

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting September 4, 2008

Minutes

Location: City Hall

PRAB Members present: David Bauer, Paul Cunningham, Joe Harmon, Donald Johns, Brian Knapp, Don Lederer, Elisa Lueck, James Ogletree, Zinta Rodgers-Rickert, Harry Wilbur

PRAB Members absent: Esther Nasjleti

Staff present: Mike McCarty, Karen Bixler, Karen Lussier

The Chairman (Brian Knapp) called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

Knapp welcomed Paul Cunningham to the PRAB meeting; he is the appointee from the Planning Commission. Knapp also welcomed Karen Lussier to Mike McCarty's staff; she replaces Dan Phillips.

July Minutes: The minutes for July 10, 2008 were approved unanimously with minor fixes.

Old Business

1. Community Center:

Knapp summarized the results of a work session held by Council on September 2. At this work session, the Hughes Group, hired by the City to design the Center, recommended that the City build a Center to the south of the Police Station, bordering the Belle Willard County Facility. The Hughes Group recommended a 9000 square foot building in order to keep costs within the amount donated by the Sherwood Family (\$5M).

Knapp said that the Council adopted the recommendations of the Hughes Group, resulting in a project that is moving quickly. Council will host outreach sessions on September 27 to collect public input.

Many members congratulated McCarty on his efforts over the summer in moving this project forward.

PRAB members expressed support for installing the footers now for building a future second story to the proposed Center.

PRAB members endorsed the creation of a 501(c)3 Foundation to collect funds for the Center and will try to get Council to support this position.

2. Park Project Update:

McCarty provided an update on various projects that he and his staff have been managing all summer – new turf fields at Draper Drive Park (dedication scheduled for September 27); new park at Stafford Drive (dedication anticipated for early November), new baseball field at Providence Elementary School, and tennis courts at Providence Park.

3. Community Garden:

As requested by PRAB at the July meeting, staff contacted a number of City residents who are interested in a Community Garden concept. These same residents agreed, in principle, to be leaders in the Community for managing the Garden once it was established.

PRAB members decided to include start-up funding for a Garden in the CIP, but acknowledged that it might take many years to fund due to the budget constraints.

4. Budget Update:

McCarty explained that the City is looking at a projected \$3.5 million deficit in the current fiscal year and that he has already been told to slash \$68K from his Department's budget. He expects a larger cut will be required in the coming weeks, possibly as high as \$250K. Planned repairs at Kutner Park are now delayed. Cuts in brochures, like Fairfax Fun Days, are expected.

New Business

1. CIP:

PRAB members reviewed last year's CIP and discussed priorities for FY09/10 and new projects for the out years. Members agreed that the list of projects for FY09/10 needs to be defined as those absolutely critical in light of the tough budget cycle. Knapp asked members to review the CIP document and be prepared to identify priorities for FY09/10 and FY10/11.

2. Park Project 2008:

Knapp proposed that PRAB members visit and survey our parks and trails in the City as PRAB did in 2007. He circulated a document that outlined the objectives of such visits (i.e., assess the condition of our parks/trails, determine improvements and rank them). He also suggested four teams, with team leads and team membership and assignments per team. PRAB members agreed to the proposal for four teams and respective assignments. Knapp urged members to start visiting the parks and conducting evaluations.

Update from the Parks and Recreation Department

McCarty previewed Fall Festival in October. He described the success of summer camps, described the beginning of after school programs at Providence, and announced the installation of new field closure signs.

Member Time

Zinta offered congratulations to McCarty and his staff for the successful July 4th festivities. She also promoted a dog park in the City.

Don L. gave a detailed report about upcoming activities at the Senior Center (September volunteer reception, October Men's breakfast, and the November spaghetti dinner). He also said that the Seniors elected three new members to the leadership council. Don also said that the Seniors Center is looking at national accreditation.

Adjournment

Knapp adjourned the meeting at 9:10 pm.

Prepared by Brian Knapp.