



Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

January 18, 2023, Minutes
The Centre at University Park

Attendance: Matt Buie, Lauren Eldridge, Samuel Ellis, Ben France (Virtual), Cannon Fletcher, , J.T. Ferstl (Virtual)

Absent: Linda Smith

City Board of Director Liaison: Director Doris Wright, Director Capi Peck

LRPR Staff: City Attorney Beth Carpenter, Leland Couch, Justin Dorsey, Shawanda Robinson, J.P. Rogers, Eric Mayfield

Welcome and Introductions: Chairman Buie called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present. Chairman Buie proceeded with the agenda to the roll call and approval of December' minutes.

Roll Call and Approval of Minutes: Eric Mayfield called the roll and Chairman Buie reported that all five (5) members were present out of seven (7) therefore, there is a quorum for us to proceed with business.

The December commission meeting minutes were approved.

Chairman Buie paused to conduct yearly election for the commission. Chairman Buie asked where there any nomination from the commissioners

Commissioner Eldridge nominated Matt Buie for the Chairman position.

Commissioner Samuel Ellis nominated Lauren Eldridge for the Co-Chair position.

Both nomination were voted on a by the commission and approved.

Citizen Communication: Chairman Buie stated that there was no one present for citizen communication.

Chairman Buie then ask Director Couch for updates of any staff reports.

Staff Reports: Director Leland Couch started staff reports with asking if the reports that the staff have been providing in the board packet were helpful for the commission.

All commissioners agree the board packet they received with all the documents were very useful.

Commissioner Ellis stated the packet were very useful, however, he feel like the time can be used for other discussion.

Administration

Administration Division – No Report! Deputy Director Angela Nelson (FMLA)

Recreation

Deputy Director Shawanda Robinson started reports by mentioning that the Recreation division has hired for the Golf Asst. Facility Supervisor position at Rebsamen Golf Course. We are currently interviewing for Assistant Facility Supervisor position at the Tennis Facility.

Community Centers: Youth Basketball program is going on with the games being Monday thru Thursday with some on Saturday.

Senior Program Group are back on regular schedule with the regular program and activities.

Therapeutic Recreation Group is back from Christmas Break and getting back acclimated to their social skills by volunteering at the zoo and other places.

MacArthur Museum has started back with their schedule field trip group within the area. They have field trips booked for about fifty-four (54) fifth (5th) graders from Carver Elementary in February. Three Hundred seventh (7th) graders from Greenbrier Middle School will be visiting the museum in March.

Athletic Division is preparing for summer playground program. We are in the process of getting Jobs advertise for the summer. Registration for the summer program begins on March 1, 2023 with the program starting on March 12th – July 20, 2023. The site has not been named, however, we are currently working to finalize all location for the summer playground program.

Exciting NEWS, Rebsamen Golf and First Tee have new POS system and went live on January 1st. This system will cut down on how we check someone in and out.

This concludes DD Shawanda Robinson report.

Director Couch thanked Deputy Director Robinson for her report and asked if there were any questions from the commission. There were no questions for Recreation Division.

Operations

Deputy Director Dorsey started his report by highlighting a few things from his report.

The Banana Sculpture is currently getting stone work done and coming to completion soon.

The Western Hill playground work is coming along well. The pavilion is up and looking good. The staff was on site to finish up some work.

The Dunbar Gardner entrance sign, staff will start the end of the week to pour concrete and place the sign the next week after the concrete.

Upcoming project focus: The month of February will be MacArthur Park around the pond area and other things within the park before the opening.

DD Dorsey concluded his report by asking if anyone had any questions. There were no questions asked.

This concludes Operation.

Director Couch thanked Dorsey for his report.

Parks Maintenance

Parks Maintenance Manager, J.P. Rogers opened parks maintenance reports by stating they are in the process of hiring three more position in maintenance. Trying to develop a trail crew to get the Trail Coordinator some help. Also advertising for CDL driver for anyone who wants to apply.

Chairman Buie asked the commissioner if they had any questions about any of the staff reports. There were no questions asked.

Buie thank each department for their report.

