

Park Advisory Commission

Meeting Minutes

September 23, 2020

Green Acres Pavilion, Green Acres Park

Members Present: Ken Kwantes, Susan Wrasmann, Sue Arnold, and Mike Fleishhauer

Absent: Andrew Meggitt and Larry Thomas

Others Present: Floyd Jernigan, Stan Busch, and Julie Rodgers

1. Call to Order

- Ken Kwantes called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

- Susan Wrasmann made a motion to approve the August 26, 2020, minutes. Sue Arnold seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Old business

- Financials

Mr. Jernigan said the financials indicate we are down this month, but when you look at July/August total operating expenses for 2019 and 2020, and compare, there isn't a significant difference.

Eugene Northern rentals have started going strong again.

Prop P Sales Tax money is up in July and August over last year. It was down in June, but that difference was made up for in July and August. We held back on some of our big purchases due to financial uncertainty, but there ended up being no real negative financial impact due to Covid because sales tax collections remained ahead of expectations.

Mr. Kwantes asked Mr. Jernigan for his analysis of SplashZone. Mr. Jernigan noted that there were 54 rentals in 2019 and only five in 2020. We only had Licking Shootout and church rentals. This was directly due to Covid. The Licking Shootout rentals still haven't shown up in our SplashZone revenue. Despite the self-imposed attendance limits and reduced hours, we had a positive year. There were some filter issues at the first of the season which were remedied and some perceptions that cleaning needed to be more frequent, but we were cleaning every hour. We then tried to make cleaning tasks more visible, since perception is everything. Those perceptions disappeared after the first month. We had one reported potential exposure to COVID at Splash Zone, but no reported cases. Medical authorities agree that chlorine takes care of COVID issues instantly and being outside, wind currents help reduce exposure. Mr. Jernigan was pleased with the work of the lifeguards. "The young people stepped up and did a really good job. Head Guards did great."

He reported that we had about 50 dogs and owners at this year's Canine Plunge and had only one issue with a dog. After the Canine Plunge, we winterized SplashZone.

- Review of budget for new year

Mr. Jernigan said there were items we thought would be put off until this next fiscal year, but were able to be done due to the increased sales tax. We will redo backstops for Kimmel and Morgan ballfields. Mr. Jernigan asked Stan Busch for a time table on those. Mr. Busch said we will wait until softball season is over. We replaced eight picnic tables in the BerJuan Sports Complex. We have been working on culverts in the cemetery to prepare for the overlay project which will be about \$50,000. BerJuan Park Playground upgrade will likely be in excess of \$170,000, with some of that coming from Parks budget and some from Parkland money. We will need to do an RFP, with emphasis on design rather than necessarily focusing on selecting lowest bid since this playground will be an all-inclusive, meaning the play aspects will be accessible for all abilities.

We did not repair the Splash Zone slide this year because of cost, but we do plan on doing that for this coming year. We did have to go ahead and replace two pumps at SplashZone.

The Frisco Train cameras are already done. We will have to get with CSE to give us access to camera feed on our computers.

Within the Parks Maintenance budget is about \$6,500 for tree plantings and another \$4,000 plus for removal of dead trees. City wide, we will spend more than that on plantings. Public Works Director Steve Hargis and the Engineering Department plan to continue the city's remediation project along the stream, and also along Kingshighway.

Mr. Kwantes asked Mike Fleishhauer to talk about their presentation at City Council on Monday for Tree City USA. Mr. Kwantes remarked about the beautiful sign and the nice banner. He said Mr. Fleishhauer did a superb job on his presentation talking about trees, such as the green ash borer problem in our trees, as well as the shag bark hickory. Mr. Kwantes said that Mr. Fleishhauer and Mr. Jernigan did a lot of work. Also, without help from Public Works Department, we couldn't have accomplished becoming a Tree City. Mr. Jernigan asked the group for suggestions of locations for the two signs we received. It was agreed that Buehler Park would be a good location with high visibility. Other possible locations included CVS on Highway 63, the Trail Head at O Hwy, on Highway 72 at the entrance to Green Acres Park, or at the intersection of Highways 63 and 72 near AT&T. Mr. Fleishhauer said the new University Drive entrance on Hwy 63 would also be a good location. Mr. Kwantes also suggested the Rolla city limit sign on I-44. It was discussed that MoDOT has stringent regulations for signage, so approval would have to be obtained for placement of most areas suggested. It was also agreed that we need to look into obtaining more signs, if possible. Mr. Kwantes noted there are proprietary issues with these signs, so they, more than likely, must be purchased through National Arbor Foundation.

4. New Business

- Director's update

Mr. Jernigan singled out several areas in the narrative. There are eight different MS&T study groups thus far that have contacted Rolla City Parks and City Planner Tom Coots regarding projects they want to design. Mr. Jernigan said we have met with almost half of the groups so

far. We are supposed to meet with four more tomorrow, and another group on Friday. Projects include a botanical/historical garden and walking path, new parking at Green Acres, multipurpose fields above the stormwater detention area at Tory, and a soccer complex at Southview. They also have a project for possible baseball fields at Hi-Point Industrial Park. Mr. Jernigan said the groups will also do a presentation for the Park Advisory Commission. Mr. Kwantes asked if we could make a suggestion to these groups. He talked about Penny Park in the 5th Ward, behind Walmart and south of new 72 extension. They are cut off from Ridgeview and residents can't cross Highway 72. Mr. Kwantes thinks they need a playground there. Penny Park's main feature is a sinkhole and likely would need an engineering study to see if it could be filled. At present, it's a vacant overgrown wooded lot with very uneven topography on Penny Lane. Mr. Kwantes suggested that some of the groups could tackle that. Mr. Jernigan noted that the Rolla Parks Department will have another Open House. Prop P is coming up in 2023. We'll retain part, but we will lose a sizable amount of tax money when the bulk of that tax sunsets. We have 17 playgrounds; we have done four. We really need something at SplashZone to be able to compete with other aquatic options in the area. We need to work on the trail, and any extension and continuation will be a six figure cost. There remain a number of improvement needs to existing facilities. Mr. Jernigan noted we need to show the public what we've done with their dollars at that open house and how we've been fiscally responsible with their money. Due to COVID concerns, we could do a virtual Open House, which would involve our IT Department. Mr. Kwantes asked when we would want to do the Open House. Mr. Jernigan said February or possibly November on 2021. He suggested a Tuesday or Thursday with times in the afternoon and early evening. Given the current climate of the virus, Mr. Kwantes said he thinks the key would be a virtual Open House.

5. Commission comments

Mr. Kwantes said that development of a bicycle pump park would be a good thing for Rolla. He spoke positively of a BMX Bike facility such as Steve Hargis had spoken of for Rolla. Mr. Kwantes said we need to make it clear what we're doing and that we're trying to be good stewards of the tax money. Mr. Kwantes asked the group for suggestions.

Mr. Kwantes said we've done so many good things to improve the parks, but so much more needs to be done. We need new lights in the ballfields. People want more trails. There is talk about linking the Deible Loop on through the cemetery. He said it would likely cause traffic issues. He noted that there is much more walking and biking going on with COVID. Mr. Kwantes added that it takes more money for maintenance. He asked Stan Busch to speak on maintenance tasks. Mr. Busch listed tasks staff now does with current trails and parks.

Mr. Kwantes asked if anyone had anything else for the good of the order and asked for input on the date of the next meeting. Mr. Jernigan mentioned that the next regular meeting would be November. Group agreed upon Nov. 18, via Zoom, at 5:30 p.m.

6. Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.