

**CITY OF WARREN PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021**



**CALL TO ORDER**

- The meeting was called to order by Chair Mike Suppa at 4:35 pm.

**ROLL CALL**

- Members present were Mike Suppa, Kirk Johnson, Kristine Whitaker, Jackie Angove, Mark Zavinski and Judi Wilson. Also attending from City Staff were Nancy Freenock, City Manager, Michael Holtz, DPW Director, Joe Reinke, DPW Superintendent and Kassie Damcott, Recording Secretary. All attendees participated via a Zoom meeting or in person, due to personal preference.

**MEMBER BUSINESS**

- Kris Whitaker and Jackie Angove's terms are expiring 12/31/2021. Both accepted reappointment to the Parks and Rec Commission board, so long as council appoints them to the board at a future council meeting.

**RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

- Warren City/County Citizens & Business Owners (In Person):
  - Andy Georgakis (Cycle Shop)
  - Kim Mong (Pickleball)
  - Doug James (Pickleball)
  - Alex Strassburg (Disc Golf)
  - Josh Cotton (Times Observer)
  - James Decker (WCCBI)
  - Brian Hagberg (Your Daily Local)
- Additional Guests
  - Matt Lokay (Mackin Engineering)
  - Andrea Stapleford (City Solicitor)

**MINUTES**

- Chairman Mike Suppa requested a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Zavinski made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021, meeting and Kris Whitaker seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

- NONE

**REPORT OF OFFICERS**

- NONE

**CITY STAFF REPORTS**

- NONE

**NEW BUSINESS**

A. Disc Golf Presentation

- Alex Strassburg, gave a disc golf presentation. Mr. Strassburg stated that disc golf is all age-friendly, can be played outdoors year-round and has a low start up cost as well as low long-term costs associated.

- He suggested two sites where a disc golf course could be constructed, comparing the areas to the Kane, PA disc golf setup within a city park. Sites suggested were Mulberry Park on Glade Avenue and Betts Park.
- Mr. Strassburg stated that although disc golf is very popular, likely most funds would be footed by the city, at an expense of approximately \$28,000 to design and build the course.
- Commission member Kirk Johnson asked at the conclusion of the presentation the number of acres that would be required for the course. Mr. Strassburg stated he was unsure, but that it was not a very large footprint overall.

#### B. Pickleball Presentation

- Kim Mong & Doug James presented a pickleball presentation with information as to the setup, cost and age-appropriate context of pickleball.
- Proposed a 4-court setup at Betts Park, next to the Bocce Pavilion and Court area, on the northwest side of Betts Park. This would encompass a 60 foot by 120 foot footprint with a 4 court setup.
- Mike Suppa asked at the conclusion of the presentation if Ms. Mong and Mr. James were looking for public or strictly city funding for this project. Ms. Mong stated that they would attempt to fundraise most of the money for the project from the public, with potentially very little city money needed. Right now, they are just looking to gauge interest in the Warren area and have found that a lot of people are in support of a permanent pickleball court with nearby amenities, hence why they found Betts Park to be best suited.

#### C. Pump Track Presentation

- James Decker (Warren County Chamber of Business and Industry) gave a presentation of a potential pump track and bike skills park proposed at the end of Market Street near the Clark Street Pump Station.
- This idea, which has been around for several years, was discussed during the Trestle to Trestle meetings more recently and a design has been drawn up with a more up to date geographic layout and landmarks.
- This pump track would be similar to bmx tracks, whereas the skills park would be for more advanced riders looking to use their abilities on platforms and obstacles. This park would be family and all-ages friendly.
- At the conclusion of the presentation, Kirk Johnson asked if the plan of a footpath from Point Park to the downtown waterfront, and including a walkway behind the IMT building were still options. Mr. Decker stated that these are both discussions that Trestle to Trestle taskforce are working on, but the funding that has been applied for requires construction to start by the end of 2022 and that may be just too soon for this.
- Mr. Suppa asked what the age limits of this kind of bike park would be. Mr. Decker answered that this would be all ages friendly, from young child to the elderly as there are different sections for each person's individual abilities. Mr. Suppa also stated that he has a concern for how children would safely get to the park, where Mr. Decker states that most children would not be alone. Mrs. Freenock also said that parking for those families that would like to drive to the park would be available, whether they park in the Parking Garage, or nearby, accessibility would not be an issue. Andy Georgakis also stated that most of the people that use bike parks like this ride to it as a family, or older children may ride together, and drivers are aware of the pedestrian traffic at that end of Market St as it is, so it would not be much of an issue.

