



WORTHINGTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the Tuesday, April 17, 2018 Meeting

Members Present - The members present were Dan Armitage, Laura Ball, Bob Burpee, Peter Calamari, Dave Kessler, Michele Miller, and Rob Wendling. City support staff Darren Hurley, Parks & Recreation Director, Julie Sergent, Marketing and Outreach Coordinator, Michael Burgdorfer, Recreation Supervisor, Scott Brown, Parks Manager and Lauren Lange, Recorder, were also present.

Also attending were Stacy Hall of 5850 Granby Street, Lynn Blanton of 5820 Granby Street, Courtney Ulliman of 261 N. High Street, Kathy Kessler of 6988 Eastview Drive, and Beth Hoerauf of 6987 Eastview Drive.

City Council Members David Robinson & Rachael Dorothy were also present.

The minutes from the March 20, 2018 meeting were approved.

McCord Park Planning Process – Mr. Calamari requested an update from Mr. Hurley on the McCord Park Planning Process input received so far for the sake of the guests that are present. Mr. Hurley reminded members that he shared the feedback from the March 12 open house at the March Commission Meeting but that the on-line comments were not available yet at that time. It was decided by the members present to take some time for members to review those comments prior to having a discussion and considering next steps. Mr. Hurley confirmed members had received and had a chance to review the feedback compiled by POD Design. Mr. Hurley suggested a plan for this evening's meeting, pointed out and reviewed the drawings and plans from the last open house laid out around the room, and updated the status of POD Design as of this point. He indicated he had spoken individually with all of the members over the past week and had compiled some recommendations for consideration. Mr. Hurley passed out a document of three possible motions and read them aloud. He indicated staff's recommendation was the first motion.

Option 1. Move to keep the proposed "compromised garden" in the Concept Plan as shown in Pod's sketch which removes approximately 20-25% of the garden footprint. We would ask POD to refine a concept around that which would remove the playground from the south side of the garden and draw one larger play area on the west side of the garden and a smaller play area on the east side of the garden adjacent to the shelters and greenspace. The multi-use trail would stay where it is shown and the shelters would be shown in the

greenspace on the north and south end of it. The following conditions would be set for keeping the garden as described:

- A. The garden group commits to having an aesthetic fence in place by the beginning of the 2019 garden season. The proposed fence design will be reviewed by the PRC. This will be at their expense or they can negotiate with the city on helping with the cost in exchange for higher rental rates.
- B. The garden group commits to having and enforcing tighter guidelines for each gardener to maintain aesthetics of their plots effective this current season.
- C. The garden group will propose an educational program in detail that will be a commitment for as long as the garden is in McCord Park to include information, programming, participation in certain events, etc.
- D. The garden group will assist in the establishment of a second Community Garden in one of the identified locations which will be facilitated by city staff in terms of soil improvements and a two year time period of establishment. When established, this second garden will help the overall garden program to grow and will also assist in the eventual further shrinking of the existing garden to open up more space in McCord Park for the other identified uses.
- E. As the more specific design and construction of the new park moves on over the next 3 to 5 years, the Parks and Recreation Commission may opt to revisit with the garden group the exact sizing and shape of the garden as it becomes more apparent if there are benefits to doing so. Any further reduction or renovation to the garden would be with the commitment to grandfather in existing gardeners and would be done via garden plots being vacated and/or existing gardeners being willing to relocate.

Option 2. Move to recommend the original concept design (from October) with the understanding that if Council will not support that design the Commission would like to recommend the above as their secondary motion.

Option 3. Move to recommend the garden stay in the Concept Plan either in whole or as offered in the gardeners' compromise, that a second garden be immediately established elsewhere and that no new gardeners are added to the current garden. Current gardeners are grandfathered in and the garden will stay in place with noted aesthetic improvements until all current gardeners voluntarily leave or agree to move to the new location(s). If Council will not support this plan then the first option is their secondary motion.

Mr. Calamari advised that his thoughts as they stand now is that one of the compromised solutions is our best alternative. What we have come to learn to date is there is not a lot of support to move all the way in one direction or another, making it hard to move this plan further. His thoughts are more towards one of the compromised motions that were discussed.

