

NORTH LITTLE ROCK PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

NOVEMBER 18, 2013

The North Little Rock Parks and Recreation Commission meeting was called to order by Mrs. Vicki Stephens, at 5:00 p.m., on November 18, 2013, 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, Ian Hope and Paula Jones.

Others Present: Gary Davis, Michael Klucher and Maureen Dickson.

Welcome Randall Bradley: Mrs. Stephens welcomed Mr. Randall Bradley and said that on behalf of the commission, they appreciated him serving.

Financial Report – Third Quarter 2013: Mr. Waller reported that revenues and expenditures are right on the mark for the third quarter ending 2013. If things remain the same through the end of the year, there may be a negative amount of approximately \$15,800. The staff has done a really good job in controlling expenses. Revenues fluctuate through the year.

Utility Cost Report – Third Quarter 2013: Mr. Rhoads stated that the ballfield utility usage is running below last year at this time. The golf course and Funland usage have increased some. Usage overall is less than in the past.

Disposition of Minutes: Mrs. Stephens presented minutes of the September 16, 2013, Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. The commission did not meet in October 2013.

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

North Little Rock High School Soccer Agreement: Jeff Caplinger stated that the North Little Rock High School athletic department needs an additional place to play soccer for their 2014 spring season. Contractors will be tearing down the football/soccer stadium and building a new one in the next several months. He presented a soccer program agreement for 2013-2014 that is similar to the one with the high school baseball team. Some details are still being worked out. A tentative schedule for January 2014 through May 2014 has been given to the staff.

Michael Klucher stated that the only state tournament they will be hosting would be the last week in May 2014.

Mr. Rhoads stated that staff is recommending working with the school district to accommodate their needs and requests authorization to finalize with the Assistant City Attorney Paula Jones.

Mr. Gary Davis said they might request that this be a two-year agreement.

Mr. Bryant made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to accept the agreement and give Mr. Rhoads authorization to finalize with minor changes with final approval from legal staff. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Stephens said she appreciated the opportunity to work with them.
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Control Burn at Burns Park: Mr. Caplinger stated that due to non-favorable weather conditions this year, the control burn in Burns Park was not completed. Bert Turner is in charge of coordinating and leading the burn. No one called about the burn last time.

Mr. Bryant stated that the staff did a good job in advertising the last time.

Mr. Rhoads stated that permission is sought to continue with the prescribed burn now through 2014. The Nature Conservancy and Arkansas Forestry Commission will work with staff to complete the burn.

Mr. Jones made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bryant, to authorize to conduct and complete the controlled burn from now through the end of 2014. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Stephens asked that the commission be kept informed. Mr. Rhoads agreed.

Request for Change in Tennis Center Hours: Mr. Rhoads reported that the Arkansas Tennis Association seeks permission to change the hours of operation for the Burns Park Tennis Center indoor courts from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, during the months of January through March 2014.

Maureen Dickson, with the Arkansas Tennis Association, said this would make it possible to have more opportunity for play on the indoor courts, allowing for three (3) evening time slots. This will be a trial period and if successful, the Arkansas Tennis Association would like to continue the hours for the indoor courts in the future. She also stated that the tennis center and grounds looked great for their adult sectional tournament. Representatives from five (5) states participated, and many complimented how nice everything looked.

Mr. Rhoads stated that Jason Rhodes, Parks Superintendent, and his staff performed the beautification.

Mr. Waller made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bryant, to grant this request to change the Burns Park Tennis Center hours through March 2014. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Dickerson thanked the commission for their time.

Proposed Fee Changes for 2014: Mr. Rhoads stated that after all levels of staff had met, changes for fees were recommended and are being presented to become effective January 1, 2014. Areas impacted include:

Baseball/Softball fields marking	Soccer non-associated fees
Summer camps	High school soccer
Afterschool programs	Splash pad
Cheer program	

Mr. Bryant made a motion, seconded by Mr. Waller, to approve these fee changes. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously. See fee changes attached.

