

**CITY OF GAHANNA
PARKS & RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES – February 6, 2008**

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Eric Miller called the meeting of the Parks & Recreation Board to order on Wednesday, February 6, 2008 at 7:01 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Diane Cantrell
Cynthia Franzmann
Windy McKenna
Luke Messinger
Eric Miller
Laurel Naegele
Vincent Tremante

In attendance from the City Administration was Tony Collins, Director and Troy Euton, Deputy Director, Carl Norris, Facilities Superintendent, Pam Crossmock, Administrative Assistant, Department of Parks & Recreation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Tremante made a **MOTION** to approve the January 16, 2008 Organizational meeting minutes; seconded by Naegele. **On roll call vote:** McKenna, Yes, Messinger, yes, Miller, Yes, Naegele, Yes, Tremante, Yes, Cantrell, abstain and Franzmann, Yes. **The motion carried 6-1- with 1 member abstaining.**

The Regular Board meeting minutes are missing a roll call yes vote for Tremante. Also there is a typo in the Director's Report; the Safe Routes to School Grant is \$24,000.

McKenna made a **MOTION** to approve the January 16, 2008 regular meeting minutes as amended; seconded by Tremante. **On roll call vote:** McKenna, Yes, Messinger, Yes, Miller, Yes, Naegele, Yes, Tremante, Yes, Cantrell, abstain and Franzmann, Yes. **The motion carried 6-1- with 1 member abstaining.**

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Collins added Gahanna Swim Club, Ordinances 563.16 and 1109.08 to new business. Tremante added Rules of Operation to old business.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA WITH THE ADDITIONS:

Cantrell made a **MOTION** to approve the February 6, 2008 agenda as amended; seconded by Tremante. **On roll call vote:** Miller, Yes, Naegele, Yes, Tremante, Yes, Cantrell, Yes, Franzmann, Yes, McKenna, Yes and Messinger, Yes. **The motion carried 7 – 0.**

VISITORS IN ATTENDANCE:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

Tremante stated that at the January 16, 2008 Organizational meeting the Board was given the Rules of Operation accepted on January 17, 2007. At the January 2008 meeting the Board discussed Section II, 2.4 Board Secretary. Tremante reviewed previous versions of the Rules of Operation and

found a copy of Rules of Operation that were approved and accepted on March 1, 2006 that covered the issue of Board Secretary.

Collins stated the department will review the Rules of Operation approved and accepted on March 1, 2006 and bring them to the March board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

2007-2008 Facilities Division Report

Carl Norris, Facilities Superintendent explained the Parks Facilities Division is responsible for all new construction, cleaning, special event logistics including Creekside Park and Plaza, pumps for the fountain and Hunters Ridge Pool.

Norris gave an overview of the 2007 year end Facilities Division report; Friendship Park shelter is completed; the gazebo has been rebuilt, and once the weather breaks a paver patio will be installed in front of the gazebo. At Academy Park and McCorkle Park the restrooms were remodeled and new playgrounds were installed; McCorkle Park building exterior was painted and Woodside Green Park restrooms were remodeled.

Gahanna Swim Club

Collins stated he attended the Gahanna Swim Club board meeting on February 5, 2008; the City has been working with the two community pools to help in any way so residents have pools to go to. Collins said there has been some discussion about working together on a permanent basis with the Gahanna Swim Club.

In attendance representing the Gahanna Swim Club were Skip Clegg, Mike Flint and Chris Birnbrich. Clegg stated the pool has been in operation as a member run pool for fifty years. The Swim Club sees an opportunity for a joint venture/partnership with the City. The City would buy the pool; the mortgage on the property is \$630,000 with a \$60,000 yearly mortgage and \$9,000 yearly in real estate taxes. The Swim Club has operated with a \$20 - \$30,000 yearly profit. The Swim Club is fiscally responsible with members' money. However they do not have the money to do upgrades needed. The bathrooms need upgraded, the front pool needs some work. Five years ago the property was appraised at over \$1.2 million. If the mortgage and real estate taxes are not a factor the pool will generate over \$100,000 yearly. The members do not care who owns the pool; they just want a place their family can swim. Compared to other local city pools, Gahanna is lagging behind. The Gahanna Swim Club can be a show place pool for the residents.

Collins stated the Swim Club Board and the City have been discussing the different options available in Gahanna since 2002. The question has been what can the City do to work together to support all the pools and when to take the Swim Club to the next level. The discussions have been for the City to step in and buy the pool, pay the mortgage; the pool will dissolve all the current debt. Current memberships already paid for will transfer and new members would have access to both pools. With the combined financial success of the Swim Club and the stability of the Hunters Ridge Pool and the ability to have a membership to both pools there should be larger growth in membership. The current membership of both pools is estimated at 5,000 individuals. Collins stated he "believes that in terms of the affect to the bottom line to the City there can be a neutral and serious thought put in for future renovations and planning".

Clegg stated where else can the City purchase a piece of property worth \$1.2 million for \$630,000.

Collins explained the positives go beyond the pool benefits; it will protect the Big Walnut Corridor and provide for future of preservation of park and open space. Collins envisions a pool board to

include the Swim Club Board and members of the Hunters Ridge Pool combined. The board would be an advisory board off of the Parks & