

**Approved**  
**Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes**  
**12/02/2014**

Chair Meka Phillips called the meeting to order at 5:20 pm in the Parks and Recreation Community Room in Mayors' Riverfront Park.

**Roll Call:**

**Members Present:** Meka Phillips, Travis Bell (arrived at 5:38 p.m.), Michael Markel, John Johnson and Natalie Patchell

**Members Absent:** None

**City Commission Liaison:** Stephanie Moore, absent

**Friends of Recreation Liaison:** Kathy Wiedmayer, present

**Staff Present:** Sean Fletcher, Amy Willard

**Introduction of Guests:** Ryan Johnson, Parks Manager

**Changes to the Agenda:** 2015 proposed fee schedule, covered under Parks and Recreation Director Monthly Report.

**Special Presentations:** None

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes for the November 11, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved.

**Old Business:**

**Tree removal (Crane Park) -** The motion was made that an Ad Hoc Committee was to be formed and that Natalie would chair it. Natalie said that she met with Ryan and Sean, and they set up two meetings. One is set for Thursday, January 15, 2015, and the other one is set for Thursday, February 12, 2015. Both meetings will be at 5:00 p.m. in the Community Room. Natalie said that as far as serving on the committee, it was established that the composition would be two reps from businesses, two Master Gardeners, two neighbors, the Parks Manager, Ryan, and Natalie as chair. Natalie said that one neighbor, Norma Smith, and one Master Gardener, Harvey Butte, have already signed up. Natalie said that she is looking at two businesses that are down the street. One of those is Rx Optical, and either Ambati Flowers or Antoniotti Chiropractic. Natalie said they can actually see the (Crane Park) triangle from their business. Natalie asked Sean to let Andrea from Adam's Outdoor know about the committee. Natalie said that Adams Outdoor is welcome to have a rep at the meetings and let them be a part of it. She said the goal of the Ad Hoc Committee is to present the findings. She said Ryan agreed to do an assessment of the site. The committee will then begin looking at what will work instead of cutting all of the trees down at once, and meet the needs that were expressed at the meeting, such as safety and aesthetics, along with historic value.

**New Business:**

**Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Applicant – Zadie Jackson –** Natalie said that Zadie served on the City Commission, and recently finished a term on the Planning and Zoning Board. Natalie said that she has been a very active citizen and has done a tremendous amount of volunteer work. Kathy asked if she was previously on the Friends' Board. Sean said yes.

Natalie made the motion to approve Zadie Jackson as a new member. All were in favor and the motion carried.

**Event Recommendations:**

- The Girls on the Run Tu Tu run event at Spring Valley Park on Sunday, February 01, 2015 from 12:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. was unanimously approved.
- The Spirit Racing 4<sup>th</sup> Annual K5K event at Spring Valley Park on Saturday, May 23, 2015 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. was unanimously approved.
- The Kalamazoo Institute of Arts 64<sup>th</sup> Annual Art Fair event at Bronson Park on Friday, June 05, 2015 from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., and Saturday, June 06, 2015 from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. was unanimously approved.
- The Super Run event at Spring Valley Park on Saturday, June 20, 2015 from 6:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. was unanimously approved.
- The Eagle Take Flight Art in the Park event at Milham Park on Saturday, June 27, 2015 from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. was unanimously approved.
- The Jesus Loves Kalamazoo Worship Launch at Bronson Park on Sunday, July 12, 2015 from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. was unanimously approved.
- The Jesus Loves Kalamazoo Community Picnic/Prayer & Grill Night at Martin Luther King Park on Wednesday, July 15, 2015 from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. was unanimously approved.
- The Jesus Loves Kalamazoo Community Picnic/Prayer & Grill Night at LaCrone Park on Friday, July 17, 2015 from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. was unanimously approved.

**Comments:**

**Citizens:** None

**Commission Liaison:** Stephanie Moore, absent

**Friends Liaison:** Kathy said that this was her last meeting because at the last Friends' meeting, there were two different agendas. One was for the regular Friends' meeting, and the second one was for Kalamazoo Friends' with the new board. They established that it wasn't necessary to have liaisons under the new board. She said the next meeting is on Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup>.

Sean said the old board will probably be around for a bit longer though, because he and Jen are trying to sort through all of the details.

Kathy said the time for the new board was changed to 11:30 a.m. on the second Thursday of each month. Kathy said Maureen stepped down as chair, and that Jen is interested in becoming the new chair. Kathy said she is more interested in being a Treasurer instead of a Secretary, because she has a degree in Accounting. She said things may be shifting around and that everything is dependent on filing the 501 (c) 3.

Kathy asked about the Friends' money. Sean said that the money will stay at the foundation, and that they would be able to access the spendable dollars. Kathy asked if Friends' would be able to invest the money. Sean said no. He said there's significant grant making dollars available, and Friends' needs to find out if they can use those dollars to hire a fund developer to keep the pot of money growing.

Kathy said that the Friends' Board is still desperately short of members and told PRAB to encourage people to apply.

**Parks and Recreation Director Monthly Report:** Sean said the 2015 proposed fee schedule are fees for programs and rental fees for parks and facilities. Sean said that PRAB usually reviews the fees and makes

recommendations before it goes to City Commission. Sean said that the Crane Park wedding rate in the past was \$80 for a 4-hour time frame, and is now being bumped to \$100. Natalie said that \$125 sounds reasonable, especially because it does cost extra to keep the park (and all parks) maintained. Sean said that sounded reasonable to him. He said he will make the change, and present that to the Commissioners.

