

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes
November 19, 2019

Chair Meka Philips called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm on November 19, 2019 at Mayors Riverfront Park

Roll Call:

Members Present: Paul Teini, John Johnson, Kayleen Shafer, Meka Phillips

Members Absent: Erin Knott, Aliyah Adams, Pam Roland, Chris Patchell, Patrick McVerry

Staff Present: Corey Stamps, Sean Fletcher

Introduction of Guests:

Changes to the Agenda: None

Special Presentations:

Tyler Bassett & Corinn Rutkoski presented on the plantings at S. Westnedge and Sherwood Park. Tyler reported we would like to start a savannah planting at South Westnedge Park.

Paul Teini asked is there surrounding parks that represent oak savannahs?

Tyler said no. Blanche hall has some components and Sherwood park but not completely. The best example is a savannah falls in between a prairie and a forest. Tyler continued, South Westnedge came about because of the big trees and the fact that it captures the real savannah look. Tyler mentioned they have a two-year plan to complete the project.

Paul asked do you have a sense of how the park is used now? Tyler mentioned he knows there has been movies in the park but not much else. Paul asked how much of the park would you want to implement. Tyler and Corinn responded not a lot of space.

Meka asked how it would be funded? Tyler responded, we are seeking grants from organizations.

Kayleen Shafer asked besides for the education how would you want people to enjoy it? Corinn responded, we would like to feature more of Vine Neighborhood events. We would also add signs that explain what the garden is for. Kayleen likes it and thinks they should add signage with the Kzoo Parks app.

Everyone approved the idea.

Approval of Minutes:

September and October Minutes have been approved

Old Business:

John asked did we send the letter for the farmers market. Meka said no not yet.

New Business:

None

Event Recommendations:

None

Comments:

None

Citizens:

None

Commission Liaison:

Sean mentioned we have 2 new commission members that are fighting to be on the board. We should know soon the outcome of who will be attending.

Friends of Recreation Liaison Update:

None

Parks and Recreation Director Monthly Report:

Sean reported, Verberg park is being updated. It will have a small pavilion, kayak launch, half basketball court, and musical instruments that have to do with black arts and culture. The park has the KRVT so we don't need to add much more. Sean is presenting this information at the Northside meeting today. The project would start next year. Also, the spray pad will go to Lacrone Park. It will be a smaller version than what we planned. There will be benches added and everything will be installed next year. This will make the second spray pad in the city. They want to have one in all the quadrants.

Sean continued, the city budget meeting is on Monday December 9th at 5:00pm at the City Hall community room. If anyone could be there in support of the parks team that would be great. Sean mentioned the budget process is unique so it helps if people can stand up and talk about how you want parks to have more money and support.

Staff:

Corey responded Tree Lighting Ceremony is November 29 from 5:00pm – 7:30pm and Candy Cane Hunt is December 7 from 12:00pm – 2:00pm

We can always use more hands for Candy Cane Hunt. If you are interested in volunteering, please just let me know.

Board Members:

Kayleen thought Safe Halloween went really good. The workers were all really nice and the games were fun. The weather was also nice. Her only complaint is Milham has no handicap spaces.

Paul would like to advocate for a trail system for biking or running in the city. He thinks it would be valuable for the city. The trail system in portage is very good at keeping away from the street and he thinks in the city of Kalamazoo that would be good for everyone. Sean has a meeting to discuss the gaps in the city that exist coming soon. He hopes something will be accomplished in the meeting as in the past not much gets done.

Paul added he noticed on the trail in the winter there is no plowing or maintenance. Sean mentioned anything is possible with the right amount of funding. The KRVT is closed for a reason.

Kayleen asked about the heated sidewalks. Sean said that's HUGE money. The downtown mall spent a large amount of money to make that happen. That would take a lot of maintenance.

John would love to see the trail continue. Every time he brings his bike out he gets frustrated and doesn't want to ride on the street. He wants to know how to get the ball rolling. Sean mentioned the push is already there. They are trying to figure out how to make less lanes downtown and more bike friendly.

Adjournment: 6:26pm

The next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 3, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. at the Parks and Recreation Community Room.

Respectfully submitted by Corey Stamps, Recording Secretary

Recording Secretary

Chair

