

**CITY OF WARREN PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
October 4, 2016**



The meeting was called to order at 4:40 PM, October 4, 2016. Members present were Dennis Crandall, Todd Ristau, Jackie Angove, Kirk Johnson, Mark Zavinski and Judi Wilson. Mike Suppa and Elyssa Davis absent. Also attending: Mary Ann Nau, David Hildebrand, Mike Holtz & Ellen Nelson.

VISITORS

Stacy Gross, Times Observer.
Dani Mostachetti, Warren YMCA

MINUTES

Upon a motion by Judi Wilson and a second by Jackie Angove to accept the minutes of the August 2, 2016 regular meeting, the minutes were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

John Page, Boy Scout Troop 13, was unable to attend due to a schedule conflict. He was to present a possible project at Mulberry Park and has asked to be put on the agenda at the next meeting. We have not spoken directly to Mr. Page, so have not determined what the project is.

REPORT OF OFFICERS

No report.

REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Healing Garden – Ms. Wilson reported that the project is on hold as they are waiting to hear about receipt of the grant. Looking at spring of 2017.

Dog Park – Todd Ristau distributed minutes from the September 8, 2016 meeting of the Dog Park Committee. Mary Ann Nau stated that Greg Austin, Targeted Pet Treats, is searching for grant money from Targeted Pet Treats, but Dad's Dog Food and Blue Buffalo.

7 or 8 committee members attended the September 21 on-site meeting at Mulberry Park. The purpose of the on-site visit was for everyone to get a feel for the park and, along with the architect, come up with ideas to create a rendering for the dog park. Ms. Nau stated there are 3 areas on the rendering: 1 for using when one of the main areas is being rested. This is just a concept. Ms. Wilson added that it is not written in stone. Mr. Hildebrand has been tasked with the job of seeking grant money to improve playground and add a pavilion, restroom and 10 parking spaces. The committee is in the process of amending a letter that will go out to the neighbors of Mulberry Park along with a rendering of the site map. Neighbors will be invited to the next Dog Park meeting on Tuesday, October 18 to express concerns, ideas or suggestions. Several committee members volunteered to go door to door and present this information to the neighbors. Mr. Holtz said that all but 1 neighbor already has a 6' barrier between their property and the park. Mulberry Street is a platted right of way and goes through the park.

Mr. Crandall asked how wet it is? Mike Holtz replied that it could be drained and the wettest area is where the pavilion is located on the site map. March and April are the worst months. The water could be transferred to the proposed rain garden.

David Hildebrand added that the park was acquired by the city in the 1960's. This park has not had the attention as others have over the years. Mary Ann Nau stated that some playground equipment still remains at Mulberry Park. The intent is to improve and expand on that. Mike Holtz said that the sewer already exists near the playground so that is the likely spot to add a restroom.

Mary Ann Nau identified an architect with Larson Architects. She also contacted Greg Fraser who has agreed to do the 501C (3) work. She has not heard from Karlene Smith regarding the facebook page. This is a pretty big committee and it is really moving this along.

Mary Ann Nau asked if there has been less water since the City has stopped mowing the top portion of the property and trees have been planted. Mike Holtz answered that it very well could be helping and that if the dog park comes about, we could plant 25 or more trees to help with water problem and provide shade.

CITY STAFF REPORTS

Lacy Park - David Hildebrand

- Still looking for word from DCNR. Probably will get notice within the next 4-6 weeks. Denny Crandall commented that he had noticed the Bocce courts have been removed. Ms. Nau asked if Mr. Hildebrand had something earmarked for 2017. He does not. Mr. Holtz thought the Dog Park could be included into package for 2017.

Betts Park – Mike Holtz

- Bids were opened and accepted for the Betts Complex restroom renovation. Contracts have been signed and work is tentatively starting next week and the goal is to be finished before the snow falls.

PA Avenue Parkway – Mike Holtz

- Bids for the Bird Observation Deck were rejected and will be rebid in February. The sidewalk will be started the week of October 10, bid was awarded to a contractor from Erie. Kirk Johnson asked if the observation deck is still being done. Mike Holtz answered that it is still happening, just delayed. David Hildebrand is looking into DCNR grants.

DeFrees Park – Mike Holtz

- The playground equipment is all here and in boxes at the DPW garage. Waiting for one piece - the sandbox. Installer from Oil City is to be here next week. The same person doing the new soft surface was to be here 2 weeks ago. Do not want to put it down in the snow.