#### D. Soldiers & Sailors Amphitheater Dedication

- There has been a request to dedicate the Soldiers & Sailors amphitheater in honor of James Zavinski, former council member and was a big part of the park throughout his years involved in the community.

- The dedication would be set for opening night of Music in the Park in 2022.
- Mrs. Freenock requested that City Staff research how the park came to be named Soldiers & Sailors and contact any local/living founders to be sure they are okay with renaming the amphitheater.

D. Sunshine Act

- City Solicitor, Andrea Stapleford, attended the meeting to inform the Commission of new Sunshine Act laws that require the agenda to be published no less than 24 hours in advance of a meeting. This must be posted in all places possible, including but not limited to a lobby board, website and/or social media page.
- Mrs. Stapleford also told the Commission that with the agenda needing to be published ahead of time, that only certain items may be added to the agenda during the meeting. These items must be of a di minimus nature and are approved by a majority vote of the Commission; additions may not involve the expenditure of funds or entering into a contract excepting those pertaining to a bona fide emergency and for which immediate action is required.

**OLD BUSINESS**

A. Washington Park Plan Review:

- Matt Lokay with Mackin Engineering attended the meeting to give the Parks and Rec Commission members an update on the Washington Park Plan and the options available to them, should they look for grant funding to improve the park in the future.
- Option 1 – No action. No money spent, no money in grants requested. Leave the park as is.
- Option 2 – Improve the existing road and parking areas, enhance the existing trailheads with better signage or markers.
- Option 3 – Enhance passive hiking and walking trails and improve way-finding (as well as option 2's improvements).
- Option 4 – Introduce active recreation and trails (as well as option 2 and 3 improvements).
- Mr. Lokay insists that if the City plans to do any kind of improvements that they speak with Mr. Southwell to review the oil lease agreement to be sure there would be no interference with his wells.
- At the conclusion of the presentation, Mrs. Freenock suggested that the Commission have a special meeting to further discuss the options presented, as it has been quite some time since the first presentation Mr. Lokay gave. Mr. Suppa stated that a special meeting on October 19<sup>th</sup>, at 4:30 pm would be best, to give all commission members an opportunity to review the options and decide what they would like to move forward with.

B. Crescent Park Update

- The electrical work for the trail lighting is starting to wrap up.
- Lights cannot be installed until the spring, due to backorder and supply issues.
- Water supply and electric have been installed for the fountain set to be placed in the healing garden.

C. Betts Park Master Garden

- A motion to add this item to the agenda was requested by Mr. Suppa. Mrs. Angove made the motion to add the Betts Park Eagle Project to the agenda and Mr. Zavinski seconded the motion.
- Mrs. Whitaker spoke to the commission about the project that Gabe Wennberg completed, with her guidance as a Master Gardener. Mr. Wennberg came to the City for his Eagle Scout project and asked if there were any places of need he could invest his time in. Ultimately, the master garden in Betts Park was chosen. Mr. Wennberg and his uncle designed and built the raised garden beds, then filled them with the appropriate planting soil and helped plant some fall and winter crops.

- Thanks to the generosity of Lowes, all the project's materials were donated.
- The Parks and Rec Commission requested the City Staff to send a letter to Mr. Wennberg from the Commission, acknowledging his time and efforts put into this successful project.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

- There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mike Suppa asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Kristine Whitaker and seconded by Mark Zavinski.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

- A special meeting is scheduled for October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. The appropriate advertisement will be made.
- The next regular scheduled meeting will be December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 4:30 pm.

Submitted by:

Kassie Damcott, Recording Secretary