



WORTHINGTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the Tuesday, May 18, 2021 Meeting

Note – This meeting was conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Members Present - The members present were Laura Ball, Rachel DeNoewer, Dave Kessler, Alan McKnight, Michele Miller, and Rob Wendling. City support staff Darren Hurley (Parks & Recreation Director) and Celia Thornton (Recorder) were also present.

The minutes from the April 20, 2021 meeting were approved unanimously.

Cost Study Review and Recommendation – Mr. Hurley shared and reviewed the results of a multipage recreation cost study. The Parks & Recreation Commission (PRC) engaged in a discussion of the study, including non-resident rates, non-profit versus for-profit status, community group/Worthington Youth Booster use and other points of clarification. Mr. Hurley assured the PRC that this document will go to City Council with the understanding that there will likely be changes in the future as its new and this will be a learning process. Mr McKnight said he felt comfortable passing a motion at this time and the other members agreed. Mr. Wendling recommended that the cost recovery levels be recommended for approval to City Council. This motion was passed by all, except for Mr. Kessler, who abstained.

McCord Park Renovations Phase I Bid Results – The bids for this project are ready to be awarded and Mr. Hurley shared the bid results with the PRC. Builderscape, Inc. had the lowest and best bid at \$1,750,063. He is hoping that Council will approve the appropriation for the project funding, award the bid and authorize the City Manager to sign the contract at their first meeting in June so construction can begin in late summer. POD will be overseeing the project.

Selby Park Playground Update – The previous Selby playground has been demolished, including the removal of the big oak tree which arborists recommended removing due to declining condition. The contractor is scheduled to show up next Monday (5/24). Mr. Hurley had hoped to have the playground work completed by Memorial Day, but the contractor has been delayed on prior jobs, so it is expected to go into June.

Parks Foundation Research Update – Mr. Hurley said that due to the current tightness of the City's finances, and in an effort to accomplish some of the projects from the Parks Master Plan, and Bike & Pedestrian Master Plan, Ms. DeNoewer and Ms. Thornton have been researching the idea of starting a Parks & Recreation Foundation in Worthington. Ms. DeNoewer and Ms. Thornton then

shared some of the information they'd discovered, including a general outline of the process and timeline (it generally takes approximately two years to establish a 501c3). They hope to bring a more detailed PowerPoint presentation to the PRC for their recommendation prior to taking it to City Council.

COVID-19 Updates – Mr. Hurley shared that the department is already planning for an expansion of services, including adding additional Community Center and Griswold Center hours, opening the locker rooms fully, starting summer camps and adding more summer programming. Due to the Governor's latest orders regarding CDC mask recommendations, and City Council's response, it is likely that masks will only be required for those who remain unvaccinated (all others do not need to wear masks in the buildings). Staff is working to balance the removal of any guidelines with ensuring those who are concerned feel comfortable utilizing our services. The department is still having difficulty getting enough part-time staff back, particularly lifeguards, and that challenge will continue to play a part in the full re-opening timeline.

Other – Mr. Hurley has continued talking to Central Ohio Mountain Bike Organization (COMBO). As excited as they are to help us start building our trails, they are currently wrapped up in finishing the Berliner project with the City of Columbus and Mr. Hurley will continue to stay in touch.

Mr. Armitage shared there is a new Paddle Grant offered by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) and thought the department might be interested in reviewing it and considering adding paddle craft launch areas along the Olentangy River.

Ms. Miller asked if there had been any movement from City Council on the deer concerns. Mr. Hurley said that it has been brought up, but Council is struggling to find the best course of action to take.

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