Sean said that there will be a 5% increase across the board, because we are going to new software called Active Net for registration. He said people will now be able to register online. He said that the 5% will cover transaction fees (for use of credit cards, etc...)

Sean said we are extending all of the camps to go until 5:30 p.m. He said currently they go until 3:30 p.m. and then the kids get transferred to the extended stay site. He said that we take kids from one site to another along with having additional transportation and staff costs, so this makes more sense. He said more people will register since they don't have to worry about leaving work, having someone else pick up their kids, or pay for extended camps.

Sean said that the fees are going from \$50 to \$70 a week for residents and from \$75 to \$105 a week for non-city residents. He said this is still way below what any other camp would cost. He said many campers get either a 50% or full scholarship anyway, so they aren't paying the full amount. He said the other thing being included in the cost of the camps is field trips. He said parents will not have to pay extra money for trips to the Kik pool, bowling, etc...

Sean said the other minimal increase is the program refund fee. We used to charge \$8 and it is now going to \$10. He said some of the fees are remaining the same- such as daily pool admissions and the rentals of fields for adult sports. He said aside from the 5% increase, there aren't any other charges.

Sean said he gives credit to Lisa for managing our money. He said for the second year in a row, we will exceed our revenue target. He said we had a large goal this year, and he is excited that we will exceed it. In addition, we will be below our expense target as well.

Sean said that for the 2015 budget, there will be budget hearings with the commissioners. He said those dates and times are on the city website. He said he will find out when they are, and will send those out to the Board. He said he would like to see members at those hearings to express concerns.

He said that he and Ryan are working on set dates to have parks clean-ups. He said there will be one in April, one in October, and then 2 per month in between. He said the goal is to get those dates set so that people can get interested in cleaning up a certain park. He said that if they did 10 a year, then within three years, each park would have a thorough clean up. He said the ones in April and October will be pretty big projects, He said that at the one last year in Verburg Park, they had 10 dumpsters full of branches, tree limbs, logs, and vines. He said they also had somewhere around 20 plus bags full of trash, and they did it with a small group of people. He said a lot got accomplished in the few hours they did it, and it made a huge difference. He said Ryan is working with parks staff on the schedule, and what parks will be done. Sean says he gets a lot of calls from people who want to volunteer, and also from people who need to do court ordered community service. He said that the administrative staff will then have a set schedule of parks with the times to tell people over the phone who inquire.

Sean said that our new Recreation Manager, Patrick, will be starting on Jan 5, 2015. He said that our department will almost be fully staffed. Sean said that Denise Dawson, one of our Parks Coordinators, is leaving to take a different job in Kentwood. He said we will look to fill that position.

**Staff:** None

**Board Members:** Natalie asked how to form Friends' of a particular park. (Ex: Friends' of Woods Lake). She wondered if it came under the auspices of the Board or the City or if a neighborhood takes it on and forms it. Sean said some do. He said that we have an Adopt- A-Park, but we don't really market or promote it. Natalie wondered how we could go about establishing a group that could raise funds for a specific park. Sean said it would need to be organic and separate from the city. He said the 501 (c) 3 is the Friends' of Recreation. He

said parks are part of that recreation. He said there is more of the volunteer/clean- up going on than there is the fundraising. Natalie suggested attaching an adopt-a-park form to any approval of use of a park.

Sean said that with our Adopt-A-Park we will give up to \$150 to invest in plants etc... He said when Friends' of Recreation becomes a 501 (c) 3, then that's an avenue that money can be donated to tax deductible.

Natalie said that professional photographers shouldn't be in the park without paying us a fee. She said that isn't fair that they ask the volunteers to stop working so they can take pictures. Natalie collected business cards so they she could contact them for donations. Sean said that if they are city residents, they could argue that they pay their taxes. Sean said it's a fine line. He said if they were to actually set up a booth, then that would be solicitation. He said it is not ok that people ask the volunteers to stop their work.

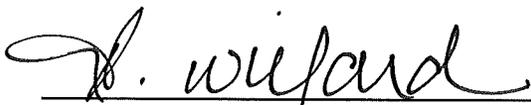
Travis said that he emailed Sean. He said the mountain bike group that he is with is doing a fat tire winter race at Fort Custer. He said that it would be cool to have a race at Red Arrow Golf Course. Travis said he is trying to get a group together. He said that a course can easily be set up in the winter time. He floated the idea that it would be a joint fundraiser. He said he wants to keep it simple, and that it could be an opportunity for his group and/or other groups to raise money for parks.

John asked if that on January 01, 2015, we would have a new City Commission liaison. Sean said not necessarily. He said that whoever wants to be the liaison, can be.

John asked about the KVCC redevelopment near Upjohn Park, and if they were working with the City to redevelop the creek. Sean said yes. He said as far as the approval goes, it is up to the DEQ. Natalie said the park ground is flooded because of the way they cut into the park and widened the area. Sean said we will get a trail alongside the creek as well. He said with our new City Planner, there is talk of having Crosstown end at Vine street He said there may be a roundabout at the intersection of Crosstown and Vine. He said it would give us some more park land.

**Adjournment:** 6:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Amy Willard, Recording Secretary



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Recording Secretary



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Chair