

Winchester Parks and Recreation
Advisory Board Meeting
Monday, April 28, 2014
6:30pm

Meeting Location: Lord Fairfax Room, War Memorial Building

Present: Krista Farris (Chairwoman), John Bentley (Vice-Chairman), Jules Bacha, Matt Mintschenko, Shelly Lee, Brian Wigley and Kyle Homan

Absent: John Elliott and Rosie Schiavone

City Staff: Jennifer Jones, Lisa Hamaker and Doug Hewett

Media: None

Guests: Art Thatcher, Project Manager with GreenPlay, LLC
Krista Farris called the meeting to order at 6:37pm.

Approval of March 24, 2014 Minutes:

A motion was made by Brian Wigley to approve the March 24, 2014, minutes as presented; Shelly Lee seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Public Comments:

No Public Comments.

Chairwoman Comments: Krista Farris

Krista Farris commented, to the Advisory Board members, her 6 years on the Board has been very interesting. A re-cap a few of the issues and projects she helped to review were Alcohol in the Park Policy, the Discovery Museum and the Minor League Baseball concept. Her parting suggestion to the Board was to keep an open mind with City Council, go forward with the best plan possible, take time to do the pros and cons lists and draw on the history of the Board when necessary. She thanked the Board and the department.

Park Advisory Board Officer Elections: Doug Hewett

Doug Hewett opened the floor for nominations of Chairman:

Matt Mintschenko nominated Brian Wigley

Krista Farris nominated John Bentley

Nominations were closed and John Bentley received the vote.

Doug Hewett opened the floor for nominations of Vice- Chairman:

John Bentley nominated Shelly Lee

Nominations were closed and Shelly Lee received the vote.

The floor was then turned over to John Bentley, Park Advisory Board Chairman.

Introduction and Discussion with the Needs Assessment Consultant: Art Thatcher, Project Manager, GreenPlay, LLC:

Art Thatcher, Project Manager with GreenPlay, LLC introduced himself to the Park Advisory Board and provided them some of his individualized background information. He has 30 years in Virginia within Parks and Recreation field. He was a former Parks and Recreation Director of various Virginia parks. He has coached college volleyball and is very familiar with Winchester.

The Needs Assessment start up meeting was held on Tuesday, April 15 with the Winchester Project Team. They, along with Mr. Thatcher, discussed a timeline and critical success factors in developing the Needs Assessment.

Focus Group and Stakeholder meetings will be held on Tuesday, May 20 and Wednesday, May 21 at the War Memorial Building. GreenPlay, LLC will do a “statistically valid survey” and 3000 surveys will be randomly mailed out to the community. They will Geo Code the surveys so they know exactly what areas they are coming from. GreenPlay, LLC will also conduct a physical inventory of assets. A monthly report will be given to the Staff Project Manager (Parks and Rec Director).

The Projected Timeline:

- 1) Survey mailed; 1st phase to be completed by end of June.
- 2) Analysis of data and final deliverables with a presentation to City Council

The Survey:

- 1) Develop a survey with the Project Team to receive critical success factors
- 2) Make the survey available by paper and online
- 3) Can be made available through the Rec Center or Libraries but, it would not be part of the “statistically valid” piece

Mind Mixer:

- 1) Blog like community conversation
- 2) Way to gather additional community information
- 3) Can be used for information gathering and can be active through the entire process

Krista Farris wanted to know if the survey can be made available on the website and it can be. Jennifer Jones asked if the SU capstone project would be allowed to use the raw data from the GreenPlay, LLC survey. Mr. Thatcher will check on that and reply back to her.

Art Thatcher proceeded to inform the Advisory Board members that he would conduct Focus Group and Stakeholders meetings dates and times and encouraged the Board to participate in some or all of the meetings. Doug Hewett suggested having Park Advisory Board members and staff included as much as possible unless it would negatively impact the groups. The Focus Group meetings will be led by Green Play, LLC and members of the Project Team.

Skate Pavilion Fundraising:

Shelly Lee and Mike Nail met with the Skateboard interest group on Saturday, April 5, 2014 at the Skate Pavilion. Approximately 15 adults are representing the Skateboard Committee. They discussed plans and dates for fundraising:

Tuesday, May 13, 2014 Chipotle Mexican Grill Night from 5:00-9:00pm and 50% of the funds collected during this time will go to the Winchester Park Foundation, earmarked for the Skate Pavilion.

