

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes

June 5, 2008

Item 1: Meeting Called to Order by Chair Lenna Watson at 12:02 p.m.

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Dennis Teeters
Jack Scott
Tawny Espinoza
Lenna Watson
Reford Theobold
Dr. William Findlay
Bruce Hill (Ex-Officio)

Board Members Absent: Nick Adams

Parks & Recreation Staff Present: Rich Englehart, Interim Director
Tressa Fisher, Administrative Specialist

Guests: Joe Stevens

Item 2: Approve Minutes

Bruce Hill stated Dr. William Findlay was in attendance at the last meeting. Reford Theobold moved to approve the May 1, 2008 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board minutes with the correction that Dr. William Findlay was present at the meeting. Dennis Teeters seconded.

Motion adopted by Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Yes 6 No 0

Item 3: Recognition of Outgoing Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members Dennis Teeters and Nick Adams

Lenna Watson thanked Dennis Teeters for his dedication and commitment to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Joe Stevens presented Mr. Teeters with a recognition plaque and thanked him for his service. Mr. Stevens discussed the relationship between Mesa County School District and the City of Grand Junction, stating Dennis Teeters played a huge role in making it successful, stating it was not always as successful in the past. Joe Stevens stated Dennis Teeters had encouraged the School District and City to discontinue billing one another back and forth for facility usage, and suggested the two organizations form a “partnership”. Mr. Stevens expressed his appreciation, stating the School District/City relationship has since continued to improve and expand over the years. Dennis Teeters also briefly discussed the history of the partnerships, agreeing there had been tremendous improvement over the years. Mr. Teeters talked about his passion for high school track and field, stating his appreciation for the track improvements that were made along with the stadium’s synthetic turf project. Dennis Teeters stated he has enjoyed his time on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and said he wanted to part with two messages; 1) A request for the slide and swings to be repaired at Sherwood Park, and 2) A request for the Board “not” to give away parking spaces when developing future parks and/or

facilities. Mr. Teeters expressed the importance of adequate parking, referring specifically to the parking shortage at Canyon View Park. Bruce Hill thanked Dennis Teeters for his years of dedication, stating, while Mr. Teeters may be leaving the Board, he is certainly not leaving the community. Thank you Dennis Teeters and Nick Adams!

Item 4: Committee Update on Burkey Park

Lenna Watson reported on the recent Burkey Park sub-committee meeting, which included herself, Terri Troutner, Jack Scott, Joe Stevens, and Shawn Cooper. Mrs. Watson stated the group discussed the park's current needs and how to possibly move forward with some minor improvements. Rich Englehart passed out a letter that Terri Troutner was planning on distributing to the Burkey Park neighborhood. Mr. Englehart said Ms. Troutner had contacted the administration office requesting reimbursement for the copying costs. Rich Englehart stated he wanted clarification as to what the sub-committee had committed to, in order to verify the information in the letter prior to its distribution. Joe Stevens stated the sub-committee only encouraged Terri Troutner to continue pursuing the process and provided her with some key points. Mr. Stevens said the primary focus of the meeting was to determine what improvements could be done in the short term, and that the sub-committee had only pledged to; 1) keep the weeds down and mow the area, 2) level the site, and 3) possibly provide a soft wood chip surface to be installed during a neighborhood work day. Joe Stevens said the sub-committee reviewed the Burkey Park master plan as a way of letting Ms. Troutner know what "could" be done if funding were identified. Mr. Stevens said they made it very clear the park's development is a matter of funding and prioritization.

Joe Stevens said the neighborhood group intends to contact the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, City Council, Mesa County, etc. for feedback in the near future. Mr. Stevens stated the neighborhood group is also interested in having an ice cream social, in hopes of obtaining additional support. Lenna Watson said the neighborhood is a very motivated group looking for the appropriate channels, and the sub-committee strictly served as sounding board, while attempting to provide them with a direction. Joe Stevens said fencing, signage, and picnic tables were also discussed, yet no commitments were made. Jack Scott said Joe Stevens had recommended the subdivisions attempt to raise some money to use as leverage in obtaining grant funding. Bruce Hill said he had recently been contacted by Terri Troutner, and has a meeting scheduled with her. Mr. Hill asked Joe Stevens if there was enough money in the parks budget to complete the minor improvements. Joe Stevens responded there is not a lot of funding, but there is enough to fund the three items committed to.

