

NORTH LITTLE ROCK PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

SEPTEMBER 15, 2014

The North Little Rock Parks and Recreation Commission meeting was called to order by Mrs. Vicki Stephens at 5:00 p.m., on September 15, 2014, at the North Little Rock Community Center.

Commission Members Present: Randall Bradley, Neil Bryant, Tom Davis, Charles Jones, Otistene Smith, Vicki Stephens and Bruce Waller.

Staff Members Present: Bob Rhoads, Jan Eberle-Wilkins, Jason Rhodes, Tina Worrell, Jeff Caplinger, Jennie Cunningham, Willie Elizandro and Paula Jones.

Others Present: Alderman Linda Robinson and Doris Allen.

Disposition of Minutes: Mrs. Stephens presented minutes of the August 18, 2014, Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. There was no July 2014 meeting.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bradley, to accept the minutes as presented. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Vote for Excused or Unexcused Absentees: There was none to report.

Agreement with Dixie Day Celebration, Inc.: Jeff Caplinger reported that the Dixie Day Celebration, Inc. has built a walkway and memorial wall (similar to the wall at Dark Hollow Memorial Park) at Conley Park. The park is leased by Parks and Recreation from Entergy. Entergy originally denied the Dixie Day Celebration, Inc. request for the wall, but later reversed their decision. However, no one contacted the Parks and Recreation Department that the decision had been reversed. The wall has been built and is near completion incorporating 300 donor purchased memorial bricks. The Parks and Recreation Commission did not vote for final approval of this request.

To clarify responsibilities on maintenance of the memorial and to give permission for construction of the memorial after the fact, the enclosed agreement has been drafted with Dixie Day Celebration, Inc. for the Parks and Recreation Commission's review and possible approval.

Alderman Linda Robinson stated that the Dixie Day Celebration, Inc. contacted the Dixie Community Development Corporation, requesting funds to finish the project. Approximately \$900 was given to the Dixie Day Celebration, Inc. to help with completion of the walkway, and purchase of the planters, benches, flowers, dirt and solar lights.

Mr. Caplinger said that at the time of writing the agreement, the items purchased as mentioned above by Alderman Robinson were not listed on the project list and will be added to the agreement.

Mr. Bryant made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Smith, to move forward with the agreement with these additions. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Prescribed Burn and Agreement with The Nature Conservancy: Mr. Caplinger reported that the controlled burns in Burns Park have been successful, but there is still more to do in removing fuel loads and habitat enhancement. The burn crew consisted of volunteers from the Central Arkansas Master Naturalists along with assistance from the Arkansas Forestry Service. The Nature Conservancy also provided staff and equipment. Without these groups, the burns would not have been able to be performed.

Continued burns are set this season, which the commission approved in the fall of 2013 to go through the end of 2014. Request is being made to extend this date through April 30, 2015.

The Nature Conservancy wants to continue to provide assistance and renew the previous agreement from earlier this year in covering a portion of their cost of providing staff and equipment at a rate of \$500 per day, but not to exceed \$3,000 during the burn season (now through May of 2015). The agreement has been reviewed by legal.

Mrs. Smith asked where the burns would be.

Mr. Caplinger replied that the burns will be in different sections and as much burned as possible each time to protect the park from spreading fires. The weather determines when there will be burns and crews have to be ready to go in a few days' notice. The agreement is the same as the last one, but with date changes.

Mr. Waller noted that the April 30, 2015, date recommended on the agenda summary does not match the date on the agreement.

Mr. Caplinger stated that all dates should be corrected to end April 30, 2015 on the agreement.

Mr. Waller made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jones, to approve the prescribed burns and agreement with the Nature Conservancy to end on April 30, 2015, as corrected. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Health Department Agreement: Tina Worrell reported that the North Little Rock Health Department would no longer be partially funded after December 31, 2014, by the City of North Little Rock. Health Department staff has currently moved out of the Community Center's kitchen and meeting rooms that were occupied by the Women's, Infants and Children's program. Equipment will be stored in the area until October 31, 2014. An amendment for the term of this current agreement for the remainder of 2014 is being recommended.

Effective November 2014, they will only be renting the area that was the former Parks and Recreation Administration Office. The current agreement needs to be amended to reflect those changes and only charge \$500 per month for this area. Approval of this area's rent for 2015 is needed.

Health Department Agreement (continued): Mr. Bryant stated that the length of the agreement starting January 1, 2015, needs to end on December 31.

Mrs. Worrell indicated that originally the Health Department wanted the agreement for one (1) year, but later requested two (2) years.

Mr. Bryant made a motion, seconded by Mr. Waller, to remove the Women's, Infants and Children's program from the use agreement effective November 1, 2014, and reduce rent to \$500 per month for the Environmental Office area effective November 1, 2014. This amendment will run through December 1, 2014. Also, to adopt an agreement for the Environmental Office area to run January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2016, with the same rate of \$500 per month. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Closing Hours for All Neighborhood Parks: Mr. Rhoads reported that over the last year, several different neighborhood parks hours have been changed to close from 9:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. at the request of alderpersons, police, neighborhood groups and staff. At the last commission meeting, commission members expressed an interest to have all neighborhood parks close at 9:00 p.m. Staff concurs and is seeking to close all neighborhood parks at this time. Programs and special events approved by Parks and Recreation staff will allow later closing times for those events.

In addition to neighborhood parks, it is requested that the area between the two (2) White Oak Bayou bridges also be closed from 9:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. This is the Victory Lake and soccer complex areas. These closing times will allow for quieter neighborhoods.