Historical Walking Tour/Pocket Parks – Mary Ann Nau

- Mary Ann Nau stated that 3 folks from the Parks & Recreation Commission have volunteered as well as staff members and Dan Glotz, who will help with grant money. Ms. Wilson was to check with Michelle Gray of the Historical Society to see if she had any interest. Mary Ann Nau had spoken to Michelle about the project and she was very excited about it. Initial meeting needs to be set. Ms. Nau asked Ms. Wilson to follow up with Michelle.

Warren Municipal Pool – Dani Mostachetti, YMCA

- YMCA used less staff this year and utilized the on-call system again this year with the lifeguards. This helped to keep number of hours worked and payroll down. Complaints were received about the bathrooms. They were slippery and could be cleaner. Pool was closed 2 days due to bad weather and 2 days for maintenance. Ms. Nau commented that the number of days open would be helpful information to include on the year-end report.
- Dani went over the details of a year-end report that was distributed to committee members. She asked if the hours of operation can be changed next year to better accommodate working families. Todd Ristau asked if many of the attendees are from Jamestown. Dani replied that the two biggest groups are those from inside the City of Warren and those from Jamestown. Most non-season passes were from Jamestown.
- Kirk Johnson asked if the security cameras were installed in response to vandalism. Mary Ann Nau stated that they had a slip and fall from a 2-year old child so it is a liability concern.

There was also a theft that was caught on camera this year. Grant money was used to install the cameras. This will help with negligence claims.

- Several special events were held this year. They would like to repeat them again next year. There was a positive response to the Doggie Dip although several inquiries were made about dogs swimming so soon after people were in. Chlorine was backed off in enough time to make it safe for the dogs. Dani thought we needed more advertisement of the event. Additional events are being considered: free fitness class, water volleyball tournament, yoga/Zumba in the grass, water Zumba and special nights like Carnival night or Luau night.
- Denny Crandall asked if a contingency plan could be in place to extend the pool season if weather warrants it. Ellen Nelson asked if this was an option as many of the guards are college students returning to campus. Mr. Holtz asked if they have high school guards or just college age. Dani replied that they do have high school guards and they ran the pool after the college kids left.
- Ms. Wilson asked if we help kids who cannot pay the entry fee into the pool. No program is in place at this time.
- Dani Mostachetti had reached out to a YMCA in Texas that has a junior lifeguard program for youth age 12-15. She needs to find more places to contact to obtain guards next year. The younger guards are "water watchers". Dani will look into legal ramifications. Using water watchers during fitness classes will save on expenses. They are volunteers.
- We will update the applications next year to reflect the changed hours requested by the Y.
- The committee thanked Dani for all her work this year.

NEW BUSINESS

Amending Ordinance 1837 – areas where smoking is restricted

- Mary Ann Nau stated that Ordinance 1837 does not address pavilion areas, as far as restricting areas where smoking is allowed. Ms. Nau relayed that Ms. Freenock thought the restriction should NOT be based on the presence of a child. Ms. Nau wanted clarification as to who can eject violators. After discussion of the changes, Mr. Crandall asked for a motion to move the amended ordinance up to council for approval. Jackie Angove made the motion and Judi Wilson seconded it. The motion was unanimously approved.

Adoption of Mission Statement

- The mission statement presented at the last meeting was revised with suggested changes from committee members. Ms. Freenock had previously suggested that the word "we" be changed to "the City". With no further discussion, a motion to accept the Mission Statement was made by Mark Zavinski and was seconded by Jackie Angove. The Mission Statement was unanimously approved.
- Mary Ann Nau would like to see the Mission Statement posted at the parks. She added that Mr. Holtz will be working to get bulletin boards at the parks where they are not present.

Revised Park Informational Flyers

- Updated information flyers were distributed to the committee members to review and suggest changes. Ms. Angove mentioned that the statement "also home to Santa: should be eliminated from Liberty Street Courtyard. Mary Ann Nau replied that Santa will still be housed in the Park. She went on to say that the name of the park needs to be updated to the new name "Art Kelsey Park" and to indicate that a pavilion is on site.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Crandall asked about the Floating Dock project. Ms. Nau replied they are still working on it. It is a Leadership Warren County project.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Crandall declared the meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

NEXT MONTH'S MEETING December 6, 2016 at 4:35 PM.