

PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, April 14, 2009
6:00 p.m.

- 1) Call to order by President Curt Stepanek.

Roll Call: Members Present: Curt Stepanek, Audrey Stowell, Dale Berg, and Beth Arneberg. Absent: Dennis Doughty, Heidi Hoekstra, and Carmen Muenich.
Staff present: Dick Hebert, Bill Faherty, Terry Johnson, and Chuck Cyr.

- 2) Approval of March 10, 2009, Minutes: **Motion by Dale Berg, seconded by Audrey Stowell, all present voting aye, to approve minutes of the March 10, 2009, meeting.**

Heidi Hoekstra arrived at this time.

- 3) Personal Appearances: Bill Faherty reports that he has received some complaints from citizens regarding dogs at Irvine Park. Dog owners are not picking up after their dogs, and dogs are running free. Discussion regarding whether we have or need signs and whether we should consider changing the ordinance to ban dogs from city parks completely. This will be addressed further at future meetings.

Carmen Muenich arrived during the above discussion. Carmen indicates he has received complaints as well.

Bill passed out priority list of projects for Parks & Rec for donations.

Lafayette has asked us to take care of their fields to start the season. They don't have anyone to do this right now and would pay for this service. Bill and Terry reviewed the fields and estimated a couple of guys could do it in about 4-5 hours using our equipment. This would be a one-time situation. Bill will figure out an estimate and see if it's acceptable.

- 4) Discuss/Consider Security system for Zoo & Parks by Access Security. No action taken. Discussion regarding contacting other companies for bids. Audrey indicated she received a complaint from someone wondering about possible illegal activities taking place at the skateboard park. A security system would hopefully help in this type of situation.

- 5) Update on Current Projects.

- a. Dog Park Playground. Curt Stepanek indicates there is a nice active core group involved in this project. They are looking at finding a suitable location. There is the retention pond on the south side and the location on Nelson Road. The retention pond is already fenced, which would be the majority of the cost of setting it up. The group will put together a proposal, and it will be submitted to our Board for recommendation to be passed on to the Council.

- b. Bobcat Exhibit Phase 2. Bill Faherty contacted ThemeScapes. It looks like the bobcats could be done in early June. Unfortunately, we do not have all of the

needed funds at this time. We previously discussed using funds from an estate to finish this project, but it is unknown when those funds will be available.

c. Kell's Corner in Irvine Park. Bill talked with the landscaper today and is meeting with him next week. Bill hopes to present project plans at the next meeting.

d. Community Gardens at Marshall Park. Staff is laying it all out. The soil has been tested, and it is good. On May 11 or 12, Kohel will donate the tilling. Two trees will need to come down. There will be four raised beds in the front, which will be wheel-chair accessible. Someone from the boy scouts has indicated to Bill that they will plant any unsold plots and donate the food to the food pantry. WalMart employees will be working at the project and we will receive a donation from WalMart based on the number of employees that work (probably will be around \$2,000). This can then be used to pay for part of the fencing.

e. Compliance with Title XIV (pool drain). Chuck and Kevin have compiled all of the information necessary to determine if we are in compliance.

6) 2009 Budget. Bill reports that no decisions have been made yet regarding cuts. He anticipates decisions to be made when the new council comes in. Bill is concerned about hiring seasonals when there's the potential of laying off union people.

7) Discuss/Consider Recreation Program Report.

a. Youth Soccer U-12/U-14 League joins Lafayette Soccer. Our participating numbers are down. We have three teams and Lafayette has three teams, so we will combine and play half the year here and half the year there. If the numbers continue to decline, we will need to decide if we want to continue sponsoring these leagues. Dick does not believe we will be able to continue U-14 next year. Soccer starts this Saturday. The U-12/U-14 league will start at the end of April.

Curt Stepanek leaves briefly during the above discussion.

Softball manager meeting is tomorrow night. These leagues will start the second week of May. The summer brochure is going to be printed on April 21. 8,000 will be inserted in the Herald; the other 4,000 will be distributed to schools and elsewhere. The brochure is also available online. Registration starts April 25.

Dick has sent out contracts to the pool staff.

8) Discuss / Consider Personnel Report. Bill reports there will be seasonal openings for a zookeeper and two other employees.

9) Discuss / Consider Friends of Irvine Park Zoo Report. No report. Brick sales continue. Chuck started putting bricks in by the bears.

10) Discuss / Consider Parks Maintenance Report. Chuck Cyr reports that staff has cleaned up and maintained the winter equipment, cleaned the roads, and backfilled the bobcat exhibit. They are also working on bricks, getting everything ready for turn on of water, and they will be putting a new roof on one of the shelters at Flag Hill. They finished with the inside of the pavilion; it has really brightened up. Basically, staff is getting everything ready to open up. Chuck reports that the corrections people have

been raking the parks and doing a wonderful job. Chuck also reports on what's happening with the animals as well.

Terry reports that it's been busy with baseball and softball out at Casper Park. He's also getting fields ready for soccer.

Bill discussed experimenting with the shutting of the gates. They are being shut at 3:00 p.m. now, and they will be closed at 8:00 p.m. in the summer. Bill would like to keep Bear Den Road closed to vehicular traffic for right now. He feels the road condition is of concern and will need to be repaired at some point in the future. Curt expressed concern with denying access for those who are unable to drive through the park. Carmen has received complaints as well.

Carmen indicates that he received complaints with the Rutledge Hill entrance being closed on Sunday. Bill indicates that sometimes when there is limited staff, the entrances and bathrooms don't always get opened. This should not happen, and it will be corrected.

With regard to Bear Den Road, Dick indicates that there are many walkers and runners using that road during the week. Most drivers are going through on Sundays. After discussion, Bear Den Road will be open on weekends only.

The north end is closed until it greens up to help with the road condition and prevent any fire hazards.

Dick believes we should think about running electricity to new shelter at Flag Hill. He says this is a question asked when people make reservations. Estimates have been obtained. If there are funds remaining in the budget this fall, electricity will be run.

Curt questions whether there will be a cover put on Little Dinky. Bill hopes to put a cover identical to the depot cover over Little Dinky.

Chuck also discussed logs. Moving and covering logs will need to be addressed in the future.

- 11) Board Member comments or concerns. Dale Berg wonders about the Zunker Memorial. Bill indicates they have not returned. Beth asks about the tennis lights. Chuck indicates they should be on. Bill indicates that courts / blacktopped areas will be patched with street dept. These should be redone, but there are no funds available now. Beth asks whether we should be using donations for maintenance in this type of economy. Bill indicates there is some donation money that could be used for maintenance, but most of the donations are earmarked for specific areas or specific projects. If it's not earmarked, the Board could decide to use it for maintenance projects.
- 12) Approve Claims. **Motion by Curt Stepanek, seconded by Dale Berg, all present voting aye, to approve claims of \$18,146.14.**
- 13) Adjournment. **Motion by Dale Berg, seconded by Curt Stepanek, all present voting aye, to adjourn.**

Submitted by:

Audrey Stowell, Secretary