Commissioner Cannon Fletcher asked a questions “What is the estimated timeline for the Kanis Bridge part of it.”

Director Couch answered by saying they are thankful for the federal programming grant for providing funding for it. It is part of our Kanis Basketball construction. The contractor is planning on installing the concrete as soon as possible. However, the contractors does not have a date when they will start the project. They will construct a temporary parking lot because the park will have limited access when they start the construction.

Chairman Buie thanked the staff for putting together the report and thank the commissioners for their questions.

Old Business

Chairman Buie opened up old business by stating the commission do not have anyone currently leading the charge of social media & outreach sub-committee. He asked if anyone was interested on leading the charge.

Commissioner France asked the question “What is actual social media sub-committee?”

Chairman Buie replied saying social media is still a liaison with Director Couch and Staff with helping and facilitating with social media presence.

Director Coach also added that the department currently have a staff member Michael Garrity who oversees our social media for the department. We have a marketing position that we are requesting to fill soon. I believe the role is to help this commission to understand where we are in terms of social media and getting our story out to the community/public.

Chairman Buie asked Commissioner France he if would consider to accept the appointment to chair the Social Media & Outreach subcommittee.

Commissioner France agreed he would be happy to accept the appointment of Chair for the Social Media & Outreach subcommittee.

Director Couch also replied by saying we are very hopeful we have new commissioners coming on very soon and they will be able to help you as well.

Chairman Buie thanked Commissioner France for taking on Chair for the subcommittee

Commissioner Eldridge interject by saying she will be happy to be a part of the Social Media & Outreach subcommittee.

Director Couch shared with the committee the different social media platform the department have and welcome each commissioners to take a look at each platform

Chairman Buie called for a motion to accept Commissioner Eldridge to be a part of the social media & outreach subcommittee.

Commissioner Ellis made the motion

Commissioner Fletcher second the motion

Motion passed with a 6-0 vote

Sub-Committee Report

- Master Plan

Chairman Buie reported that Commissioner Linda Smith submitted a report of the Master Plan subcommittee via email.

Director Couch nominated either Commissioner France or Fletcher to discuss with the commission what they discussed from the Master Plan meeting last week.

Commissioner Fletcher stated that Commissioner Linda Smith had been to prior meeting with the subcommittee but the other commissioner had not. It was nice to meet with Leland and his staff to go through the Master Plan that was adopted in 2020 by the city board. One of the things we all shared is that it's more like a checklist instead of a visionary plan. The third point we talked about connectivity and thank the LRPR team for the summary they are providing. The committee will like to propose a park or two a month to discuss at each commission meeting only to support the LRPR in their park updates.

Chairman Buie thank Commissioner Fletcher for his report from the Master Plan meeting

- Parks Conservancy

Chairman Buie gave update on Park Conservancy, the supportive member friends program is being constructed and I anticipate the Park Conservancy Board will at the next meeting Wednesday, February 1st will approve the Friends program and it can go live at that point.

Additional communication will be sent out later. Either I or the park conservancy liaison who will be appointed in a second will be able to report at the next meeting.

Chairman Buie asked Commissioner Eldridge if she would consider being the Parks Conservancy Liaison.

Commissioner Eldridge agreed to Liaison position

Attorney Beth Carpenter interjected and asked Chairman Buie to call for a motion and vote to make it official.

Commissioner France made the motion to allow Commissioner Eldridge to be the Parks Conservancy Liaison for this coming year.

Commissioner Fletcher second the motion

Motion passed 6-0

Golf Tournament

Commissioner Eldridge informed the commission the Golf Tournament will be May 19, 2023. The most important thing is the beverage and some of the food and snacks has already been arrange. The biggest lift from Eldridge and other commissioner is sponsorships. She is trying to edit the marketing sign that was used in the past for the Golf tournament. Commissioner Eldridge will take any input from anyone regarding levels of sponsorship. In years past there have been two different levels of sponsorship with one being \$250 and the other \$500. Commissioner Eldridge think those levels should be raised a little because of corresponding benefits that deals with advertising itself and in the golf cart. Commissioner Eldridge open the floor for any questions or idea related to sponsorship. It is the commissioner ideal to make the tournament affordable for everyone including the sponsors. Commissioner Eldridge think this will be a great moment to highlight other events that is going on around Parks & Recreation. Within a month all documents will be finalize.