Bruce Hill said, while he hopes to keep the neighborhood's enthusiasm level high, he also hopes they realize a fundraising push will not have enough of an effect on City Council to raise Burkey Park on the priority list. Mr. Hill stated he intends to recommend the idea of leveraging any funding the neighborhood raises towards the minor improvements that can be made now, stating their fund raising efforts will most likely not initiate the development of a \$4 million park project. Joe Stevens said he expressed the neighborhood should not collect any money right now, as the Burkey Park project has not been prioritized. Mr. Stevens said he tried to make it as clear as possible that the City's funding is allocated at the discretion of City Council. Jack Scott said it appears the Burkey Park neighborhood's main concern is that nothing is being "started". Councilman Hill said he is supportive of minor improvements, yet expressed he does not want past improvements to go unnoticed, stating the property is much better than it used to be. Jack Scott and Lenna Watson both said the sub-committee was very cautious not to commit to any major improvements.

Joe Stevens stated, while he appreciates Terri Troutner's enthusiasm, her letter is very premature and goes beyond what the sub-committee had discussed and/or agreed to. Rich Englehart questioned whether the sub-committee had committed to pay for the copying charges and/or if they had offered to let the neighborhood group utilize the City's tax exempt number for collecting donations. Lenna Watson said nothing like that was promised, and that the sub-committee meeting was only a discussion, not a "guarantee" of anything. Rich Englehart also asked if there was a fencing commitment. Joe Stevens responded, stating the fencing discussion was very general, consisting of brainstorming options of how to minimize vehicles from "four-wheeling" through the property. Mr. Stevens said the sub-committee agreed to "look at" what could be done, but made no promises. Joe Stevens stated the sub-committee's intention was to strictly lay some groundwork by approaching the project on an "exploratory" basis. Rich Englehart stated he will contact Terri Troutner and reiterate what the specific items were that the sub-committee had committed to, as well as work with her on revising the letter. Discussion ensued regarding the amount of minor improvements that can be done without creating the perception the entire park is going to be developed. Jack Scott expressed leveling the ground and providing a soft surface trail might be enough to pacify the group for the time being.

Item 5: Future Meetings Agenda

The July Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting will be moved to Thursday, July 10 due to the holiday.

Item 6: Other Business

Dennis Teeters thanked Joe Stevens for his many years of hard work and dedication to the City of Grand Junction, the Parks & Recreation Department, and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Mr. Stevens said he has appreciated his time with the City of Grand Junction and that his departure is "bittersweet", as he will miss the community, but is also anxious to move closer to his children/grandchildren. Good luck Joe Stevens – you will be missed!

Rich Englehart stated he will be the Interim Director of the Parks & Recreation Department until another Interim Director is hired from within the organization. Mr. Englehart said the posting for the Director's position will close on June 27, 2008 and that the hiring process will include an assessment center. Rich Englehart reported the City intends to have a new Director hired by August or September.

Jack Scott asked who would be replacing departing Parks and Recreation Advisory Board members Dennis Teeters and Nick Adams. Tressa Fisher responded the Board members have not been replaced yet, as the City Clerk's office is in the process of re-advertising the openings.

Rich Englehart briefly reported on the status of phase III of Canyon View Park, which includes additional tennis courts and a restroom shelter. Mr. Englehart stated Phase III has been identified as a high priority and said the project is moving forward on schedule.

Rich Englehart reported City Council had approved the intergovernmental agreement with Mesa County for the No Thoroughfare Wash. Dr. William Findlay expressed the project will provide a much safer path for bicyclists, as it will allow them to avoid the busy intersection. Rich Englehart stated, although there will be some encroachment issues to deal with along the trail; the agreement has already resulted in an excellent partnership.

Item 7: Adjourn

Lenna Watson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dennis Teeters moved to adjourn and Jack Scott seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 12:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tressa Fisher
Administrative Specialist