

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes October 2, 2008

Item 1: Meeting Called to Order by Chair Lenna Watson at 12:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Lenna Watson
 Reford Theobold
 Dr. William Findlay
 Tawny Espinoza
 David McInay
 Yvette Carnine
 Bruce Hill (Ex-Officio)

Board Members Absent: Jack Scott

Parks & Recreation Staff Present: Rob Schoeber, Director
 Mike Vendegna, Interim Assistant to the Director
 Tressa Fisher, Administrative Specialist
 Larry Manchester, Interim Recreation Superintendent
 Traci Wieland, Interim Parks Superintendent
 Marc Mancuso, Interim Forestry Supervisor

Item 2: Approve Minutes

Reford Theobold moved to approve the September 4, 2008 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board minutes. Tawny Espinoza seconded.

Motion adopted by Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Yes 4 No 0

Item 3: Introduction of Newly Appointed Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members Yvette Carnine and David McInay

Lenna Watson asked for introductions around the table and welcomed newly appointed Board members Yvette Carnine and David McInay.

Item 4: Introduction of New Parks and Recreation Director Rob Schoeber

Rob Schoeber introduced himself and expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve as Grand Junction Parks and Recreation's new Director. Mr. Schoeber discussed the importance of maintaining a strong communication link between himself and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board members. Rob Schoeber said he plans to keep the Board members in the loop and as "active" as possible. Mr. Schoeber also thanked the Board for being community volunteers, stating a lot of people benefit from their dedication and willingness to get involved.

Item 5: Burkey Park Update

Rob Schoeber provided a brief history of Burkey Park for the benefit of the new Board members, stating the parcel is a 20 acre property that was donated to the City by the Burkey family for the purpose of building a City park. Mr. Schoeber stated the development of the park property has not been as prompt as the Burkey Park neighborhood would like; however, said it is an unusual situation due to the fact the park property is located within City limits, yet the surrounding houses are County residents. Rob Schoeber discussed the existing funding limitations, yet stated the Parks and Recreation Department intends on moving forward by creating an updated Burkey Park master plan in-house. Mr. Schoeber said, while there are no commitments in terms of funding or development at this time, the master plan will serve as a “starting point” and a tool for keeping the project on the front burner. Lenna Watson asked if the development of a master plan would potentially serve as a point of frustration since there is no funding available. Rob Schoeber responded the master plan is another step forward, as the neighborhood wants to be assured the development of the park is not a dead project. Bruce Hill stated City Council is supportive of the direction staff has taken based on the feedback received at the July 19, 2008 neighborhood meeting. Mr. Hill discussed the difficulty for City Council to prioritize project funding, and expressed Council’s approval for the inexpensive improvements recently made at Burkey Park. Bruce Hill expressed the importance of the Parks and Recreation Department working very closely with City Council regarding any further development at Burkey Park, suggesting a joint meeting with the Board and City Council to discuss the prioritization of park development.

Lenna Watson asked about the status of the annexation of the surrounding Burkey Park neighborhood. Mr. Hill said the situation does provide an interesting dynamic, as County residents are lobbying for City dollars to develop Burkey Park. Councilman Hill said it makes sense for the surrounding neighborhood to annex in the future. Reford Theobald expressed concern the City may be in danger of setting precedence if they choose to develop parks for County residents over parks for City residents. Dr. William Findlay expressed the importance of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board focusing on prioritizing park development, with regards to future neighborhood and regional parks. Reford Theobald discussed the history of the Persigo agreement, which was originally intended to encourage annexation. Mr. Theobald said the “bigger picture”, which is also a part of the public safety initiative, is to review the 201 boundary as a whole, under the idea that all of the 201 area will eventually be located within city limits. Reford Theobald stated, in the long term, the entire 201 whole area will need additional parks. Bruce Hill reported Commissioner Roland recently stated the County was interested in contributing to the development of Burkey Park, although the City is uncertain as to the County’s intentions and/or their extent of funding. Bruce Hill stated, once the City has determined the park priorities, the County may be interested in a partnership with the City to develop Burkey Park. Mike Vendegna stated the Parks and Recreation Department is not driving the development of Burkey Park higher than any other City parks, they are simply maintaining it with the same standards as other undeveloped City property (mowing weeds, trimming trees, fencing, etc.) Mr. Vendegna stated the neighborhood is very happy with the recent improvements.

Rob Schoeber reported Park Planner Shawn Cooper is being transferred into a new position in the Engineering and Planning Department at City Hall, in which he will be able to take a more global approach in the development of park property. Mr. Schoeber said the City intends to utilize Mr. Cooper’s expertise with regards to updating the Burkey Park master plan, while also involving the City’s Planning Department in the process.