Chairman Buie thanked Commissioner Eldridge for her report and asked the commissioners if they had any questions

Commissioner Ben France asked if Commissioner Eldridge can send out a list of sponsors from last year as well as last year flyer

Deputy Director Shawanda Robinson asked if she and another LRPR employee can meet with Commissioner Eldridge to see her needs so the department can assist with as much as possible.

Commissioner Eldridge stated she thinks that would be great, because one of her needs is getting an option for online payment for sponsorship. She would like to see something set up for potential sponsors to pay online before the tournament.

DD Robinson thinks the new system may have some amenities inside to help us with that online payment prior to the tournament.

Director Couch asked a question, have there ever been a discount for early registration in the past, now since there is a date can there be some type of advertising for anyone sign up before March will receive a certain amount of discount for registering. Maybe with that incentive there will be more teams to sign up sooner.

Chairman Buie thanked everyone for their ideas

Commissioner Fletcher asked where there a cost outside the food to operate or are there a fee for the rounds

Commissioner Eldridge replied that Rebsamen has been very generous in allowing us to make use of their facility without payment. I think we can talk about the cost in future meetings that if we meet a certain goal or exceed that goal then we can make any exchange.

Chairman Buie asked where there any other questions for the tournament discussion. No other questions was asked, therefore he thanked everyone for their responses.

Chairman Buie then proceeds to New Business.

New Business

Chairman Buie open discussing with referring back to Commissioner Fletcher statement on highlighting a park each month for discussion. The park for the month of February was Boyle Park.

Chairman Buie asked Director Couch if he wanted to speak on the request

Director Couch replied he would like for the commission to choose a location and Boyle Park might be the first one. He would be more than excited to give a presentation on all parks. His only add to it is to make sure there is a new ward picked each month so we are moving around the city. Sometimes we might get a Park where there is very little going on and other parks may have a several highlights. However, park staff is excited to discuss a park each month.

Chairman Buie called for a motion to discuss Boyle Park for the February meeting.

Commissioners Eldridge made the motion

Commissioner Fletcher second the motion

Motion passed 6-0 vote

Director Couch wanted Michael Garrity to give updates on Marathon

Marathon

Marathon is back on normal schedule, since the last twelve (12) months there have been two marathon events to catch up from COVID. This year will be the 21st annual marathon which will take place on March 3-5, 2023 with a Health and Fitness Expo on Friday and Saturday from 10-8PM on Friday and 10-6PM on Saturday at the State House Convention Center. Saturday morning at 7:30am there will be a 5K and 10K and at 11am there will be a Little Rocker mile

race. The Little Rockers program run their first 25.2 miles since the start of school and on Marathon weekend they run their final mile for their medal. On Sunday is our marathon and our half marathon. We start at 6AM with an early start for marathon and at 8AM we have a general start for the half marathon and the other participants. Health & Fitness Expo, we want to make it more experience and more things to do and attract local community as well. We want to highlight Parks Department throughout the Expo. There will be a DJ onsite as well as basketball set up for fun. We will use this to promote things throughout the Parks Department and we would love for the commission to be present as well. We want to promote Parks and the Commission at this event. This is a free event.

Michael Garrity encourage the commissioner to come and see behind the scenes prior to setup.

Director Couch also informed the commissioner of the new medical clinic that is operating at West Central Community Center. It is a separate center but it's open to the public. We also have a radio station at West Central who gets great numbers from people who listen. We can put flyers and any other announcements on for airing.

Chairman Buie asked the name of the radio station

DD Robinson informed everyone the name of the radio station was KWCP 98.9

Director Couch informed everyone the distance the radio station covers.

Discussion Items for Next Meeting

Chairman Buie started off by asking the commissioner if there were any agenda items that need to be added for the February meeting beside Boule Park.

No commissioner had an item to add.

Director Couch did not have an item to add.

Board Liaison Feedback

No Board member were present to give any feedback.

Meeting Adjourned.