Saturday, May 24, 2014; a Skateboard Jam Fest, Anna Kronstein as the organizer for the event, is being planned.

Sunday, June 22, 2014; a Picnic Fund-raiser at Linda Ross’s home is being planned.

A car wash is also being discussed.

The next interest meeting will be Wednesday, May 7, 2014 at 5pm at the Skate Pavilion.

Shelly Lee is also working to have previously donated funds in the amount of \$5,000 that is currently in the Winchester Park Foundation; from the "Friends of Jim Barnett Park" fundraising efforts, for the Bridgeforth Field light replacements, transferred to the Skate Pavilion project. The committee that raised the initial funds will have to all sign a letter asking for those funds to be re-directed and the Winchester Park Foundation will have to post a public announcement of the request. The Skate Pavilion fundraising goal is \$10,400.00 to be collected by June 1, 2014.

Jennifer Jones informed the Advisory Board that Camp Woodward will extend the free Skate Camp weeks for one more year but it is the last extension.

Director's Report: Jennifer Jones

• Winchester Community Gardens @ Timbrook Park Update-

The first Community Gardens should be up and running by May 15, 2014. Leaf compost has been delivered, fence has been put in place and the plots have been designed. Ten individual plots are available at Timbrook Park.

• Programs Update:

For the month of April, the department has offered 25 "Community Recreation" programs with only 4 of those being cancelled. Some of the most successful activities were the "Swinging Fore Sports Golf Tournament", the "Egg Splash" and "Backyard Composting".

• Skate Pavilion Order

With funds that have already been raised and the City matching funds the department was able to order 2 hubba ledges, 2 grind rails, a 3 foot ledge style pyramid and pour 2 smaller concrete sections adjoining the original concrete pad. The equipment should be in stock by June 13, 2014 and installed by June 16, 2014.

A remaining larger concrete pour with a retaining wall and the adjoining obstacles will still need to be completed as funds are raised.

Continuing efforts to raise the remaining \$10,400 by the Skateboard Committee before June 1, 2014 will enable the department to possibly secure the remaining adjoining obstacles that will eventually be attached to the large concrete pour once funding becomes available to complete that pour.

A new display case that displays a poster with a QR code scan code has been installed at the Skate Pavilion.

A new Skate Pavilion Operating Plan has been created and is on the City website.

An RFQ (Request for Quotes) has been drafted for concessionaires and or skate shop vendors and should be going out soon.

• Apple Blossom Festival Preparations:

The department staff will plan to put their spin on Apple Blossom and spruce up the park by adding plantings, decorating the playground by Family land and painting signs. Shelly Lee offered to reach out to some flower enthusiasts to see if they would like to help.

- **Shawnee Springs Clean Up and Signage:**

The members from the Opequon Watershed along with a few local school groups cleaned up the invasive vines that were encompassing some areas of the Shawnee Springs trail. No Camping signs (City Code 18-9) were put in place and a few campers were removed from the area.

The area eventually will become a “Healing Trail” that will offer a relaxation and passive recreation site, natural wind chimes and meditation.

Krista Farris asked if an edible trail hike could be considered.

Jules Bacha asked where the campers would go and Jones replied she acted on the complaints from area citizens in the public park for safety concerns.

- **Ball field Maintenance Update:**

The new field equipment the department received has been delivered and has been in use on the fields. The department has an aggressive plan of action with one full time staff that is dedicated only to fields. The Maintenance Division has actually developed their own field maintenance plan and Jennifer Jones commented their goal is to have the best fields in Virginia within 3 years.

Matt Mintschenko asked if Friendship Field is off limits until it can be maintained. Jennifer Jones will see if Park Place is an option. He also expressed his concern about mowing in between the trees and Jennifer Jones will review this as well, since it may be a water retention area.

- **Park Advisory Board Retreat:**

The tentative date set is Saturday, June 21, 2014 from 1-5pm, but Jennifer Jones would like to have the new Advisory Board members on before holding the retreat.

