



## **WORTHINGTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

### **Minutes of the Tuesday, January 16, 2018 Meeting**

**Members Present** - The members present were Bob Burpee, Peter Calamari, Dave Kessler, Michele Miller, Rob Wendling and Darren Hurley, Director of Parks & Recreation.

The minutes from the December 19, 2017 meeting were approved.

**Swearing in of Re-Appointed Commission Members** – Mr. Calamari read the swearing in statement for re-appointment to the Commission to Mr. Burpee, Mr. Kessler, and Ms. Miller as they repeated it after him. They each signed their document and returned it to Mr. Hurley as newly reappointed members of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

**Organizational meeting – Appointment of New Officers** – Ms. Miller requested nomination for 2018 Chair. Mr. Burpee explained how historically the chair had remained the same for many years at a time up until a point several years ago where members had a discussion and decided rotating the chair would be preferable. It is up to the board to nominate and vote for a chair and vice-chair each year. Mr. Kessler nominated Peter Calamari, Ms. Miller seconded the nomination. All members voted in favor for Mr. Calamari to become Chair.

Ms. Miller requested nomination for 2018 Vice Chair. Mr. Kessler nominated Bob Burpee, Mr. Calamari seconded the nomination. All members voted in favor for Mr. Burpee to become Vice Chair.

**Overview of 2018 Projects** – Mr. Hurley presented a document listing the 2018 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Projects for Parks and Recreation as approved by City Council at the end of 2017. He reviewed many of the projects listed, the costs associated, and an estimated completion date for each one. Mr. Hurley described in detail the Community Center HVAC project that will be taking place this year and the potential energy efficiency savings the improvements could generate to offset the costs of the initial improvements. Mr. Wendling asked if the money budgeted for McCord Park would carry over if plans aren't finalized in time for work to occur this year. Mr. Hurley replied that it would and that was the likely scenario at this time. Restrooms at the Olentangy Parklands are scheduled to be installed this summer. Mr. Burpee appreciated the project finally being funded, it will be a wonderful addition to the community and that park. Mr. Hurley then described the department's buses currently in use, one was replaced last year and one more will be replaced this year. This will update the eldest two of the four buses the city owns. Ms. Miller inquired about the funds scheduled for the Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan. Mr. Hurley explained that the Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Board will be bringing in a consultant to help them develop more specific and detailed plans for improvements. Ms. Miller asked how the Urban Forestry Restoration

money in the budget would be used. Mr. Hurley replied that this money will be used to replace street trees or city trees that have to be removed. Mr. Hurley explained that this had been a topic of discussion of City Council during their budget hearings in the fall and additional money for tree replacement had been allocated in the 2018 operating budget as a result.

**McCord Park Master Planning Update and Next Steps** – Mr. Hurley shared he had received feedback directly from individual City Council Members encouraging more process and discussions with stakeholders regarding the McCord Park Master Plan and the Community Garden. He had also been asked to engage POD Design to come up with some alternative concept drawings that would compare the current design to those that contained some or all of the Community Garden. Mr. Hurley has reached out to Mr. Kolwicz and Mr. Dziatkowicz at POD Design to have them facilitate a meeting with the gardeners to illustrate the challenge of fitting all of the desired amenities in the space and to ask them to complete an exercise to look at design options. That meeting is scheduled for tomorrow, January 17, and is expected to include four or five gardeners.

Individual members went on to describe their communication efforts with members of City Council since the December meeting. Each of them described their conversations and the level of support they received from individual council members. Members discussed the importance of continuing dialogue with council members and educating them about the process they have gone through to date and getting their feedback to understand how best to proceed moving forward.

Mr. Kessler pointed out a new discovery since the recent snowfall. The hill near the current garden location in McCord Park is heavily used for smaller kids to sled ride. He suggested the redesign of landscaping should be considered when planning in order to keep this a safe sledding hill and to possibly enhance it.

Mr. Kessler made it known that his wife has circulated communications regarding the Community Garden in the neighborhood and engaged several neighbors who oppose the Community Garden in its current location.

Mr. Hurley shared the idea of grand-fathering existing gardeners to stay in their current garden plots while the park is being planned and construction timelines are figured out.

Mr. Hurley indicated depending on how the meeting goes tomorrow POD would likely have some alternative concept drawings for review by the February meeting and commission members could discuss then whether they would like to take those to an open house, post them on-line for feedback, or consider some other step for additional public involvement as requested by City Council.

**Other** – Ms. Miller commented on how nice the sledding hill is at Huntley Bowl Park. She suggested the possibility of a winterfest event or some type of programming to utilize that park more. Mr. Wendling suggested it would be a great spot for paintball games and Mr. Burpee suggested a walking trail with a bridge over the water way in the northeast corner.

Ms. Miller also commented on her surprise of the trees that were removed from the Anthem property on High Street. Mr. Hurley replied that the property sold and the next day there was a company there taking down the trees. He said prior to the purchase the prospective owners had walked the property with our arborist Shawn Daugherty and the Planning Director Lee Brown and assessed the condition of various trees on site. Mr. Wendling added that he knew many were dead or dying and had been neglected for some time. There are plans by the owners to plant mature trees on the property this coming spring.

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