

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
CITY OF WASHINGTON, FRANKLIN COUNTY, MISSOURI  
Wednesday, October 13, 2021**

**Agenda Item #1: Call Meeting to Order** –Co-Chair, Tessie Steffens, called the meeting to order at 5:28 p.m.

**Agenda Item #2: Roll Call** – Director of Parks & Recreation Wayne Dunker called roll. Those in attendance-included Co-Chair Tessie Steffens. Commission Members Gavin Woolley, Betty Werner, Bob Dzurick, Bob Kloeppel, Danny Cassette, Dave Wehmeyer, Darren Lamb and Council Liaisons Jeff Patke and Duane Reed.

Those not in attendance – Co-Chair, Sparky Stuckenschnider and Kevin Kriete.

**Agenda Item #3: Pledge of Allegiance**

**Agenda Item #4: Approval of Minutes** (*September 8, 2021*) a motion by Bob Kloeppel with a second by Gavin Woolley.

**Agenda Item #5: Parks Report** – *given by Wayne Dunker*

- Lions Lake pavilions arrival date has been pushed back to December instead of November.
- Phoenix playground has been ordered and should arrive in January.
- Still three (3) full time staff members short.

**Agenda Item #6: Communications from Audience**

Soccer: *Nicky Meyer, Tim Peters, Nick Sullentrup, Mike Rubel & Katie Brown all spoke.*

Nicky Meyer:

- Soccer is important to the community.
- Has signed her kids up for soccer for the past 6 years.
- Competitive soccer is usually played in St. Louis. Parents do not want to travel. WSA has a beautiful vision for soccer in Washington, and they are helping in competitive soccer. WSA is very organized in a thoughtful manner.
- The kids are learning teamwork, diversity, commitment, confidence, self-esteem and how to be a teammate. This builds character and you want these kids to stay in this community.
- WSA mission is not out of line with the Parks Department's mission.
- If you have not come to the soccer fields during a busy game or practice night, it is a buzzing community.
- WSA is growing and would like to continue to grow.
- The Parks Department manages the fields and has expressed their issues, but nothing seems insurmountable. WSA is open to help find solutions.

Tim Peters (*WSA Board of Advisors*):

- Here to be a part of the solution. Not here to reflect on the past.
- Watched the re-play of the meeting last month. Feels some of the comments from the board were unprofessional.

- There is lack of communication on both sides. WSA wants to be part of the solution in correcting this issue. There needs to open the lines of communication instead of butting heads.
- Part of the solutions is to have a representative and possibly a commission formed between Junior Football, Baseball, Soccer and Parks Department. WSA would like to work to come up with a solution to resting fields, opportunities of other fields.
- Sports are competitive as ever and are year round.
- The statement in the last meeting about extending the 2<sup>nd</sup> session due to lack of kids is false. Per the field permit, WSA is allowed to be on the fields on specific days of the week until November 30. Parents showed demand to have a second session.
- In July, registration was stopped due to lack of field space. Having to rest field #2 put a damper on both organizations.
- WSA realizes other fields are available, but they just are not up to the quality that is needed.
- Lakeview is a vibrant community. It is convenient when having multiple children playing.
- WSA would like to be part of the planning process over the next 3-5 years.

Dan Sullentrup (WSA Board of Advisors):

- Thanked Tessie for trying to explain the changes being made during the meeting last month.
- False information was discussed at last Park Board meeting, which made the meeting last longer. This led to a comment stating that it takes forever to solve soccer issues.
- A field permit was signed in February to run through November for specific days of the week. Changes were made in July, which put stress on WSA and the Parks Department.
- A plan needs should be put together between football, soccer & baseball to move forward.
- Problem doesn't get solved by badmouthing and name calling

Mike Rubel (*WSA Assistant Coach - competitive league*):

- League was horrendous 5 years ago. Pulled his kids from the league.
- WSA has been growing ever sense the changes have been made.
- Not letting the kids grow would be a huge mistake.

Katie Brown (mother of 3 soccer players):

- Extremely thankful that they can practice locally as well as being competitive.
- Sports are playing year round and have become very competitive.
- We have to learn to adapt to the changes in the sport. WSA is really trying to do that. Needs support on both sides to make that happen.

## **Agenda Item #7: Old Business –**

### Lake Pavilions Update:

- Project is still on course. Will continue to do demo work, site grading and getting the concrete pads poured.
- Pavilions #1 & 2 have already been removed.

### Main Stage/Amphitheater Roof Project:

- Soil test came back good
- Doing boring work. Project is still on course.

### Ronsick Field Project:

- Got pricing late on Tuesday. Everything we want is included and in budget.
- Will take information to Council on Monday, October 18 for approval.
- Once contract is signed, there is about 4 weeks of upfront work with designing, etc., and then about 10-12 weeks of construction.
- Completion date is not set; it will depend on the weather.

- A motion to approve moving forward with the project was made by Debbie Toedebusch with a second by Gavin Wooley.

