



## **WORTHINGTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

### **Minutes of the Tuesday, June 18, 2019 Meeting**

**Members Present** - The members present were Dan Armitage, Laura Ball, Bob Burpee, Rachel DeNoewer, David Kessler, and Rob Wendling. City support staff Darren Hurley, Parks & Recreation Director and Lauren Lange, Recorder were also present.

The minutes from the May 21, 2019 meeting were approved.

**Review of Olentangy Parklands Tour** – Mr. Hurley displayed pictures of the Olentangy Parklands walking tour last month and reviewed the topics discussed. He recalled April’s list of brainstorming topics and provided an updated list of discussed items since the tour. The list was reviewed and the following things were discussed:

- More permanent watercraft access at both the Flats and Olentangy Parklands. *Mr. Armitage suggested the access be called “Paddlecraft Access” so it is not confused with illegal motorized boats.*
- Safe passage way through the rock walls/riffles. *Mr. Burpee added that the passage ways through the riffles should be offset.*
- Access to fishing holes (example was off of the bridge going north on the trail from the park where some photos were taken)
- Additional river observation areas with pavers and cleared viewing of river in the same format as the two that are completed. Periodic placement along the two miles of trail with ideal locations being at the existing riffles.
- Consider pursuing the scenic river designation.
- Improve, repair, or replace existing benches and picnic tables that are showing their age.
- Reclaim or fully abandon side trails and clearings that are partially overgrown but still visible.
- Add trail etiquette signage along the trail. *Mr. Wendling added the idea of a straight chip trail near the “S” curve and pedestrian bridge would help separate pedestrians and cyclists on that already dangerous curve.*
- Interpretive signage sharing the history of the river and information about things along the trail and river to educate trail users.

Mr. Kessler and Mr. Wendling discussed that invasive species removal should be added to the list as well as a plan for replanting in their spot. Possibly a seed bank of native plants could be accumulated from residents. Moving forward, Mr. Hurley would like to discuss execution of each topic items and whether a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) project should be created or if community involvement could help execute, similar to the plantings at Snouffer and Perry Park with volunteer support. Mr. Hurley also discussed trying

to add this portion of the Olentangy River to the ODNR scenic river designation. This could help bring resources, tourism, grant funding, and develop more network opportunities. Staff will work to put these items into some sort of a plan that will help move things forward.

**McCord Park Renovations Next Step** – Mr. Hurley reported that the next phase of the McCord Park renovations project is ready to get underway with detailed design which will lead to the creation of construction documents for bidding purposes. The City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the design work and received three responses. After review, the City has asked POD Design, LLC and EMH the project was put out to bid for consultants, there were three responses, and two were asked to respond with further credentials. POD Design and EMH&T will be submitting formal proposals and interviewing with a staff team which will lead to the selection of a firm to carry us forward. Our hope is to kick off that process later this summer and be ready for construction to begin in 2020. The project may be done in multiple phases. The Service and Engineering Department is working on the parking lot repaving and will incorporate the changes identified in the Conceptual Plan in order to save some money for the project and to not have to tear up fresh pavement once the project begins. More information about the timeline and process should be available at the next meeting.

**Pedestrian Crossing at East Granville Road Park and 161** – Mr. Hurley shared with the Board that the Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Board has recommended a crossing improvement at 161 and Pingree Drive in front of East Granville Road Park. They are recommending a treatment to cross 161 that would make it safer for bikes and pedestrians to cross. An analysis was done by DLZ, a local consultant, and shared at the last Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Board Meeting. Mr. Hurley shared it with the Board. The study revealed three alternatives for improving the crossing with the recommended option being a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB). The Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Board has the funding in place to move the project forward, however, a couple of surrounding residents had concerns about the recommendation so they are taking another month to have the questions researched and feedback provided prior to making a final decision.

**Other** – Mr. Armitage inquired about the Game Room usage. Mr. Hurley said staff is gathering and compiling information and will report back at the next meeting.

Mr. Wendling inquired about the Community Center North Locker Rooms and if everything was back on line with them. Mr. Hurley informed that the boiler that provided hot water to the locker rooms had a coil fail and there had to be a decision made as to whether to replace the coil on an aging boiler or replace the boiler. Fortunately, some funding was in place due to the on-going HVAC project so the decision was made to fully replace the boiler and hot water tank. This took some time so there was not hot water service to the locker rooms for a few weeks. Patrons were able to utilize the South Locker Rooms. The new boiler was installed and everything was back up and running last month.

Mr. Kessler thanked Mr. Hurley for attending to the situation of the loud whistling noise coming from the louvers tied to the HVAC system. Mr. Hurley went on to explain the adjustments still being made in the punch out list and that is what caused the loud noise temporarily. It is part of the efforts to obtain negative pressure in the natatorium.

Mr. Hurley mentioned the graffiti vandalism that was recently discovered at the Olentangy Parklands affecting the skate park, newly installed restrooms, and minimal signage along the trail. It is in the process of being cleaned up. Police are aware and will install temporary cameras in the future if necessary.

Mr. Hurley also mentioned a recent request for a living urn to be placed in a park. The living urn referred to a biodegradable container that would be filled with ashes and be a part of a root ball of a newly planted tree. He is discussing this practice with other agencies and trying to determine the appropriateness for having this in our parks.

Mr. Armitage asked if there were any updates to a rock thief situation he has taken note of at Rush Run Park he mentioned last month. Mr. Hurley said he passed along the information to Columbus Recreation & Parks but has not received an update.

Ms. Ball asked if there was a timeline or schedule available for the Northeast Gateway Project being planned. Mr. Hurley believes construction will begin in 2020 as right of way acquisition and other preparations are underway.

Mr. Burpee made comment of the ground being treated and prepped for the new garden at Snouffer Park. Mr. Hurley confirmed and said it is going well with the input from the garden group. Plans are to open the second garden for users in 2020.

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