

PARKS, FORESTRY, & RECREATION COMMITTEE

Monday, January 17, 2022 Minutes

The regular meeting of the Platteville Parks, Forestry, and Recreation Committee of the City of Platteville was called to order by Jason Artz at 7:00 p.m. in the North Conference Room.

ROLL CALL

Present: Jason Artz, Don Francis, Erin Ihm, Suraya Strobl, Cindy Tang (Zoom),

Not Present: Victoria Hundhausen, Brian Whisenant

Staff in Attendance: Adam Ruechel and Howard Crofoot

Members of the Public: Robert and Elizabeth Gates, Kim Zielinski, Sam Villeneuve, Morgan Arnold, Christina Burr

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

Robert and Elizabeth Gates spoke under Citizen Comments. They are concerned about staffing at the Pool this summer. They appreciate the City including an increase in pay for Lifeguards, plus reimbursing the cost of training for Lifeguards. They believe more should be done to incentivize young people to become Lifeguards. They are pledging \$10,000 toward Lifeguard incentives to help toward solving staffing issues. They are hoping others may join them and are willing to pledge lesser amounts over the next few years to continue incentive programs. They will leave it to Staff to figure out the best combination of signing bonuses, end of summer bonuses, wages while in training, pay and reimbursement for Red Cross swim instructor training, or other incentives. City Manager Ruechel thanked them for their concern and generosity in not just pointing out a problem but proposing and funding solutions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Suraya Strobl to approve the minutes from December 20, 2021, seconded by Cindy Tang. Motion carried.

STAFF UPDATE:

- a. **Broske Center Fees** – Adam Ruechel went over the Financial Report in the packet. He cautioned that there may be outstanding receipts and expenses not included in the report, but it should be noted that as of December 31, 2021 there was net revenue over expenses of \$6,147.05. Any excess revenue stays in the fund to support future maintenance on the building. He also noted that Lifeline is planning to come in to install sound boards to reduce the noise in the building the week of January 24. This schedule may change if Lifeline employees are still off work recovering from COVID.
- b. **Recreation Programs** – Adam Ruechel noted that programs are continuing as normal, including basketball, volleyball and pickleball. The Indoor Park youth program at Westview School on Saturdays had about 45 participants.
- c. **City of Platteville Park, Forestry and Recreation Fund Accounts** – Adam Ruechel said that Committee member Cindy Tang asked for an update on the various fund accounts. He presented a list of 13 Trust Funds and Park Impact Fees ranging from \$300 to \$71,764.19. There is an account for general recreation donations of \$5,250.00. Adam went on to explain the three Endowment Funds. All three are being managed by the Community Fund of Southwest Wisconsin. The Parks Endowment Fund is for any park. There is \$73,537.40 in the account with \$8,734.59 spendable. The Legion Park Endowment Fund is just for Legion Park for maintenance of baseball, softball and related uses. There is \$23,197.60 in the account with \$2,893.64 spendable. The Orlo Clayton Smith Park and Legion Field Endowment Fund is for only those two parks. There is \$396,978.73 in the account with \$149,601.62 spendable. Howard Crofoot spoke of Orlo and Cyril Clayton as brothers who worked for the City as Street Maintenance employees and loved Platteville enough to leave large trust funds for these parks.

OLD BUSINESS

Recreation Department Transition – Adam Ruechel talked about the process of hiring new employees. He said that he made an offer today to the top candidate for the Parks and Recreation Director position. Once that position is hired and on board, staff will hire the new Recreation Coordinator position. The new Office Assistant will be on board as of January 31.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Update from Platteville Inclusive Playground Committee** – Christina Burr of the Platteville Inclusive Playground Committee gave a presentation of the status so far. Two grants have been submitted by Angie Wright. A CDBG-CV grant has been submitted by the City. Angie Wright is working on another four grants to be submitted in February. The group has raised over \$91,000 since inception in November. They are hopeful that they will have funding in had to allow for ordering the playground equipment by June 1 to be installed by November. Even if the City is successful in getting the CDBG-CV grant with 100% funding, there are items that cannot be funded with this grant, including upgrades to the bathrooms in the Stone Shelter. The group has other enhancements that will need additional funding.

- b. Request for Recommendation of Financial Support**– Christina Burr said that most of the donors want to know that the City is pledging financial support for this project. The Committee is asking for a pledge of \$100,000 with no conditions, qualifications or restrictions. Any such conditions would make other donors consider the same conditions. Motion by Erin Ihm to recommend that the Common Council pledge \$100,000 from Trusts or Endowments as the City sees fit with no restrictions on the pledge. Second by Cindy Tang. Motion carried unanimously.

NEXT MEETING – Monday, February 21, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Motion to adjourn by Suraya Strobl, seconded by Erin Ihm. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Minutes by Howard Crofoot