

## **NORTH LITTLE ROCK PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**

**JULY 15, 2013**

The North Little Rock Parks and Recreation Commission meeting was called to order by Mrs. Otistene Smith, acting chairperson, at 5:00 p.m., on July 15, 2013, at the North Little Rock Community Center.

**Commission Members Present:** Neil Bryant, Tom Davis, Chandra Martin, Otistene Smith and Bruce Waller. Charles Jones had to work and Vicki Stephens was out of town.

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

**Others Present:** Billy Lawson, Jr.

**Employee Introductions:** Mr. Rhoads introduced Ian Hope, new Park Ranger.

The commission members welcomed him.

**Disposition of Minutes:** Mrs. Smith presented minutes of the June 17, 2013, Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

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

**Election of Officers:** Mrs. Smith opened the floor for election of the commission offices: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

Mr. Davis said he was declining to serve another term as Vice-Chair.

Mr. Bryant made a motion, seconded by Mr. Waller, to keep the current slate of officers (with the exception of Vice-Chair), which are: Vicki Stephens, Chair; Otistene Smith, secretary; and Mr. Waller, Treasurer. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Waller nominated Mr. Bryant as the Vice-Chair. Mr. Davis seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion passed unanimously.

**Reduced Fee Policy Criteria:** Mr. Rhoads stated that at the last commission meeting, discussion began in reference to requests being made by groups to reduce or waive special event fees based on certain criteria adopted by the commission. The commission had asked for further review of criteria to help determine if fees are to be discounted or waived.

Staff is seeking input from the commission concerning whether to bring requests to the commission, or to have that authority delegated to the Director of Parks and Recreation to determine if fees are discounted or waived per the following proposed criteria.

**Reduced Fee Policy Criteria (continued):**

**CRITERIA FOR EVENT DISCOUNT OR WAIVING OF FEES**

- A minimum of 60 calendar days for a written request to be made for an event discount or waiving of fees.
- Must be non-profit and show proof of such status.
- Must have proof of liability insurance and sometimes medical insurance on participants.
- With the written request, summary budget showing revenue and expenses of the event must be included. Also, fees and charges to the participant must be outlined.
- Must show what benefits the City and/or Parks and Recreation Department derives from the event (increase of hotel/motel/restaurant taxes, recognition of city/department, etc.).
- Will consider whether established or new event.

Mr. Waller stated that authority to set fees rests with the commission. The commission should keep the authority to approval or deny these requests and not involve the staff.

Mrs. Smith said that staff will have to be involved and funds will be lost if reduction or waiver of fees are approved.

Mr. Waller stated that the staff would have to make sure the person met all criteria before the request goes to the commission. With these criteria, someone would be precluded from coming in and asking the commission for a fee less than what is charged.

Mrs. Martin asked when would a non-profit agency need liability insurance.

Mr. Rhoads stated that all associations that use the facilities are supposed to be affiliated with someone that has insurance.

Mr. Waller stated that they would need liability insurance only when asking for a reduced fee otherwise, they would not be required to have liability insurance. All on-going associations and agreements with the larger groups are required to have liability insurance.

Paula Jones stated that the city could be sued, but just for insured amount of coverage.

Mr. Bryant made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Martin, to accept the criteria as presented and have staff review requests to make sure all of the above criteria items are met for discounts or waiver of fees before going to the commission for a decision. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

**Parks and Recreation Department 2014 Capital Budget:** Mr. Rhoads reported that the City Council would discuss capital items on July 22, 2013. Enclosed is the Parks and Recreation priority needs list made up of over \$2,000,000 requested items over the last few years in capital and program improvements. Also included is the staff's capital and equipment request for 2014. The list represents just over \$2,000,000 in needs. It is anticipated that the Hamburger Tax capital penny will have about \$650,000 available after bond payments for purchases. This represents funding for the first 17 or 18 items on the list. Other funds would have to be appropriated to fund other items. There will be approximately \$325,000 left at the end of each of the years 2013, 2014 and 2015.

It is to be noted that the \$35,000 for recreation center renovations (painting) and the needs assessment were dropped from the list as a non-allowable item. By account definition, they are not capital.

Staff will work to add painting of one (1) recreation center a year (approximately \$17,500 each) into the recreation operation budget. Other options are being considered as far as the needs assessment is to see if a college class might do the assessment as a project for minimal cost.

Mrs. Martin asked if the baseball field lights have to be done at the Rose City ball park.

Mr. Rhoads stated that the department owns the facility and it is part of department's responsibility. In early 2013, the facility was unsafe, but has now been brought up to a safe condition.

Mrs. Smith asked if this list would allow for the purchase of two (2) 15-passenger vans for the recreation centers.

Mr. Rhoads said it would.

Mrs. Smith asked if the baseball complex storage building would be made out of fabricated material.

Mr. Rhoads said it would be small metal building to store equipment and provide a place to work.

