



## WORTHINGTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

### Minutes of the Tuesday, November 16, 2021, Meeting

**Note** – This meeting was conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams.

**Members Present** - The members present were Dan Armitage, Rachel DeNoewer, Dave Kessler, Alan McKnight, and Michele Miller. City support staff Darren Hurley (Parks & Recreation Director) was also present.

The minutes from the October 19, 2021, meeting were approved unanimously.

**Perry Park Playground Renovations Planning** – Mr. Hurley shared that the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is moving along in City Council review, and he expects it to pass with the projects he shared at the October meeting intact. One of the larger projects proposed is the Perry Park Playground Replacement. The proposed CIP allocates \$280,000 for its replacement. Mr. Hurley outlined the process used on recent playground projects has been to survey residents, provide survey results to the playground designer, create multiple options for an open house, and then finalize a design based on the input from the open house which can include an on-line input option as well. Mr. McKnight indicated this sounded good to him if it has worked in the past. Mr. Kessler agreed. Mr. Hurley shared some challenges they had dealt with on the surfacing and kids cutting through the middle of the playground that would be addressed in the design. Ms. Miller wondered about the impacts of cleats on the playground and Mr. McKnight offered some suggestions on layouts. The members supported moving ahead with a winter timeline for design and summer or fall installation.

**Skatepark Proposal Follow Up Discussion** – Mr. Hurley indicated he wanted to follow up on the skatepark proposal given in September by resident Kelly Whalen. Mr. Hurley shared he wanted to see if members had further thoughts after having some time to consider his presentation. Mr. Hurley believes a possible path forward would be for staff to provide some information on the current condition of the existing skatepark and its useful life remaining given some of the maintenance challenges emerging with its condition. Along with that, staff could get some information on possible approaches to expanding versus replacing and any methods to help with funding such as grants. Mr. McKnight shared he had walked the area and could see some of the maintenance problems and would want us to be wise about considering replacement instead of further investing in a facility that is declining. Ms. Miller shared she spends a lot of time at the skatepark and agrees that the design is dated and not friendly for beginners. She likes the idea of a complete replacement and researching costs and what that would look like. She believes it is a great amenity and gets a lot of use. Mr. Hurley says there is some symmetry with the proposed

mountain bike park nearby and it makes sense to at least frame it for further discussion and consideration. Members supported staff working on this information for the first half of 2022 and prior to the next CIP process.

**McCord Park Phase One Renovations Update – Phase One and Phase Two** – Mr. Hurley provided an update on McCord Park Phase One renovations. Work for this fall is wrapping up including the paving of the trails, seeding, and cleaning up of soils, and preparation of the playground and shelter sites. The outstanding items continue to be the playground and shelter which will be deferred to spring when the weather allows. The train observation area has come along including the placement of the caboose. Work to come includes pouring of concrete, addition of railings, and landscaping in the area.

Mr. Hurley also shared Phase Two design is kicking off with POD Design continuing work and preparing to get underway. This will take the conceptual design into more detail and POD will be at the January Commission Meeting to overview that process. The current timeline is to work through design in 2022 and be out to bid late in the year with construction planned for 2023. The CIP is showing \$2.1 million for phase two. Members will have an opportunity for input along the way starting with the January meeting.

Ms. Miller asked if there would be a ceremonial event when phase one construction ends. Mr. Hurley indicated we need to get back to doing that to celebrate projects. That had been set aside during COVID, but we need to resume it. Mr. Kessler asked about the smaller trails and whether they would be completed soon. Mr. Hurley answered they would not be installed until the playground construction is completed as they interconnect, and they didn't want to do them partially.

#### **Other –**

Mr. Hurley shared he is scheduled to meet with COMBO regarding the Mountain Biking project soon after Thanksgiving.

Mr. Hurley shared the Parks Foundation research is still moving forward. Ms. DeNoewer and staff have been putting in time to continue assessing that and how to move forward with it. Staff plan to bring forward more information in the first quarter of 2022.

Mr. Hurley indicated there would probably not be a meeting in December due to it falling so close to Christmas. He also indicated we may move back to in-person in January. Members shared a desire to possibly consider hybrid as it makes attending easier. Mr. Hurley agreed to assess and touch base prior to January to see where everyone is and decide about format for the meeting.

Mr. McKnight asked for an update on Indianola Park playground. Mr. Hurley indicated the city is still working with the insurance company to settle the claim on the damages from the vehicle accident. The city is moving forward with an appropriation so the order of new equipment can be made. He expects to sign a contract in December and have the work ready to go when weather allows in the spring.

Mr. McKnight also shared he had noticed the department received an award from the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association. Mr. Hurley shared that yes he just was informed of it. We received an award for the Family Fun Ride bike event that was a partnership with the Worthington Police Department. He will share more once the award is given to staff at the February OPRA Conference.

Ms. Miller pointed out a project being installed along the trail by the river. A donated pad and bench being installed looks nice. Mr. Hurley indicated Shawn Daugherty on staff has been working on a couple projects in the area. Mr. McKnight pointed out a scout project going on as well.

Ms. Miller pointed out the sign at the Stevenson entrance is down.

Ms. Miller asked for an update on the deer issue. Mr. Hurley shared that City Council has been engaged with staff for an update and a report has been distributed to Council from Mr. Barnhart who had presented to us. Mr. Hurley will share that information with members.

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