

Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Committee Minutes of August 14th, 2014

Meeting called to order by John White Jr., at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers in City Hall Plaza, 630 S. Central Avenue.

Present: John White Jr., Chris Viegut, Jane Yaeger, Ali Luedtke, Rich Reinart and Alderman Tom Buttke

Excused: Kristy Palmer

Absent: None

Also Present: Ed Englehart, Parks and Recreation Director; Ben Steinbach, Parks and Recreation Maintenance Supervisor; Kelly Cassidy, Parks & Recreation Supervisor; Dan Knoeck, Public Works Director and Rotary Winter Wonderland Co-Chair; Alderperson Char Smith; Jeff Bahling and Rebecca Ramirez, Rettler Corporation; and Tom Barg (arrived at 6:50 p.m.).

PR14-22 Motion by Buttke, seconded by Luedtke to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2014 meeting.

Motion Carried 5-0

Public Comments: None

Chris Viegut arrived.

The committee set Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. in room 108 for the date and time of their next meeting.

Englehart introduced the Rotary Winter Wonderland use agreement extension request and explained that the Board of Public Works at a recent meeting had considered this item and approved the use agreement changes that are being considered this evening.

PR14-23 Motion by Buttke, seconded by Yaeger to approve extending the term of the use agreement with the Rotary Winter Wonderland from 2018 to 2024 with the additional language regarding use of the renovated space, and to thank Rotary Winter Wonderland for their efforts in providing this activity. Discussion followed.

Motion Carried 6-0

Smith left the meeting.

Englehart made initial comments regarding the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan process and the next steps in having the plan adopted by the City. He introduced consultants Jeff Bahling and Rebecca Ramirez from Rettler Corporation. They presented a power point presentation with highlights from the CORP and led discussion. Buttke commented that he agreed the Committee members needed to embrace the plan and keep focused on its implementation. White questioned whether or not the term “renovation” should be attached to the Hefko swimming pool situation, and whether or not the level of funding estimated to address the issue should be increased. Viegut commented that the City does need to address the Hefko swimming pool issue in the short term. Luedtke requested clarification on a fully accessible playground that was listed as a barrier-free playground. Buttke asked that it would be nice if staff could provide some examples of what a barrier-free playground would look like. Englehart noted that he has requested comments on the CORP to be provided to him via email prior to the end of August and he will share all comments with Rettler Corporation and the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Committee, and any changes to the current document should be agreed to by the Committee members. The plan has also been made available to the public on the City website, and a hard copy document at the public library and at the Parks and Recreation Department.

PR14-24 Motion by Buttke, seconded by Yaeger to direct staff to forward the plan to the Board of Public Works, Plan Commission, and Common Council for their consideration and approval.

Motion Carried 6-0

Englehart distributed information with the financial totals for the 2012 and 2013 actual department expenditures and revenues, and the 2014 budgeted and 2015 requested amounts.

Information Items: Staff updated the Committee on their respective areas of responsibility and answered questions regarding the monthly reports. Englehart noted that the trail surface repairs are being made by Fahrner Asphalt and they should be completed by this weekend and the trail reopened for use. It was also commented that the fundraising for the new grizzly bear exhibit has gone very well, and that a public announcement on the project and a general fund drive will be made at the zoo during the Maple Fall Fest on September 13th. Buttke shared information on the Zoological Society activities and commented that the new zoo store continues to be very successful.

Committee Member Questions, Comments, and Suggestions: Viegut noted some concerns regarding the large cracks in the asphalt on the trail just east of the wolf exhibit in Wildwood Park, in addition to invasive plant concerns on park land and the need, when possible, for the maintenance staff or volunteers to remove before it goes to seed.

Future Agenda Items: No specific items were noted.

Communications: Englehart shared a few of the areas that the department had received citizen/program participant comments and communications.

PR14-25 Motion by Leudtke, seconded by Yaeger to adjourn the meeting.

Motion Carried 6-0 Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Ed Englehart, Parks & Recreation Director