Mr. Armitage commented that he has flipped on his original thoughts of eliminating the garden. He added that he feels that there are many recreation options for kids and teens but not as many offered to his peers and the older adults. He has looked into it and talked to folks and feels the department should maintain the garden as it stands.

Ms. Ball commented that this is a huge project and will be broken down into phases. Therefore, she suggests moving forward with the Master Plan, with the condition of doing the improvements that don't touch the garden first. Get the parking lots and ball fields in place and establish a group to continue talking about the garden but with the idea that the last phase of the park improvements be this enlarged area. The shelters, path, and components of the playground could still be installed, things that don't impact the garden, and allow some more conversation to be going on. She recommends a compromise of the Master Plan but making the garden portion last. With the idea of establishing that second garden that would include more people from the community. Continue to work on shrinking the garden, maybe naturally, and making the necessary improvements for aesthetics.

Ms. Miller began her comments by stating she also feels that this a huge project and is getting stalled because of this one piece. All other components of this plan are benefitting the entire community, the ball parks, soccer fields, the driving and parking, etc. She visits many other large parks with kids in

sports and this garden is not putting our best foot forward and has been in discussion for so long and it needs to move forward with improvements, because a larger community is being brought in and that is what really is helping our property values. The view of the garden is also in the same space as special events. Ms. Miller supports Ms. Ball's recommendation to keep moving forward with these changes and big investments that have been talked about for years, and favors the idea of continuing to talk about it, redrawing it, having other gardens established and people may have a different point of view if there are three other gardens in Worthington. Ms. Miller thinks it is important to put it back out to the larger community and do another survey. The Master Plan was based off a survey of the entire community that took several months resulting in good data and input. The garden decisions are being based on a very small group of people that has been very vocal recently. Improvements are being held up that make Worthington look better and increase all of our property values, because of this little small spot so she would like to see the members keep moving forward. Ms. Miller would have a different recommendation of those presented as well, she wants to keep moving forward and to make the garden area a later phase in the process. Mr. Hurley added that as these conversations continue it needs to be kept in mind that the state of the current playground needs to be more urgent. Some of the current playground pieces are not far from having to be shut down.

Mr. Kessler added his opinion of Option 1 as presented by staff and why he will not support it. The original plan included a play trail traveling from Eastview Drive to the All Children's Playground and connecting the existing Community Center sidewalks. To accommodate the garden that trail had been pushed closer to residents and takes away opportunities for the play areas. That is why he believes it is a bad plan. The original plan allows the trail to be closer to the ball diamonds and allows parents to be in one spot and able to watch kids on the field and kids on the play trail. It also moves things away from the neighborhood somewhat and that is important. Acknowledging the fact that this construction will not get done all at once. It could be asked of the builders to plan on the west side because the current playground is in bad condition. The playground could be roped off with caution tape, that's how bad it is, dangerously, awfully, terribly bad. So it will need to get done first. The ball diamonds and northern tier has nothing to do with the garden. Mr. Kessler made it known that he supports the community garden, at one point he was a gardener in this garden, and agrees that it is a nice amenity to have in the community. He does not see any reason why one of the four to five places that have been identified as possible new locations couldn't be immediately available. One or more of these spots should be planned, marked, and plowed yet this spring for gardeners to choose their plots and begin amending their soil. They shouldn't be gardened, fenced, or water provided yet. Eliminating the current garden will not happen this year and will be phased out in two more seasons. In the meantime, every gardener that wants a plot in one of the alternative sites can be improving their plot and getting ready to garden in probably 2020. In the meantime, he is sure that gardeners will do something about the fencing and clean up the area and make it as presentable as possible. There will be a certain amount of "pardon our dust" that is going to be happening anyway. Mr. Kessler says he loves the October plan because the group spent a lot of time planning it and receiving community feedback for it. He recommends eliminating the current garden in a way that the garden will still be available this season and probably next season but gardeners will also be able to prep a new location preparing for transfer. This is a motion that he would support.

