.

Patricia Klein asked how high the fees had been raised since 2004. Ms. Jewell explained that overall, fees had increased by 3%.

The group discussed a variety of related fee issues including the contract with the Kalamazoo Kings and rental of their office space, staffing costs at the Youth Development Center, and the elimination of some programs, (basketball league). The group also discussed the Kalamazoo Municipal Golf Association's commitment to park funding.

Ms. Jewell stated that the park use fees represented approximately \$22,000 of the total \$315,000 raised.

Pat Klein offered a motion to support the proposed fees and charges. John Hilliard seconded her motion which was unanimously approved by the Board.

Ms. Jewell stated that one idea which had been expressed at the December 6, 2004 City Commission meeting was to raise the Parks and Recreation fees 10% rather than 3%. She stated that she would keep the Board informed as to any changes.

Garrylee McCormick informed the Board that the City Commission had agreed to reconsider reductions in Parks and Recreation including limited closure of the Kik Pool, playground programs, transportation for youth programming and the closure of Woods Lake Beach. Further, he stated that a proposal was being developed to continue to operate Woods Lake Beach utilizing volunteers.

Ms. Klein asked for an explanation regarding the closure of Woods Lake Beach, stating that the list of duties developed by City staff for volunteers appeared to be excessive and outside the realm of what could be expected from volunteers. Ms. Jewell explained to the Board that the \$2,200 reduction figure related to the Woods Lake Beach closure included supplies, trash disposal fees and security services. She also explained that staff who had formerly been responsible for overall park maintenance had been eliminated and the list developed outlined all of those duties performed by that staff. Those items included purchase of supplies, (i.e. cleaning, paper), mowing, cleaning, trash removal, etc., as well as assuming legal and risk management.

Ms. Klein reminded the group that the City's comprehensive plan had included "Spot maintenance of parks" utilizing volunteers/residents. She felt that the list of tasks for Woods Lake Beach, supplied by the City, was in conflict with the sentiments expressed in the comprehensive plan. Ms. Klein stated she had garnered support from the neighborhood organization, but felt that the duties were too extensive for them to perform.

Ms. Jewell related the problems the City had experienced with volunteers including lack of weeding and maintenance of flowerbeds by Adopt-a-park volunteers and the limited time availabilities of many volunteers. She also cited the success of volunteers in Crane Park, stating that the City was very fortunate, especially Parks and Recreation, by the number of people willing to volunteer.

Ms. Klein questioned who would be responsible for vandalism, clean up, etc., of Woods Lake Beach as she feared this property would be very vulnerable should the park close. Ms. Jewell was uncertain, however, she believed this would be the responsibility of the property owner.

Jerry Wilinski suggested that a Kalamazoo Gazette Viewpoint article be written to explain to residents the plight of Parks and Recreation.

Ms. Jewell then informed the group that Jerry Wilinski and Garrylee McCormick had fulfilled their terms of office and would need to be replaced on the Board. She also stated that John Hilliard would need to be reappointed. The group agreed to invite the only Board candidate on record to attend the next meeting.

Jerry Wilinski motioned a recommendation to reappoint John Hilliard to a three year term. His motion was seconded by Pat Klein and unanimously approved. Ms. Ampersee stated she would fill out the appropriate paperwork.

Chair McCormick thanked Ms. Ampersee for her years of service to the Board as she would no longer be acting as recording secretary. The Board echoed his sentiment.

Ms. Jewell stated that she had made several recommendations to the City Commission as to appointees to the Friends of Recreation Board. John Hilliard motioned support of her recommendation and requested that a liaison be selected between the "Friends" and PRAB. Jerry Wilinski seconded his motion which was unanimously approved by the Board.

City Forester Todd Pryor reminded the group that Garrylee McCormick had served as the Board's liaison to the Tree Committee and asked that another candidate be selected.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 pm.