

Minutes

Park and Recreation Commission

(meeting taped)

Monthly meeting: Monday, April 12, 2004 in the Veteran's Room of City Hall.

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

By roll call, members present: John Walsh, Al Felice, Matt Cripps, Karen Izzo, David Mikos and Beverly Handi was excused.

Parks and Recreation Director Dennis O'Connell was present. Athletic Director Kenneth Marcucio was a

additions or deletions to the agenda:

Without objection, the agenda was accepted as written.

approval of minutes:

A motion was made by Karen Izzo and second by Matt Cripps. Move to accept the minutes of the meeting 2004, as written. Motion carried with Beverly Moran and David Mikos abstaining.

Public portion:

Daniel R. Waleski of 23 Elm Street expressed concern for the Parks & Recreation Commission overseeing the parcel. He was not sure whether this public area should come under the Parks & Recreation Commission, per se. The parcel is a public square with concrete walks and seating areas, or manicured lawns. The nature of this parcel calls for what is best served for individuals for passive recreation. He suggested that the issue be put aside and given a thought before a definitive decision is made as to the parcel's final authority.

Mr. Waleski noted that there have been two brush fires on the parcel in the past few weeks and today construction equipment arrived and began removal of trees although the city is in litigation over the regulatory approval from the Inland Wetlands Agency. He expressed concern for the ongoing vandalism and the lack of police presence.

Chairman Walsh noted that the Neighborhood Committee did ask him at one of their meetings whether the Parks & Recreation Commission could oversee Witek Park. He brings that request to the Commission this evening. Chairman Walsh noted that all of the city owned property is ultimately under the control of the Board of Aldermen.

No one else came forward and public portion was closed.

Correspondences:

Nothing was presented.

NEW or OTHER BUSINESS:

A.) Neighborhood Committee request to have Commission oversee Witek Park:

Chairman Walsh indicated that he raised the question of the restructuring of the Department of Public Works and the relationship the Commission would have with the redefined department. He acknowledged the importance of having dedicated staff to perform necessary maintenance needs. If the Commission was to take over jurisdiction over the park, current rules for the Park revisited. He was not in favor of permits or fees. He felt the Commission should encourage people to use recreation facilities. Mr. Felice indicated that the desire was to develop trails once the fields were cleared. Chairman Walsh felt strongly that any trails should be linked with Ansonia's trails on their High School property.

Members felt that the maintenance and administration should be clearly defined prior to the Commission assuming authority. The majority of members were in favor of eliminating the permits and fees as it was felt that they would not be enforced. Members questioned whether the volunteers for the patrol could be activated although no appointment was made to the Open Space Commission. It was felt that the access road for the fields will provide the police access. Members returned to the discussion on the maintenance, feeling that this would be paramount in the future. The Commission would consider the oversight. It was noted that the maintenance plan dictated by the Derby Police Department and Inland Wetlands Agency approval is quite specific and members were concerned that this plan needs to be accomplished with adequate personnel. Members also desired to have the administration of the park defined as they wanted assurance that the Commission would oversee the development of rules for the park.

A motion was made by Matt Cripps and second by Beverly Moran. Move that the Parks & Recreation Commission communicate to the Neighborhood Committee on the request that the Commission administer Witek Park.

Recreation Commission would be in favor of the request with stipulations on roles and responsibilities, and overall governing authority of Witek Park. Motion carried unanimously.

B.) 2004-2005 Budget request:

Mr. O'Connell presented the 2004-2005 Parks & Recreation budget proposal. The proposed budget is for an increase of \$3,400 or 8.88% over the current budget of \$197,520. There are increases in the salaries as they had no increases for two years. It was noted that these increases will have to be approved by the Board of Supervisors. A line item for supervisors was increased to add a person for seasonal weekend help. The building maintenance line item was deleted from the budget as the administration is now under the building maintenance department. The maintenance items have been increased to accommodate the added maintenance of the Little League field house and the skate park. Under program line items, the skate park funding and the request for training and safety programs have been suggested that the Commission invite the programs to meetings over the course of the next few months to discuss laws and budgets, similar to what was done a few years ago.

A motion was made by Al Felice and second by Karen Izzo. Move to approve the 2004-2005 Parks & Recreation Commission Budget request. Motion carried unanimously.

DIRECTOR REPORTS:

Parks & Recreation Director's Report: Mr. O'Connell reported that the spring programs are underway and going well with practice underway and games will be started shortly. Babe Ruth will have two teams, a little league softball team this year due to a lack of participants. There is a Middle School team this year and girls will be playing on.

Maintenance work on the field

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A motion was made by Matt Cripps and second by Beverly Moran. Move that the Parks & Recreation Commission communicates to the Neighborhood Committee on the request that the Commission administer Witek Park. The Parks & Recreation Commission would be in favor of the request with stipulations on roles and responsibilities, procedures and overall governing authority of Witek Park. Motion carried unanimously.

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A motion was made by Al Felice and second by Karen Izzo. Move to approve the 2004-2005 Parks & Recreation Commission Budget request. Motion carried unanimously.

DIRECTOR REPORTS:

Parks & Recreation Director's Report: Mr. O'Connell reported that the spring programs are underway. Soccer seems to be going well with practice underway and games will be started shortly. Babe Ruth will have its first girl's little league softball team this year due to a lack of participants. There is a Middle School team and many of the girls will be playing on.

Maintenance work on the field house has been arranged with improvements to the walls in the showers and addressing the gutters by the concession stand and repairs to exterior trim. Plans are to bring in a professional to inspect the football field surface and determine what can be done to repair the damage from last year's use.

It was noted that members of the health club asked if it was possible to have music in certain areas of the club. Mr. O'Connell will explore the request and possibly consider cable television as an alternative.

Athletic Director's Report: Mr. Marcucio was not present.

Committee Reports:

Programs Committee – The Committee will be meeting on April 15, 2004. A CPR/Red Cross course

tentatively set for April 27 & 28. The course will be limited to fifteen participants on a first come, first the coaches and further courses will be explored for the fall.

The Committee is continuing to study a universal application form for coaches. Ms. Izzo is pursuing th this year.

Facilities Committee – Chairman Walsh noted that the Healthy Valley is pursuing grant funding to de to encourage residents toward a healthier lifestyle. The participants could access the database, record th monitor how active they are on a regular basis.

All needed approvals for the Greenway should be received and bids should go out in June with constru in late summer.

Mr. Felice reported that the equipment is up at Witek Park with construction anticipated to be complete As noted by Mr. Waleski, there is litigation but the city fathers decided to move forward.

It was noted that the Commission voted against the Cultural Commission's use of the Ryan Field Com Board of Alderman subsequently approved the use. Chairman Walsh indicated that the Commission's p relayed to the Neighborhood Committee. It was his understanding that all effected Commissions and D meet to discuss concerns and determine the appropriate use of the fields.

A motion was made by Matt Cripps and second by Al Felice. Move to adjourn the meeting at 9:00p.m. unaniously.

The next Parks & Recreation Commission meeting will be Monday, May 10, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. at City Aldermanic Chambers are unavailable then the Veteran's room will be requested.

Respectfully prepared,

Karen Kemmesies, secretary

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