Mr. Wendling definitely supports the establishment of additional community gardens. He feels there has been a lot of time and energy put into these garden plots. As a gardener, being around plants all the time, good soil does not happen overnight. He supports Option 1 because he believes allowing the garden to stay at a reduced size of 75% until a new good site can be established in 5 to 7 years because it takes that long to get good soil. He also likes the educational component of the original design and it was in the original goal to do community outreach education. He also likes people from the garden group to help choose additional locations of a garden to gather input on light and water availability. Mr. Wendling thinks the idea of getting in two playgrounds on the west and east side of the garden without putting them along the trail. He agrees that having them along the trail is not the best option. Mr. Kessler pointed out that the trail originally was not moved that far south as it is in the displayed option. Mr. Kessler also added that the feedback from the neighborhood pertaining to the trail running behind the residences connecting the All Children's Playground was that they did not want it at all but if they had to have it they would like it to be as close to the building as possible. There was some discussion among members of possible other ways to run the trail running west to east. Mr. Wendling likes the idea of making the garden a showcase, putting

some nice fencing around it and will help with critter control and adding an archway that will make it look like an asset to the community.

Mr. Burpee commented that he appreciated everyone's previous comments. Rarely is there an opportunity to redo a major park, this is the premier park in town with its location next to the Community Center, with lots of amenities and lots of access. He stated that it troubles him that the compromised plan being looked at is a less than optimal solution to accommodate the garden. He supports the idea of community gardens and feels there should be more available in the community. When this location was first selected, it was not the product of major research it was sort of just kind of plucked because it was available and was never designed to be a permanent spot for a garden. Mr. Burpee stated his thoughts followed along with Ms. Ball's idea of addressing the garden area last. Somewhere along the lines, Mr. Burpee said he asked POD Design if they had ever seen a community garden in and amongst a park like this. They replied that they only have experience with a park area that is used solely for gardening, and that reply remained with him. The park should be looked at as a major community asset and so are community gardens, but there are other locations that could work as well for a garden. Therefore, he supports the phased idea of moving around the park and addressing the garden area last. Hopefully, by the time it comes to the garden there would be lots of room for the ideal play concept that was presented in the original plan.

Mr. Hurley suggested we move on to public comments. Mr. Calamari agreed and turned to the audience for feedback.

Ms. Hall stated that she lives in a heavily wooded and shaded area near Rush Creek. When she moved to Worthington five years ago she was really excited about finding the group of community garden folks who were very welcoming. After being waitlisted for a while, she finally achieved a plot in the garden. She has been in community gardens everywhere she has lived, primarily in towns in California and now here. The best part is sitting in the garden and watching a mother walk by pointing out different vegetables in the garden to her children. This is still seen a lot in this garden. Ms. Hall commented on the excellent points that have been raised here, and the previous conversation with Mr. Hurley and other program directors have talked a lot about the educational opportunities that the gardeners have let fly past on being able to put more informational signage out or providing even passive educational opportunities of having kids walk through the garden and read and identify flowers and vegetables. She believes this is not going to happen if a garden is hidden behind a police department. Perhaps a couple days a week or month kids could be bused over to have them look at a garden in a spot like that but then she feels it becomes like a zoological exhibit, it is not something they will have instant access to while big brother is in the softball field. Aesthetically, a garden is a garden, and it will look like dirt sometimes of the year and there is a lot more that can be done to help promote home values and property values, because she understands this is a very important thing. She also wants to make sure that prospective homebuyers who are coming to the community understand that this is a community that appreciates all aspects of the community's needs, from little kids playing on the playground to elderly people who still have opportunities to engage with different generations in an open public space. So she would ask what the goal is of "phasing." Is it to phase the garden away? That is something the commission members would have to inform the gardeners of.

