

APPROVED
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes
August 10, 2005

Chair Hilliard called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm in the Parks and Recreation Community Room in Mayors' Riverfront Park.

Roll Call:

Members Present: John Hilliard, Josh DeBruyn, Lance Ferraro, Larry Haley, Patricia Klein, Gary Wager, Garrylee McCormick

Members Absent: None

City Commission Liaison: Commissioner Don Cooney

Staff Present: Frances Jewell, Pat Vinge

Procedural Matters: None

Introduction of Guests: Lynn Stevens from Western Michigan Business Review

Changes to the Agenda: The addition of an event to the Event Approvals (the Women of Worship, Coats and Winter Clothing Drive for the Homeless and Underprivileged)

Special Presentations: None.

Approval of Minutes: The July 5, 2005 minutes were unanimously approved.

Old Business:

Interview Prospective Board Member

Prospective member has been e-mailed twice, with no response. Chair Hilliard will attempt to reach her one more time and then will write her a letter.

Waiving Fees for Events – Subcommittee Update

Subcommittee members Josh DeBruyn, Larry Haley, and Lance Ferraro have met once and presented written notes from that meeting. A final report will be presented at the September 6 meeting.

PRAB Survey

John Hilliard handed out the Budget Calendar that was presented at the August 8 City Commission meeting. He encouraged members to visit the City's website to review Commission agendas. He shared information about the City's fund balance and the need to begin building it back up to avoid a poor bond rating. The survey regarding Board members recommendations for budget savings was tabled until the September 6 meeting. There was some discussion on the sale of some underutilized park property to reduce the general fund subsidy to Parks and Recreation. Some members had heard that the sale of Eastern Hills Golf Course was imminent and Don Cooney said that at this point the potential decision to sell Eastern Hills is just in the discussion stage. It was questioned if the City would still have the industry standard recommended acreage per person if this were sold and Frances indicated that the City would still meet that standard.

Friends of Recreation Golf Outing Report

Frances Jewell reported that the Outing was quite successful. The event brought in approximately \$5,000 which was down from last year, however, other similar golf outings in the community are also down in net revenue this year. John had volunteered at the event and agreed that it was a good event and that Eastern Hills did a great job. Funds raised at this event will go towards the Boundless Playground in Upjohn Park.

New Business

City Leased and Owned Properties Proposal

Frances had provided PRAB with a list of non-designated/non-dedicated parks and leased properties which are being recommended to be sold by the City or to be returned to the lessee. Brief discussion followed on what a non-designated or non-dedicated park is and what this means if the City decides to sell parkland. Frances shared that the recommendation regarding sale of surplus park properties included the recommendation that proceeds be invested in the Kalamazoo Municipal Recreation Endowment Fund. Bronson Park is leased by the City from the County and its return to the County is recommended. This prompted much discussion. It was determined that the list of properties recommended for disposition will be reviewed in more detail at the September 6 PRAB meeting. A notice will be sent to all neighborhood associations informing them of the September 6 meeting and will include a list of the parks and leases being considered.

Garrylee McCormick stated that he wants PRAB to have a representative on the Property Review Committee as was the custom in the past. Frances suggested that he get in touch with Jerome Kisscorni, Community Planning and Development, and let him know that PRAB would like to resume its representation on this committee.

Event Approval

The Board unanimously recommended that the Acting City Manager approve the following two special events.

- National Night Out, August 2, 6:00-8:00 pm; Frays Park, Farrell Park, and Rockwell Park (original request included Fairmount Park which will not be used) ***[approved by phone/e-mail by 6 members; 1 member could not be reached.]***
- "Back Pack Event," Kalamazoo Deacons' Conference, LaCrone Park—Friday, August 19, 2005
- Women of Worship, Coats and Winter Clothing Drive for the Homeless and Underprivileged, Martin Luther King, Jr. Park—Saturday, November 12, 2005

Comments:

Citizen-Non Agenda Items

None

Commission Liaison

Commissioner Cooney expressed concern about the quality of life issues and financial issues facing the City. He praised the community efforts this summer regarding the Summer Youth Jobs Program that involved 100 youth and all the programming that has

happened this summer with the \$31,000 funding from the City and the foundations. Don especially noted that Denise Siegel, Recreation Manager, has played a key role in getting youth agencies together and working as a team with no “turf” conflicts. He invited PRAB to the Youth Talent Show in Bronson Park on Saturday, August 13. He also praised WMU recreation students for their involvement in working with youth this summer. Don shared one piece of bad news that there was an electrical problem at Washington School and a great deal of food that the Turn 2 Foundation had donated to the Food Bank of Battle Creek for youth program evening meals at Washington had been spoiled.

Parks and Recreation Director—Monthly Report

Frances shared that Parks and Recreation had received a grant from the Kalamazoo Community Foundation/John E. Fetzer Institute Fund for \$5,000 to fund a youth Apprenticeship in Advertising at the Youth Development Center. She also invited PRAB and the public to the Donor Wall Dedication at Mayors’ Riverfront Park on August 25.

Staff Comments

None

Board Member Comments

John praised the Summer Youth Jobs program and highly recommended that it happen again next summer. He said that the kids did a great job and residents thanked the youth for cleaning up the neighborhood.

Adjournment: Larry Haley had to leave at 6:00; Josh DeBruyn at 6:15; Lance Ferraro at 6:40. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Vinge, Recording Secretary