Proposed Parks and Recreation Ordinance Changes: Mr. Caplinger presented proposed update changes to the Parks and Recreation Ordinances and other minor changes within the codes.

Mr. Rhoads stated that over the last few months, staff and commission have been discussing the merits of having garage sales in the parks. The commission voted at the September 2013 meeting not to have such, and instructed a proposed ordinance change be drafted.

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Proposed Parks and Recreation Ordinance Changes (continued): Mr. Caplinger stated that the definition of rummage sales is the sale of miscellaneous articles, used or new, to raise money for charitable or for-profit purposes. He added that this provision shall not apply to vendors associated with a permitted event within the parks.

Other additions and changes included:

Pertaining to fires, a section was added that all fire containers shall remain on paved or gravel surfaces which are not under pavilions or awnings. This was added to keep grills or other fire containers off the grass and from under the pavilions.

Under the fishing section, an addition was added to allow bowfishing along the Arkansas River bank.

Under the motorized vehicles section:

- Clarification was made that axled trailers could not operate or park under in any pavilion, city park or trail except on streets, parking lots, and trails designated for motorized traffic.

- Any person operating an emergency vehicle, department vehicle or medically-necessary mobility device (such as wheelchair, golf cart or Segway) as defined by DOJ, Title II, 28 C.F.R. §35.104 and Title III, 28 C.F.R. §36.104), shall obtain a permit from the department.

Under the leash required for dogs, an exception to having a dog on a leash in city parks was added to allow a person designated by the department, authorized by the Director of Parks and Recreation, in the official conduct of their duties and dog training exercises.

Mr. Waller stated that regarding garage sales, he feels this provision should not apply to all vendors with proper North Little Rock city licenses and permits who are associated with a permitted event in the parks. If they are qualified to have one, they should have one. It is an opportunity to reinforce that requirement. He does not feel that enough people that perform charities or non-profit organizations understand that they have to be licensed to perform such activities.

Mrs. Jones stated that wording for this should be that this provision should not apply to vendors associated with permitted events with the Parks and Recreation Department who have complied with the City of North Little Rock business license requirement.

Mr. Waller made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bryant, to approve these amendments to the Parks and Recreation Ordinances, then send to the City Council for approval. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Director Reports: Mr. Rhoads presented the written director reports.

Ordinance on Attendance at Parks and Recreation Commission Meetings: Mr. Rhoads stated that clarification was needed regarding excused absences from Parks and Recreation Commission members for the meetings.

Paula Jones stated that the commission members could vote at any time on whether the absent member should or should not be excused, and that could include the current meeting, the following meeting or anytime thereafter.

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Ordinance on Attendance at Parks and Recreation Commission Meetings (continued): Mrs. Stephens stated that she would prefer voting at the current meeting on these absences after roll call, and asked that it be placed on the agenda as an agenda item for each meeting.

Jan Eberle-Wilkins agreed.

Dog to Chase Geese: Mr. Rhoads reported that the department has had one (1) volunteer dog sporadically chasing the geese in Burns Park. Staff is proceeding to buy a local dog that is one-third the price of the proposed dog from out of state. This action to buy a trained dog was previously approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Ian Hope said the dog is a Blue Heeler/Catahoula mix that was rescued and trained to chase geese but not harm them. The dog's name is Shepard and is called Shep. He will be kept at the Burns Park golf course and used primarily by the golf course staff. He has shown to be an excellent dog for this activity. This action will run the geese to another location, usually across the river as they will learn not to return to the area because of the potential dog bothering them.

Calendar of Events: Mrs. Stephens stated that the next commission agenda deadline is Tuesday, December 3, 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, December 16, 2013, at 5:00 p.m., in the North Little Rock Community Center.

The January agenda deadline is Tuesday, January 7, 2014, at 2:00 p.m. The January regularly scheduled commission meeting is Tuesday, January 21, 2014.

Adjournment: Mr. Bryant made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jones, to adjourn at 5:57 p.m. All voted aye, and the motion passed unanimously.

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

Submitted by,

Otistene Smith, Secretary