Mr. Davis asked where the equipment is currently being stored for the baseball complex.

Mr. Rhoads said it is stored in various places and has to be moved around. The boxcar trailer is used to store chemicals. This items should be included in funding with no issue.

Mrs. Smith asked if there would be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) sidewalks built at the Burns Park dog park and Sherman Park.

Mr. Rhoads stated that ADA accessibility to restrooms close by will suffice, and at some point these will need to be addressed.

Mr. Waller stated the existing facilities do not have to be ADA compliant. However, if grant money is received to work on the facility, the facility has to be made ADA compliant.

Mr. Waller made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bryant, to accept the 2014 Capital Budget as presented. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously. See capital improvement budget included.

Mr. Waller thanked the staff for their hard work on the budget.

**CAPITAL NEED REQUEST FOR 2013-2014**

**PARKS AND RECREATION**

Over \$20 million of need has been determined by the Parks and Recreation Commission. This list represents only \$2 million of that need. From the Hamburger Tax Capital only \$650,000 will be available after bond payments to use to fund the first 17 or 18 items. Funds are still needed from other sources for the other items shown.

<b><u>ADMIN PRIORITY</u></b>	<b><u>ITEMS</u></b>	<b><u>ESTIMATE COST</u></b>	<b><u>JUSTIFICATION</u></b>
1	Fairway 5 Gang Turbo Mower	\$ 53,000	Two units are needed to keep up mowing at golf courses at Burns Park. Currently one unit is inoperable and is not worth the repairs needed.
2	Large Blower for Trails	5,000	Eight-year-old vehicle-pulled blower used weekly to clean trails. The motor and unit have been rebuilt once and is on last days of productivity.
3	Ranger Vehicle	25,000	When ranger started, bought a federal surplus vehicle. Vehicle is approaching 100,000 miles and has started having ongoing repairs.
4	Deck Mower	10,000	Replace existing seven-year-old mower in need of extensive repair. Used at Burns Park soccer field.
5	15-Passenger Van	25,000	Needed to help transport increased number of participants in youth and teen programs.
6	Tables and Chairs	10,000	Folding tables and chairs used in all the centers. About every three to five years replacements are needed.
7	Fairway 5-Gang Mower	48,000	Replace aging gang mower used to maintain the 17 soccer fields in Burns Park.
8	Server, Printer, Computers and Software for Centers	15,000	Hardware and software to update the recreation program registration, membership and facility scheduling of all recreation.
9	Pave Half of Parking Lot	90,000	Burns Park Baseball Complex parking lot is unfinished. Pave half of lot-total cost would be \$175,000. Cannot afford full cost at this time.
10	Small Maintenance Building	85,000	Due to lack of funds, a maintenance building was not completed for the baseball complex. Some equipment is brought in by trailer or stored in boxcar.
11	Light Two Soccer Fields	60,000	To host 2015 regional tournament, must light two more fields. With \$60,000 donated and installation help from electric, another \$60,000 is needed.

<u>ADMIN PRIORITY</u>	<u>ITEMS</u>	<u>ESTIMATE COST</u>	<u>JUSTIFICATION</u>
12	Irrigation System	50,000	Replace existing irrigation system on 9-holes of Burns Park Golf Championship Course. System is 30 years old. Do other 9-holes when money is available.
13	Two Deck Mowers	25,000	Have been replacing parts and motors to keep these two running. Out lived life expectancy. Golf.
14	ADA Sidewalks Dog Park/Sherman Park	25,000	Areas in some parks and locations are not ADA accessible. Specific requests have been made for these areas.
15	Baseball Field Lights (materials only)	70,000	Rose City baseball complex lighting system is about 30 years old. Light fixtures, wires and cross arms need to be replaced. Would save on electrical use. Safety issue.
16	Outdoor Basketball Court	15,000	Baring Cross needs activities for community youth. Need a recreation center, but need to start somewhere. Ruby Stewart-Brown, advocate for BC.
17	15-Passenger Van	25,000	Programs have grown particular for the summer programs. An additional van is needed to serve the program needs.
18	Deck Mower	10,000	Replace existing older mower in need of extensive repair. Used at Burns Park and outside neighborhood parks for on-going mowing.
19	Irrigation System	50,000	Replace existing irrigation system on 9 holes of Burns Park Golf Championship Course. System is 30 years old. Phase two, second nine holes.
20	Bleacher Shade Canopies	150,000	Burns Park Baseball Complex not finished. Need shade canopies for spectators for hot weather tournaments. Safety of older grandparents and others watching.
21	Lights for 4 Tennis Courts	67,000	For league play and tournaments at times there are not enough lighted courts. To attract larger tournaments for courts need to have lights.
22	Resurface 6 Tennis Courts	33,000	Courts are almost 10 years old and with all the use are in need of recoating of the playing surfaces. Ten presently need new surface, but six are requested at this time.
23	Fairway 5 Gang Mower	48,000	Replace aging gang mower used to maintain the 17 soccer fields in Burns Park.
24	ADA Upgrades to all Restrooms	150,000	Burns Park has several restrooms and facilities that are not accessible by ADA standards. Use the \$150,000 as grant match to make \$300,000 in ADA improvements.

