



## WORTHINGTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

### Minutes of the Tuesday, October 15, 2013 Meeting

**Members Present** - The members present were Laura Ball, Bob Burpee, Rob Wendling, and Darren Hurley, Director of Parks & Recreation.

The minutes for the September 17, 2013 meeting were approved.

**Wilson Bridge Road Multi-Use Trail Recommendations** – The Multi-Use Trail connecting Olentangy Parklands and the Worthington Mall has been identified as a goal for the City in previous Comprehensive Plans. The City applied for and received a grant through ODNR to construct the trail with a completion date of June 2014. After the funds were secured the designing of the trail began.

The trail is required to be eight feet wide. This meant there were two options of expanding the current sidewalk. One option is expanding toward the street but the other option conflicted with many trees. Deciding that the street direction had to be ruled out for safety, City Arborists and the Arbor Committee were asked to analyze the trees and the impact the trail would have on those trees.

The Arbor Committee recommended removal of trees if the trail were to be built as shown with a prescribed replacement plan due to conflict of falling fruit and structural issues. Further assessment included meeting with property owners and their landscape managers, a specific tree by tree analysis, and dialogue with concerned residents. As the city Arborist reviewed each tree, it became apparent there were significant issues to consider in regards to the condition of the trees. The Osage orange trees, in general, are nearing the end of their lifespan. Categorizing the trees along the corridor 50-60% are dead or in serious decline. If those are removed, most likely the surrounding trees will be impacted in a variety of ways including root damage, trunks or branches grown together, or newly exposed trees could pose a weakness in severe weather. Of the trees that could remain unaffected, their average life expectancy is 10 more years. The cost of removing the trees once the trail is built will increase and the ability to plant and initiate a new tree line will be interrupted.

The timing of this project is positive in such a way that the city will be receiving recommendations on the Wilson Bridge Corridor including landscaping and street tree recommendations and the money has already been allocated to deal with the corridor. As a result,

our recommendation is to remove the trees that conflict along the path of the trail and initiate an aggressive replacement program that would ensure the screening of the corridor, begin the establishment of shade along the trail, and jump start the desired aesthetic effect of desirable tree species along the corridor while removing any liability from the newly constructed trail.

**All Children's Playground Update** – Many volunteers from Dublin-Worthington Rotary along with a few others participated in the community build Saturday October 12. Most of the equipment is in place with a few details left. Grading of the land will be completed soon to improve drainage, concrete will be poured for the new patio, and the safety surface will be installed. The Dublin-Worthington Rotary funded the patio.

**McCord Park Planning** – New ideas were given from Commission members from last month's meeting. Mr. Hurley also plans to seek feedback from Worthington Youth Boosters on plans for the future of the park. Mrs. Ball further explained her drawing of options for a future McCord Park. Mr. Hurley stated that the planning process will eventually include the Worthington Youth Boosters, City officials, and residents once we have something for them to react to/evaluate.

**Other** – Brandi Williams began her position as the new Fitness Supervisor on October 7, 2013. Mrs. Williams joins us from the City of Vandalia Recreation Center. Among other impressive qualifications, Brandi took pride in never having to cancel a group fitness class and having a very clean facility. Brandi is looking forward to developing relationships with patrons and staff.

Being no further business, the motion for the meeting to adjourn was granted.