Mr. Blanton is a gardener and believes there is a lot of flexibility of the gardeners and how they can provide a lot of educational background to this experience. He also thinks they can provide an access to Worthington in this location that wouldn't exist any place else. He has been in that garden and talked to people from three different continents. He has talked to people from all over central Ohio who have come to play softball. These activities work with one another, they don't work against one another. He stated he was really disappointed that that vision is not existing here. He feels there is so much that can be done here to create a shining star for Worthington, that is being totally ignored and he finds that frankly, disappointing. There are community gardens around this city where the gardeners work with schools and develop education plans together with the teachers to bring kids into the garden, which is something these gardeners should do. There are master gardeners around the city, this garden has four of them, who provide all kinds of education to people in communities all over this city. There are 300 Master Gardeners providing thousands of hours a year worth of volunteer work, and all that can be done here. He feels there is such an opportunity where it is located now that is really baffling that it wants to be moved and that people haven't looked at the possibilities that exist with this concept. Having the garden right here where

everyone can see it and not having it elsewhere. In his mind, he would love gardens all over the city but this is a shining star and it needs to be where it is. It gives Worthington a great deal of positive vibe that it won't get if it is hidden someplace else. This could be developed into something very positive and unlike anything else in town or in central Ohio, just because of this little location. Again, he feels there is a lot of possibility here that is not being approached. He would like to emphasize, this may not be the final plan that is decided upon, and Ms. Hall and himself are very concerned about this concept of planning where we don't know what is going to happen. He compared it to a balloon mortgage where you don't know what it is going to be like in the end. He would like to scrape the bucket more to find a plan of phasing to be laid out in front them.

Ms. Dorothy said she heard this was quite an issue, she has been following comments online and had not been able to get to previous meetings. In general she is more involved with bike and pedestrian accommodations. One of the reasons she is involved with that is she supports the fact of people bumping into people. She is very interested to keep natural connections together and to foster people interacting in the community that wouldn't normally interact with each other. In general, that is her principal. She attended tonight to find out more of what is going on and thanked everyone for their comments this evening.

Ms. Ulliman stated that she lives in the blue house across the street from McCord Park. She does not garden but is working on it. When she was looking to move into her house she thought the community garden was a neat aspect of the community, something she thought was neat but she kills everything she touches so she did not have interest in getting involved. She inquired where the parking lot was in relation to the garden in the compromised plan. Mr. Hurley explained the layout of the land surrounding the garden, and pointed out on the drawing the differences that would take place in the shape of the parking lot in the plan. Ms. Ulliman recognized two pushbacks she had on both sides. As a project manager herself, she did not like the idea of the phased approach because that plays a lot of open questions and has the potential to bust the budget. Second, Ms. Ulliman questioned why all the great community aspects that have been discussed with the garden, having all these programs, why has that not been done already, they are all great ideas.

Ms. Hoerauf states that she lives near McCord Park, right near the playground. She said she has two children and has spent many hours playing sports at McCord Park with an older and younger child. She didn't understand, with the amount of money being spent on this project, why the park shouldn't be maximized to be accessible and viewable for everybody. Ms. Hoerauf went on to explain that she had been to parks where she was watching her older daughter play softball and her younger son had gone back behind the garden fence. This was concerning because she couldn't see him and was in a neighborhood she didn't know. She thinks it makes more sense to have a clear open view park where she could watch her daughter play ball and watch her son run and play where she can see him and is comfortable not moving around. The amount of money being spent to have sections separating this park doesn't make sense to her. She has been to a lot of parks traveling with softball leagues and believes McCord Park is a beautiful park and should be showcased as such, not with walls around certain parts. Ms. Hoerauf stated she is not a gardener but totally supports the garden effort, it is great and it sounds like there are alternative plans for the garden to be somewhere else and allow this park to be open and viewable for the kids and their families that are attracted here.