<u>ADMIN PRIORITY</u>	<u>ITEMS</u>	<u>ESTIMATE COST</u>	<u>JUSTIFICATION</u>
25	Crestview Park Fencing	25,000	Ornamental iron fence along park on I-40 access road. Limit access and make park safer. Requested by Park Hill Neighborhood Association, Cary Tyson.
26	Pave Parking Lot	85,000	Burns Park Baseball Complex parking lot is unfinished. Pave second half of lot not done previously.
27	Upgrade Pool Building	50,000	Glenview pool building need to have updated bath room/shower fixtures and check in counter. Repair of some cement block is also needed.
28	Renovate Pool Building	50,000	Sherman Park needs updated bath room and shower fixtures. Repairs and renovation of building is also needed.
29	Remodel Rest Rooms in Large Meeting Room	50,000	NLR Community Center rest rooms need to be made ADA accessible and the flooring needs to be replaced.
30	Complete Upgrade or Replacement of HVAC	250,000	NLR Community Center. The system has a very old chiller and a boiler system. It breaks down on a regular basis and needs to be replaced with a newer cost efficient system.
31	Fence in Area	50,000	For safety and security of area and rides a fence is needed to circle the Funland complex.
32	New Lights and Steel Poles at DeJanis	180,000	The lighting system is about 30 years old. Full replacement is needed. Would save on electrical use and provide the additional light levels needed for high school play.
33	Splash Park Phase II	200,000	Splash Park was built at Glenview about five years ago. The cost to demolish the old pool left little funds for splash park features. Funds are needed to add features.
34	Add Skate Park to School Street Park	25,000	Skate park for use by children in the neighborhood. Park master plan has skate park. Request made by Terry Eslick, Rose City Neighborhood Association.
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$2,109,000</b>	

**Garage Sales in Parks:** Mr. Rhoads reported that recently a request had been made by a church to have a garage sale in one of the parks. Also, a neighborhood association has mentioned that they would like to have three (3) or four (4) garage sales a year in a different park. Generally, this type of event takes away aesthetically from the park. There is a potential for generations of a large amount of trash, particularly if they leave the unsold items at the park. Also, negative impact on grass and landscaping could occur.

Mrs. Martin asked if the church was waiting on a response from the commission.

Mr. Caplinger said no, the church is looking at other options. An application was sent to them but they have not responded.

Mr. Bryant said he feels that parks should only be used for enjoying the parks, and not for garage sales. Unsold items could be left behind. He does not think they should be allowed, as the city property is for parks and recreation.

**Garage Sales in Parks (continued):** Mr. Waller said that if a group meets stated criteria including fees and clean-up, he would not object. This would include the group filling out an application and paying fees including a clean-up deposit.

Mrs. Smith asked if the criteria was met, including fees and cleanup paid, would garage sales be allowed in all parks or just limited to the smaller parks. She would not like to see this all over a park.

Mr. Rhoads said this has not been discussed.

Mrs. Martin said she thinks there should be standards for these types of events, and does not like the idea of having these sales in the parks.

Mr. Caplinger said there needs to be a group or sponsor to an event like this and it should be scheduled.

Mrs. Martin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Waller, to table this item and have the church or anyone else come before the commission to make their request. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Martin asked that the event form be sent to the commission before the next regularly scheduled commission meeting.

**Director Reports:** Mr. Rhoads present the written director reports. He stated that Steve Ralston thinks the **Emerald Park Golf Course** is not cost efficient and wants to consider giving it back to Ft. Roots. It is a long term contract and he will get more information on this.

Tina Worrell reported that there was a good turnout at the **Busch Pepsi ball tournament** with no problems.

Mrs. Smith stated that the staff had done an excellent job with duties performed and being short on help. She asked if there had been additional consideration to turn the **batting cage** area into a **skate park**.

Mr. Caplinger stated that there had been no additional discussion for this consideration, and work will have to be done to the site if it is converted to a skate park.

Mr. Caplinger reported that George Pugh and other family members donated a total of \$6,000 for upkeep, maintenance, beautification and operation of the **Pugh's Old Mill Park**. They are planning to make a donation each year.

**Calendar of Events:** Mrs. Smith stated that the next commission agenda deadline is Tuesday, August 6, 2013, 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, August 19, 2013, at 5:00 p.m., in the North Little Rock Community Center.

**Adjournment:** Mrs. Martin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bryant, to adjourn at 5:54 p.m. All voted aye, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comments:** Mrs. Smith opened the meeting for public comments but there were none.

Submitted by,

Otistene Smith, Secretary