#### Phoenix Park Playground Project:

- Paperwork has been signed and playground is ordered.
- Parks will be doing the site grading and the removing of a portion of the trail.
- Pricing may be lower than originally estimated.

#### Soccer League:

- Police had to issue warnings or tickets a few weeks ago.
- Received a request from Sarah (WSA) this week about using Lakeview baseball outfields. Wayne sent Sarah an email on September 30 asking about this matter with no response. Parks was not sure if they were going to use the outfields.
- The exact same day, the Department received a request from Mike Newbanks, Junior Football League, to use baseball outfields #3 & 4 and a request from WSA to use the outfields of #3 & 4. Mike's request was at 8:00am and WSA's was at 3:30pm. Football needed to practice with lights on for the playoffs. Washington High School was using Lakeview baseball field #2 for softball practices and games. The only field available was #1, and WSA agreed to use #1 for their practices.
- Jeff Patke stated the current capital improvement sales tax ends in 2026. The WSA Board needs to work with the City for the possibility of acquiring more fields or improving the current fields. WSA should start planning now and keep communication open.
- Gavin Woolley stated the City is not anti-soccer. The Parks Staff is doing the best we can. Sarah stated in a previous meeting that soccer has had a 24% growing rate, which is substantial. Growing pains are going to take time to cure.
- Tessie thanked those who attended the meeting and stated the Parks Commission is not anti-soccer. In addition, the City has extended the soccer parking lot, added parking spaces and sold a striping machine to WSA. The City has a limited number of fields, which have to accommodate football, baseball, soccer, softball and other public users.

### **Agenda Item #6: Communications from Audience**

### **Agenda Items #8: New Business**

#### Lion's Club donation:

- Received notification that the Lions' Club that they would like to donate \$35,000 to the City of Washington. \$30,000 for the rock columns on the new pavilions at Lion's Lake and \$5,000 for an entrance sign at the corner of South Lakeshore Drive and Grand Avenue in addition to re-branding their green Lion's Lake sign.

#### Lions Lake Playground removal:

- Playground was installed in 1990 and is out of compliance. Memo was sent to City Administration in 2013 by prior Parks Director.
- Not ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) or ASTM (American Society of Testing Materials) compliant. When pavilion was installed in 1990, City did not have to comply with all the ADA rules.
- Manufacture no longer carries replacement parts
- Platforms are bowing, paint is peeling badly in spots, and there no fence to keep small kids from wondering into the Lake (or onto Veterans Dr.).
- Unit is a liability. Insurance company is not forcing us to remove it
- Unit could be removed when demoing the lake pavilions while onsite.

- When All Abilities was installed, the ultimate goal was to remove this playground and install a newer version that would be compliant
- Swings could remain.
- Playground will be removed and scrapped. City would be liable if it was sold or donated. A lot of other cities will often shred the plastic items to prevent re-use
- Bob Dzurick made a motion with a second by Dan Cassette, to remove the playground with an opportunity to rebuild a new one in the future. All were in favor, except Gavin Wooley.

#### Phoenix Park Name Change to Richard F. Stratman Park:

- Darren Lamb received a letter from Joe Vernaci, developer of Phoenix Center, requesting to change the name of Phoenix Park to Richard F. Stratman Park.
- Mr. Vernaci stated former Mayor Stratman was the reason the park was put into the development. It would be nice to recognize him.
- Brian Boehmer and Jim Briggs named the park Phoenix with Joe's consent. Mr. Vernaci wishes he had reserved the rights to change the name.
- Members discussed that as a Commission they voted not to name parks and park facilities after people. The Hall of Fame wall in City Hall is where people can be recognized.
- Even if the Commission does not recommend renaming the park, Council can still override the Parks Commission.
- A motion to table this discussion until the November Commission meeting was made by Danny Cassette with a second by Debbie Toedebusch.

#### Pool Report:

- Despite a cold start to the pool season, the aquatic complex saw record attendance this past summer; pool still lost \$45,000, which was substantially lower than previous years.
- At the November meeting will hand out a document that will compare the 2019 pool season to the 2021 season.
- Many positive comments throughout the season.

#### Other:

- Commission thanked the Recreation Coordinator, Robin Peirick, for a great Witches Event at the Market and thanked all the staff members that helped make the pool season successful.
- The Disc Golf Tournament held by the Lions at the Busch Creek Course and the Witches on Main Street were both great programs with lots of positive comments in the community.
- Dave Wehmeyer noted that WIB/Parks Department won an award during the 2021 AIB Symposium for Best Adaptive Reuse Project for turning Burger Park Landfill into a Disc Golf Course.
- Betty Werner wanted to mention (to the audience) that some of the projects mentioned tonight are funded by the ½ Capital Sales Tax fund (which is voted on by residents) and athletic field maintenance dollars come from the City's general operating budget.

**Agenda Item #9: Executive Session:** None

**Agenda Item #10: Next Meeting** –November 10, 2021 at 5:30pm

**Agenda Item #11: Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 6:40 by Debbie Toedebusch with a second by Betty Werner.

MINUTES SUBJECT TO PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION APPROVAL.