Ms. Kessler stated that she lives next to McCord Park. She felt encouraged by the conversation the commission members had around the table, not previously understanding the amount of compromise that has taken place. She feels the playground right now and its condition can be embarrassing because it hosts many people from all over the city who come to play sports. The grass grows up between the rubber surface, weeds around the trees, she picks up trash when she walks through. She is a teacher and totally believes in kids exercising and moving and is very excited about the idea of a play trail and sounds like it has the potential to be so much fun for kids and that is what our parks are there for. Ms. Kessler also agrees with the open concept does not agree with fences separating the park. She supports the idea of keeping the garden till later in the process while preparing other gardens to move in to. It will be years before the play trail gets installed and gives ample time for to prepare these other areas. Ms. Kessler questioned in the seven or eight years of the garden being in McCord Park has there been any educational programs so far? Mr. Blanton replied that there has been a lot of informal education, with people walking by and talking to gardeners. This is not measured by anything or kept statistics on, but the gardeners know

it happens. They talk to people all year long. It happens all the time, there has been an informal educational component that happens all the time and there always has been. This natural interaction is not seen unless you are out there in it. To transform this educational component into something more formal would not be difficult. Gardeners have never been asked to do this, outsiders would not have any idea what the gardeners can bring to the table. Ms. Hall added that she was appreciative of Ms. Kessler's question. She recalled that one of the reasons there has not been any signage up to this point is because the department had asked them not to, but they are offering to help do some signage now. She believes the gardeners have always wanted to do something but have always been careful not to over step their boundaries as far as what is stipulated of their participation. Mr. Armitage asked what percentage of gardeners would be willing to outreach to the community and don't have the right soil and right conditions to plant a garden in their own yard. He pointed out that Ms. Hall and Mr. Blanton are willing to engage in this sort of thing but he thought everyone may not be as willing. He imagined some of the gardeners may not enjoyed kids running around their plot or to be by others while they are there, some would just want a place to garden. Ms. Hall replied that it would be a minority of people who would want to load up all their equipment and manure in their car and drive to a park to garden unless they have an intense desire for community. She does not believe there is anyone who is growing food for their household only because that is the only place they can. Mr. Blanton went on to elaborate that he cannot say he has ever seen a gardener not interact with the other people who are there, that just is not the attitude in that space. He said Ms. Hall hit the point right on the nose that the gardeners are there because they want to share this experience with others. Mr. Armitage asked Mr. Kessler why he stopped using the garden. Mr. Kessler replied that he could not keep it up, the weeds got out of control. It got to be too much so he build a raised bed in his own yard. Mr. Armitage pointed out that he lives in walking distance from the garden and it was still hard to keep up. Mr. Kessler agreed that yes while it was close by there were a substantial number of gardeners that experienced the same difficulty that he experienced. Year in and year out there are a number of gardeners that have the same experiences that I had. He had managed a plot for three or four seasons, and without being allowed to use chemicals to suppress weeds, he felt it was a lot of ground to keep up and manual labor. There are a numbers of gardeners that find themselves in the same boat I did and I feel for them. Mr. Burpee agreed that his wife and he managed a plot for two seasons and it wore them down. Mr. Kessler added that every season there are three or four plots that are all weeds each year.

Ms. Miller asked Ms. Hall if she would have the same benefit of the community garden if she didn't have to haul manure across town, and the garden was closer to her house. Ms. Hall agreed that that would be divine, she would love that. Ms. Hall added that she thinks that would provide more opportunities for Master Gardeners like Mr. Blanton to spread out into some of these smaller locations but a more devoted group and easier for gardeners to get to and perhaps keep weeds more suppressed. She thinks other garden locations is a fantastic idea but does not run counter to having a public garden situated that can be right in the middle of the community. Ms. Hall referenced Franklin Park Conservatory Community Garden that is located right next to the children's playground.

Ms. Kessler continued to state that she is in favor of taking out the garden and believes that the park is going to be a wonderful showcase and is proud to live next to it. She understands the changes will not happen overnight but does think that the commission is offering alternatives for the gardeners and working hard to make something they can move into. She inquired that since the garden will be staying this season, why can't attractive fencing happen now? She believes it is unattractive at this point and not fun to live next to. Mr. Hurley replied that the budget of the garden group and the city would have to be looked at before fencing could go be established. Mr. Blanton added that business could possibly support that fence. Mr. Hurley added that installing a fence would take some time because the city would need to look at it from a maintenance stand point.

