

Parks Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes

*October 23, 2019 • 5:30 p.m.
3rd Floor Conference Room – City Hall*

Members Present: Larry Thomas, Ken Kwantes, Susan Wrasmann, & Andrew Meggitt.

Others Present: Floyd Jernigan, Parks Foreman Simon Yoakum, Tinkergarten program leader Gina Root.

1. Call to Order

- Ken Kwantes called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. Moment of silence in remembrance of Councilman Jimmy Dale Williams, who passed away Oct. 16, 2019. Williams served for 30 years on Rolla's City Council.

3. Approval of Minutes

- A motion was made by Larry Thomas to approve the minutes of the July 24, 2019 meeting. Susan Wrasmann seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

4. New Business

- **Splash Zone**

Revenue and expense - Aquatics Manager Kia Soden reviewed this past season's numbers, and did comparisons to previous years. This past season was impacted by the weather to a larger extent, with temperatures not warming up until later in the summer and with more rainouts than in the past, resulting in closings and lower attendance. The first season pass, which typically is sold in early May, wasn't sold until end of May. June's rainy and cold weather delayed pass sales further. She also pointed to the split of the Centre from the Parks Department, which resulted in elimination of the Centre discount. The new game and shade area didn't get finished until very late in the season, delaying hoped for increased revenues for rentals. Larry Thomas noted concession margin was low, with Soden noting that ice cream sales were hurt by the weather. She said they will look at increasing concession prices for next season.

Maintenance - Westport Pools inspected the drains at the pool for compliance with the VGB Act that requires public pools be equipped with anti-entrapment devices that comply with a specified performance standard. Staff replaced one of the drain grates this past season. All such grates have a rated time period. Westport will provide a proposal for installation of new grates. Kia will get additional quotes from two other contractors. End of season power washing had been done. The slide leak still needs addressing. Kia is also collecting proposals to repaint the slides.

Staffing - She complimented the past season's managers and lifeguard staff for their work but noted that due to the cyclical nature of these college students' future schedules, that there would likely be some turnover.

Future plans – Director Jernigan noted Public Works' concrete crew would replace problem areas that have raised or dropped below acceptable grade. That work is scheduled for November, depending on their work schedule. The boiler is budgeted for replacement. The resurfacing and replastering of the pool surface is also planned prior to next year's opening.

- **Cemetery rules**

The Commission reviewed the existing rules of the cemetery, which have been in place with only minor changes, since at least 1997 and have been approved by Council at various times when burial lot prices were increased, the last time in 2012.

Members viewed photographs of lots that aren't compliant, due to the placing of impermanent structures in and around the headstones or the addition of a variety of elements - fencing, solar lights, landscaped brick areas, toys, figurines and other transitory pieces, all of which are expressly prohibited by the rules. The rules are posted on the parks website, posted at the cemetery, and copies are provided to families when lots are sold.

Commission members discussed a request by a family to take care of their own area and that family's desire to make their loose brick landscaping enclosure more permanent, in line with the headstone guidelines.

There was no support from the commission to make any exceptions or changes to the rules.

Commission chair Ken Kwantes, recalling from his time as the parks director, that the overwhelming majority of families who have loved ones buried in the cemetery, adhere to the rules. He said the rules were looked at in depth in 2010 with a series of public meetings that included a review by a citizens' committee, and the only areas that were changed then related to operational procedures. Ken suggested adding to the rules that solar lights specifically to the items that are not acceptable.

Commission members agreed that the rules should be upheld but did make allowance for those non-attached pieces, as long as these are placed physically on the monument and staff can mow and trim around.

4. Financials

- Mr. Jernigan presented the financials for the past three months. Personnel for September was up in expense due to Parks maintenance staff filling in as concessions, scorekeepers, and as umpires. Tree expense also factored in for the past three months due to removal of trees for a variety of factors, including

disease and vandalism, along the Trail and Barnitz and Green Acres Parks. Staff purchased 20 trees for either replacements or new plantings.

5. Old Business

- **Tinkergarten update**

Leader Gina Root gave the Commission an update on the program, which offers Outdoor classes and activities, that began in the summer at Green Acres Park with herself as the leader and has expanded to an additional instructor and a second park location, at Schuman. She said classes sometimes go up to 30 people, which includes both the children and their parents. The primary age for the program targets ages 2-5 but can include 18 months up to 8 years.

- **Capital projects and budget summary**

A list was shared of finalized projects approved in the budget which will come up for Council approval or city administrator approval in the purchasing process. Larger planned projects include Coventry Playground, which had to be moved in the new fiscal year due to delays caused by weather and the budget approval process; a permanent bathroom to be located at a to-be-determined location in Ber Juan, road and culvert improvements in the cemetery, the replaster and reseal of the Splash Zone pool walls and floor; a shade structure at the ballfield complex, and a replacement boiler at Splash Zone.

6. Director's update

- The director touched on several areas in the director's report. The reception for Scout Trevor Pelc's work at the Green Acres ballfield is Friday at noon. Commission members, Council, city administration, Scouts, teams and players who utilize Green Acres ballfield, those who helped with the project, and city and parks staff have been invited. A similar event is tentatively planned for Murry Park, to recognize the efforts of those Scouts. That is planned for Nov. 14 at 2 p.m. McConnell & Associates is currently working on resurfacing and painting at the Green Acres old tennis courts for the conversion to pickleball. When completed, staff will install posts and nets for three courts. Parks hosted a headstone cleaning at the cemetery, with approximately 30 in attendance. About a dozen pre-1900s stones were cleaned. Those taking part requested to have this event twice a year. Parks staff won't be doing leaf pickup this year as nearly 10 businesses now provide this service, when initially begun, this didn't exist. The price of replacing aging equipment was also a determining factor.

7. Commission comments

- Citing the need to discuss particular areas such as trees and the budget in a more timely manner, Chairman Kwantes suggested the commission meet six times a year, which would help "provide the right input at the right time." After comments by members Larry Thomas and Andrew Meggitt, Kwantes suggested

the director follow up with City Administrator John Butz for approval. Kwantes added he would discuss the idea with fellow members Susan Wrasmann, who had to leave a few minutes early for another meeting, and Sue Arnold, who had to be out of town.

8. Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Director Floyd Jernigan prepared the minutes.