10th Street Park:	10th Street and Crest Road
17th Street Park:	17th and Schaer Streets
Campbell Lake Park:	Murry Lock and Dam
Camp Robinson Park:	54th and Camp Robinson Road
Conley Park (leased from Entergy):	Dixie and Range Line Streets
Crestview Park:	Magnolia and Crestview Streets
Crestwood Triangle Park:	Crestwood and Lochridge Streets
Dark Hollow Memorial Park:	15th Street and North Hills Boulevard
Emerald Park:	West Scenic Drive
Faucette Brothers Historical Park with Gazebo:	Main Street and Washington Avenue
Fearneyhough Park:	C Avenue and Plainview Circle
Fourth Street Park:	West Third and Fourth Streets
Frank M. Witkowski Park:	18th and Division Streets
Glenview Recreation Center and Splashpad:	4800 East 19th Street
Heritage Park:	24th and Franklin Streets
Idlewild Park:	Idlewild and Cedar Streets
Jim Roberts Neighborhood Park:	13th Street and Park Drive
Lorene Joshua Park:	14th and Vine Streets
Melrose Park:	Melrose Circle

Closing Hours for All Neighborhood Parks (continued):

Military Heights Park: 23rd and Willow Streets
Moss Street Park: 41st and Moss Streets
North Heights Complex (leased to Police Athletic League): 4801 Allen Street
North Heights Recreation Center and Pool: 4801 Allen Street
North Shore Park: Lynch Drive and Saunders Streets
Old Mill Historical Park (T.R. Pugh Park): Lakeshore and Fairway Streets
Pugh Park: Vine and Locust Streets
Riverview Park: West River Road
Rose City Athletic Complex (leased to Police Athletic League): 400 Rose Lane
Rose City Recreation Center and Park (leased to Boys and Girls Club): 400 Rose Lane
School Street Park (joint use with North Little Rock School District): School and Middle Streets
Sherman Park Recreation Center and Pool: 624 Beech Streets
Vestal Park Ball Complex (leased to Police Athletic League): 13th and Crutcher Streets
W.C. Faucette Memorial Park: J.F.K. Boulevard and "A" Street

Mr. Waller stated that if there is a lot of input from the public received about these closings, this will need to be brought back to the commission.

Mr. Rhoads agreed and said that signs will be posted at these locations as a way to notify the public.

Mrs. Smith made a motion, seconded by Mr. Waller, to approve setting the closure times of 9:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. for all neighborhood parks, Victory Lake and soccer areas, except for rentals, special events and activities approved by the Parks and Recreation Department. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Allen said she thinks this is a very good idea.

Naming of Burns Park Pavilion: Mr. Rhoads presented a letter and petition requesting a pavilion be named after Roosevelt Horton. The initial request was not approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation in January, but was placed on hold at the time due to Mr. Horton still being employed in the department.

Mr. Willie Elizandro, former Parks Superintendent, felt Mr. Horton was truly worthy of such honor of a pavilion being named after him, and circulated a petition for support from others for such to occur. Over 200 names of employees and citizens signed the petition in support of such naming.

It was found that in 1981 a pavilion was named after John Irvin, a park employee of 23 years. Other pavilions were named after Mayor Eldor Johnson in 1982, and Dr. O.J. Ratcliff, a former Parks and Recreation Commission member and Chair in 1994. Minutes are enclosed. No records can be found but in 1974 two (2) other pavilions were named after Shelby Smith and Louis Gershner.

Naming of Burns Park Pavilion (continued): The commission needs to review the information and determine if the requirements for naming the pavilion after Mr. Horton are being met. If the commission plans to approve or seeks additional information, the recommended naming needs to be placed on the next commission meeting agenda for public comments. Since a pavilion is being named and not a full facility, commission has final authority and it does not have to be forwarded to the City Council for approval.

Willie Elizandro stated that he was Mr. Horton's supervisor for several years. Mr. Horton has the respect of all of the employees that work there and is very dedicated. He is very concerned about getting things done right in the park and talked to whom he needed to, to get things done. He is a great person. Mr. Horton does not know about this recommendation to name a pavilion after him and he (Mr. Elizandro) wants to keep this a secret until a decision is made by the commission.

Mr. Jones made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bradley, to name pavilion #8 after Roosevelt Horton. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Rhoads stated that this will be returned to the commission agenda in October, which will be after the 30-day waiting period, for a final vote.

Ms. Stephens said she wants this to happen in Mr. Horton's lifetime.

Mr. Elizandro thanked the commission for their consideration and said that Mr. Horton is a great man and very deserving of this honor.

Director Reports: Mr. Rhoads reported the following:

- The **Hamburger Tax** collections went up a small amount this past month.
- **Grants** have been done for Sherman Park and Burns Park. Handicapped projects will have priority. Small grants are being done now but there is no match money for grants next year. Grants will be looked at again in 2016.

Mrs. Smith asked Mrs. Worrell to see if she would be able to partner with 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) **school grants and state wellness grants**. She (Mrs. Smith) said she will get the application to Mrs. Worrell.

Mrs. Worrell said she would check on this.

Mr. Waller said the **2014 budget** is now looking better than it did in June 2014.

Calendar of Events: Mrs. Stephens stated that the next commission agenda deadline is Tuesday, October 7, 2014, at 2:00 p.m. Any items need to be called in by that date and time to the Parks and Recreation Administration Office.
The next regularly scheduled commission meeting is Monday, October 20, 2014, at 5:00 p.m. in the North Little Rock Community Center.

Adjournment: Mrs. Otistene made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jones, to adjourn at 5:48 p.m. All voted aye and the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments: Mrs. Stephens opened the meeting for public comments.

Doris Allen asked if the department works with Community Development Corporation grants.

Mr. Rhoads replied that the department does work with them regarding food programs at several places.

Submitted by,

Otistene Smith, Secretary