Mr. Robinson stated that he came tonight to listen, and hear firsthand, the information from the public as well rather than just read minutes. He shared that he was glad he did and is struck by the integrity of everyone speaking. There are obvious divergence in viewpoints and opinions but recognizes each individual is speaking the truth from their heart in reasoned, processed ways. This community is very lucky to have a commission like this and he thanked them for their service. This is a difficult task in front of the commission members and council as well.

Mr. Hurley encouraged the members to continue moving forward in making a decision, keeping in mind that a good decision is not always a fast decision. He coached the members on how the process

could move forward through discussion and crafting of a recommendation. Mr. Calamari requested more clarification on the “phasing” option that was previously mentioned. Ms. Ball responded that when she speaks of “phasing” she is speaking in terms of park development. She elaborated into financial phasing and how she would break the park down. Since she does this for a living, she explained, for instance, when reconfiguring the parking lot, there will be a time when spaces are lost, the new spaces will have to be added before the loss of other spaces so that the Community Center can operate the way it needs to. She explained getting some of the big blocks that go whole community out of the way in a logical order. Mr. Hurley always brings his projects back to the commission so they will get to see the construction documents which is also when the public will see them. This is less public than it is and will become far more refined. She recommends doing the big blocks of reconfiguring first and continuing talks about the garden. If some attrition happens in the garden that naturally shrinks it, this will give it time to happen naturally rather than forcing it. If the plan went full tilt into Option 1 it would be forcing it at this point. Ms. Ball agrees with the solid path being too far south so there is some reworking of that area that will still need to happen. Mr. Calamari wonders if we the word phasing is used, the decision is left open ended and undecided, just kicking the can down the road. He reviewed the past discussion mentioning in favor of the garden shrinking naturally but ultimately that southernmost path needs to be higher up. There is so much trying to be fit in that one spot that neither a garden or a play trail is being achieved, it is all just getting jammed in to make everyone happy. So when phasing is mentioned the thought is ultimately attrition will be allowed to happen to shrink the garden and move the trail up and build the new garden. Mr. Kessler reviewed the previous specifics of a new garden location.

Mr. Kessler then recommended to move the plan from October to Council but would ask when it goes out to bid for the bidders to specifically address how they can go about it, asking that they delay the development of the park that is currently the community garden, at least the 2/3rd size one if nothing else, to as late in the project as possible. He moves that the commission, in our next meeting, get down to brass tacks at identifying new garden sites that are quickly available and don't present the conflicts that this one has presented. And that the city mark off and plow those sites and allow Sustainable Worthington and the community garden group go about their process for allowing people to reserve plots and have the ability to work the soil, starting this year. Thinking that when the construction crew gets to the point that the existing garden needs to be torn up to do the play trail and drainage, and all that has to happen in there, there will be a site to move to.

Ms. Ball added that The City of Worthington does not have the amount of money to make this whole project happen at the same time. There will naturally be phases. She says she cannot support the motion because she does not see any compromise in further dialogue in the motion.

Mr. Calamari amended that members keep the door open for, some sort of, smaller public service oriented garden somewhere in the park.

Ms. Ball advised that she would like to further study the enlarged area, move forward with the park master plan with a study, and some additional dialogue on the garden. She does not think any of the people in the room want to get rid of it completely. Ms. Ball said she loves edible gardens, but that alone doesn't accomplish the community gardening aspect and there are people who far prefer to garden in a community. So if there is a way to recraft the motion so that area still gets further studied she would support it.

Mr. Kessler disagreed and said the long term plan for McCord Park is to return it to public use and he does not rule out having a demonstration garden, a worming garden, or edible landscaping. To him that is all details in final design that just don't need to be addressed at this point. Mr. Wendling added that is a discussion we need to bring in staff for because you are talking shifting responsibility of a community garden that people are gardening for themselves and giving back to the community versus a garden that you want to do education programming out of which is now going to be maintained by staff. Mr. Kessler clarified in response to Mr. Calamari that his motion does not rule out space for a garden of some type in the plan.