Mike Vendegna distributed a list of the comments received from the July 19, 2008 Burkey Park neighborhood meeting. (See attached) Lenna Watson asked where the main access to the park will be

located. Rob Schoeber responded, stating Shawn Cooper will work directly with the Streets Department to determine the best access point. Lenna Watson said the neighborhood meeting was very successful and included people of all ages. Rob Schoeber stated the Parks and Recreation Department intends on having a follow-up meeting at a later date.

Item 6: Project Updates

Mike Vendegna reported the restrooms at Duck Pond and Sherwood Parks are both open. Mr. Vendegna said the remaining minor issues would be resolved within the month. Mike Vendegna stated contracts have been awarded for the new playgrounds at Spring Valley II, Duck Pond, and Williams Parks and said the waterslide project at Lincoln Park-Moyer Park is being wrapped up with repairs to some minor leaks, irrigation and landscaping. Mike Vendegna stated the Department intends on improving the look of the landscaping with zero to minimal maintenance.

Mr. Vendegna also reported on the upcoming remodeling of the parks administration office and the parks shops, as well as the status of the Canyon View tennis project. Two of the three sections of fencing at the new tennis courts have been completed and the foundations for the restrooms and shelter have been poured. Mr. Vendegna said the six new tennis courts will consist of post tension concrete, which should virtually eliminate cracking. Mike Vendegna said the landscaping and irrigation will be completed in-house and said, once finished, it will be the nicest tennis complex on the Western Slope.

Rob Schoeber reported on the recently completed Horizon Drive interchange project. Mr. Schoeber said the crews did a great job and that the ribbon cutting ceremony was a success. Discussion ensued regarding the dangerous conditions in which the maintenance crews are subjected to when working along the interchange. Two recent incidents included a trailer coming unhitched and crashing within 100 yards of a parks worker, and a drunk driver who caused nearly \$20,000 of damage to the new wall.

Mike Vendegna thanked the Board members for meeting at the cemetery and provided a brief history of the site. Mr. Vendegna reported the cemetery's main office was originally a garage in which the staff met with the grieving families inside a room full of maintenance equipment. Mike Vendegna said the cemetery was originally charged with maintaining as an enterprise fund, which grew more difficult as the trends began changing away from traditional burials. Mr. Vendegna said both the cemetery office and the maintenance building are now too small and inadequate; therefore a new facility is being built across the street in 2009. The current office building will be torn down and replaced with a cremation columbarium area including benches and a fountain. The existing maintenance shop will be torn down, grassed over and plotted for direct traditional burials. Mr. Vendegna stated approximately \$250,000-\$300,000 in revenue can be generated by utilizing these two areas. Mike Vendegna reported an additional 8 ½ acres, located near the Catholic cemetery, will also need to be developed in the next 10-12 years, and said the existing site should be able to serve the community for another 50 years. Mr. Vendegna said the current property consists of 42 developed acres and approximately 100 undeveloped acres. Mike Vendegna reported the cemetery is no longer an enterprise fund, and also has a perpetual care fund in which they are only allowed to draw from the interest and not the principal. Mike Vendegna stated the cemetery is currently working with the Finance Department to reduce the principal and put the money saved into a cemetery capital improvement fund for long term planning.

Item 7: Other Business

Larry Manchester reported on the very successful 2nd Annual Pork and Hops festival, which consisted of 54 barbeque teams participating for over \$20,000 in cash prizes. Mr. Manchester stated the event hosted over 10,000 people in a two day period. Reford Theobald asked about the parking situation. Larry Manchester responded the School District did an excellent job in providing busing for the football games, yet discussed the difficulty of holding such a large event in the park. Discussion ensued regarding alternate locations for the festival. Larry Manchester stated the Pork and Hops committee had considered relocating the event to the Mesa County Fairgrounds; however, found it very cost prohibitive. Mr. Manchester discussed the positive aspects of the current location, including the use of the Lincoln Park Barn for the certified judges who have to remain in a completely secluded area. Larry Manchester commended the Parks and Recreation staff for their hard work, stating the entire Department assisted with this year's event.

Item 8: Future Meetings Agenda

Lenna Watson reported she will not be in attendance at the November meeting. The Board agreed to have a brown bag lunch meeting at Sherwood Park, weather permitting.

Item 9: Adjourn

Lenna Watson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Reford Theobald moved to adjourn and Tawny Espinoza seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 1:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tressa Fisher
Administrative Specialist