



Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

March 13, 2024

The Centre at University Park

Attendance: Ben France, James Ferstl, Samuel Ellis, Cannon Fletcher, Mike Bernardo, Summer Campbell, Chemia Woods, Quinten Whiteside, Quincy Grant

Absent: Linda Smith, Ron Bara

City Board of Director Liaison: City Director Andrea Lewis, City Director Capi Peck

LRPR Staff: Parks Director-Leland Couch, Deputy Director-Angela Nelson, Deputy Director-Shawanda Robinson, Deputy Director-Justin Dorsey, City Attorney-Beth Carpenter, Courtney Perry-Safety and Training Coordinator, Briana Hatfield-Data/Special Programs Coordinator, Brittany Nichols-Parks Marketing and Social Media Coordinator, Mahogany Burkhalter-Administrative Assistant-Parks Director

Welcome: Chairman France: Welcomed everyone. Mentioned this is his first (1st) in person meeting as Chairman.

Roll Call: Roll call completed. Seven (7) Commissioners in attendance out of Eleven (11) Commissioners in attendance. A Quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes: Motion made by Commissioner Bernardo to accept minutes from February meeting. Motion 2nd by Commissioner Ellis. Minutes Approved.

Citizen Communication: No Citizen Communication.

Director Presentation: Set goal to cover projects that Parks is planning to present to the Board. Parks has four (4) ARPA projects for the community centers. Finalizing construction documents, putting out bid, and once process is completed, taking them to the board for approval. There's an ADA transition plan. Vendor, Cromwell has been selected for the project. Working to finalize to the board for approval. Working on project renderings for light design. We have selected EDG for that process. We're always looking for somebody to help us with project renderings. Discussed the process for the timing for board presentation. Is two (2) to three (3) week process. Ensure it gets on the agenda for the board, and the directors meeting. Chair asked for input from Board. No input given.



Old Business

Director Couch spoke about Hindman Park Presentation. They presented 15 to 20 items. Staff reviewing maintenance related items. Moving forward with new sign at Park entrance. Golf course is closed. Disc Golf course is open. Clarify capital items for sales tax. Masterplan being defined. Marketing Coordinator Brittany talks about upcoming marketing, communication, and events. Two (2) community meetings discussed. Allsopp Mountain Bike Trail Meeting. Twenty-Five (25) residents attended. Residents supported and provided feedback. Three (3) sections of trails proposed. Targeted neighborhood outreach. Reservoir Park meeting. 75 ppl attended. Six (6) neighborhood associations in attendance. Informal presentation. Got feedback about priorities. Eclipse upcoming events with programs at community centers. Ordered 10,000 Solar Eclipse glasses. Glasses are being distributed through community centers, Fire Departments, and Police Departments. Website has Calendar of Events. Pop-up Planetarium hosted by Dunbar Center. Using AI to design and create newsletter. Today, ribbon cutting for Margaret Clark's Tree House opening. What was discussed at Reservoir Park meeting? Park restoration timeline, coordinating with FEMA and insurance, cleanup efforts, partnership with Public Works. Previewed Masterplan. Design Plan donated by Cromwell Architects. Softball field mockup discussed. Cromwell reached out to us to help. Almost a year since the tornado. Major improvements completed. Murray almost finished. Rock Creek debris cleared. Working to get federal grant. New agenda format discussed. Format is as follows. Roll Call, Approval of Minutes, Citizen Communication – two (2) minutes, Director's Report. Discussed upcoming projects. No longer having staff reports presented. Not a lot of change. Placeholder request for outside presentations. One (1) presentation per meeting. Subcommittee reports discussion. Listed in the bylaws. Permanent committees. Commission can amend bylaws. Subcommittees are important. Extra time needed to discuss things. Bylaws provide that there is a chair for each subcommittee. Appointment of subcommittee chairs by commission chair. Parks Conservancy has its own board. Treehouse Ribbon cutting with some Directors present, Margaret Clark was the donor. Marathon was successful. Parks Director and Mayor were present. Expo went well. Parks Conservancy had booth at Expo. Eclipse discussion. 1.5 million people expected to travel to state. Kids out of school. Activities for kids at community centers. Extra preparation for Eclipse. Emergency declaration because of potential impact. New agenda format is established with communication between the Chair and the Parks Director. Almost finished with Kanis Park Basketball project. Mahogany is the point person to assist with information needed and other Commission communication. Briana is the Data and Special Project Coordinator and has been working with Parks Director on the City's new data standards team. Shawanda and Suzy Matheny are sending in data from the centers. Will have a data report for the mayor and the commission.



New Business

No New Business

New Items for Next Meeting:

Appointment of Subcommittee Chairs. Subcommittee discussions.

Board Liaison Feedback

Director Peck commends Brittany for social media posting. Treehouse event was cool. Board discussion on Litter. Self-appointed Little Lead. Keep Little Rock Beautiful event success. Hundreds of people came out. Need slogan. Adopt-a-Street programs, Adopt-a-Park programs. Hillcrest Softball League Adopted a softball field. Karen Sykes working on programs.

Director Lewis: My ward neighborhood associations host quarterly cleanups. Continue to spread awareness. UA Little Rock Intern to help with program revamp.

Kiwanis Park Update: Project created from citizen input. Had Bond funds available. Community meetings provide feedback.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:59 pm