- **WPRD Program Guide:**

The newest edition of the Program Guide was direct mailed starting Monday, April 21, 2014. The department has also been delivering copies at designated locations throughout the City. Krista Farris asked if the Winchester Park Foundation has a donation page and she also offered her skills to proofread the guide, for the department, before it goes to print.

- **Update of Fiscal Year 2015 Budget-**

Jennifer Jones relayed to the Park Advisory Board members the Fy15 would more than likely be base budget. One CIP (Capital Improvement Project) and the Needs Assessment, Phase II are also included in the funding.

- **Park Ambassador Program:**

The program has been developed by Jennifer Jones to help the Park Maintenance Division with trash collections, field lining, etc. in hopes to get Jim Barnett Park ready for the World Series event in August. The Park Ambassador interest meeting is Friday, May 16, 2014 at 10am. She is hoping the program will appeal to retired men that may want to volunteer some of their time to assist with smaller park related tasks.

- **Bridgeforth Field Progress-**

- 1) **ADA-**

The side walls are up on the ticket booth and a contractor may be sought to help finish the souvenir stand so it can be completed before the end of the Fiscal year. The restrooms should be opening in May.

2) Artificial Turf

Ten contractors attended the pre-bid meeting and the bids are due back by May 6, 2014.

General Comments from Jennifer Jones-

Jennifer Jones presented Krista Farris with a plaque, prepared by City Council; she then thanked Krista for her guidance, insight and time spent as the Park Advisory Board Chair.

Assistant Director's Report- Lisa Hamaker

Dog Park Upgrades

- 1) Play structures have been installed.
- 2) The picnic area was completed by Robertson's Homes.
- 3) Access to water is now available in both dog areas.
- 4) Staff has spruced up the area.
- 5) Shade Structures and paving still need to be done.
- 6) The Elizabeth C. Clarke Foundation provided the \$9,000 donation that helped make the upgrades.

World Series 2014

- 1) The officials from Babe Ruth visited Winchester and met with the some members of the World Series Executive Team. They were very comfortable with what Winchester has planned.
- 2) In-kind Sponsors are being secured and more are needed.
- 3) The banners on the light poles will go up, in the downtown area, after Apple Blossom.
- 4) Advertising spots are being finalized.
- 5) The event is August 9-16.

Program Brochure Street Distribution

- 1) The new program brochure has been delivered to about 30 outside sites.

May Events and Outdoor Pool Opening

- 1) The Outdoor Pool is being cleaned on Tuesday, April 29, 2014 for the summer and the season begins Memorial Day weekend.
- 2) May 17, 2014 Kidz-Fest is being held on the Old Town Mall. The department will participate with the Bubble Van and a smaller obstacle course.
- 3) Friday, May 16, 2014 a Middle School Madness Dodgeball Tournament is being planned.
- 4) Saturday, May 24, 2014 is the "Alice in Wonderland Tea" in Jim Barnett Park.

Board Comments and Idea Sharing:

Matt Mintschenko commented about vehicles on the grass at BMX. Lisa Hamaker commented with the next phase of the ADA construction the fence will get changed and it should alleviate the issue. Jennifer Jones commented that signage "no parking on the grass" could be put up. Matt suggested putting the split rail fence back in place.

Everyone thanked Krista Farris and John Elliott for their time served on the Board.

Krista Farris encouraged the Park Advisory Board members to keep in touch with City Council and to maintain a healthy relationship since the Liaison's to Board and Commissions may be dissolved by City Council.

John Bentley inquired if the field conditions could be re-evaluated and Handley have the ability to plan for games since it is the only playing area they have. Lisa Hamaker commented Handley does have the desire to help with the fields more and SU may be working on an apprenticeship program for Handley students.

Krista Farris commented; along with the proposed trash fee the City is recommending; that maybe a re-use, recycle trash program could be developed as a coordinated effort between Parks, the Recycling Coordinator and Public Works.

Advisory Board Meeting Dates:

Advisory Board Meeting: Monday, May 19, 2014 @ 6:30pm

Adjournment: With no further business to discuss John Bentley asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting; Kyle Homan made the motion and it was seconded by Matt Mintschenko. The motion was approved and the meeting was adjourned at 8:55pm.

Respectfully submitted; Jennifer Stotler; Park Administrative Coordinator