Mr. Hurley reviewed the proposed motion on the table for clarification as being to move that the original plan from October be recommended to Council. The phasing should keep the garden in its current location as long as possible, and that the new garden(s) be started immediately. This would include marking and beginning to work on new garden location. Current gardeners would have first opportunity when current site went away to move on to new location.

Mr. Calamari amended to that motion that we have some kind of commitment to review this public service aspect that has been explained poorly but feel strongly about.

Ms. Ball proposed the compromised plan where the community garden stays, so even a Community Service Garden is not a Community Garden and that is not in this motion.

There was much discussion about the securing of a new garden location and the details of how it could be implemented immediately.

Mr. Hurley advised that his interpretation of the discussion is that the group may be split and he wasn't sure moving forward a recommendation with a split vote would be the best path forward.

Mr. Calamari's official and approved amendment is to include further review of keeping some sustainable public service type demonstration garden portion permanent.

After much discussion and review of wording the official motion was finalized and made by Mr. Kessler and seconded by Mr. Burpee:

Move that the originally recommended concept plan for McCord Park from October (current Option A) be recommended to City Council with the understanding that the phased construction of McCord Park keep the current garden in place as long as possible and at a minimum through the end of 2019, that the new garden location be identified and initiated immediately including marking of plots and soil improvements with the intention current gardeners be given priority for the new plots, that the relocation of the existing garden be contingent on the successful identification and implementation of a new garden site, and that the plan show a small demonstration garden to be utilized for education and awareness in McCord Park.

A roll call vote was requested by Ms. Ball.

Vote:

Mr. Dan Armitage: Nay

Ms. Laura Ball: Nay

Mr. Bob Burpee: Yea

Mr. Peter Calamari: Yea

Mr. David Kessler: Yea

Ms. Michelle Miller: Yea

Mr. Rob Wendling: Nay

The motion passed four votes to three.

Project Updates – Mr. Hurley updated members on several projects around the city. The Olentangy Parkland Restrooms project came in over budget. The original budget was \$120,000 and is now \$195,000. The increase in budget will result in two stalls instead of one on each side and also provide climate control so that the restrooms can be open year round. Council approved the increased budget last evening, therefore the project will continue to move ahead. Installation is expected in 90-120 days. Mr. Hurley complimented Scott Brown, Parks Manager, for all his hard work on this project. Mr. Burpee also shared his appreciation for Mr. Brown's hard work and his excitement of seeing the completion of this project.

The two lower tennis courts at Olentangy Parklands will soon be permanently converted into six pickleball courts. The work is weather dependent but hope to have it completed by June 1st. Ms. Miller inquired about paving the gravel path leading from the lower parking lot to those lower courts. Mr. Brown replied that the hill is being looked at to reduce the grade and plan to eventually pave the pathway.

The Community Center south end roof replacement work is underway. Weather has been stalling the progress but nonetheless hope to have the work completed by the start of summer programming.

The IT department is working to upgrade the Wi-Fi at the Community Center. The Wi-Fi currently is limited and often not accessible at busier times due to bandwidth limitations.

There are many Earth Day and Arbor Day activities planned throughout the community. The annual Earth Day event at Moses Wright Nature Preserve will be taking place this Saturday April 21st from 9am to noon. Dewey's Pizza will be providing lunch and celebrating the 10th anniversary of Sustainable

Worthington's Partnership. The Annual Arbor Day Tree Planting Event will be on Friday April 27th at noon on the Village Green. Parks Crew will be planting a Sycamore tree this year on the Northwest Quadrant in memory of the late Harvey Minton. Last weekend, in partnership with FLOW, volunteers planted 500 tree saplings in the Olentangy Parklands between Whitney and Highgate playgrounds. Volunteers braved some difficult weather to get the work done.

The Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Board's master planning has been approved. The board will now begin working with the firm Blue Zones, LLC to create a Strategic Biking and Walking Implementation Plan and will be seeking input on parks from this commission.

Other – Mr. Wendling mentioned that Worthington is celebrating its 28th consecutive year as a Tree City USA. This is an extensive process and quite an accomplishment.

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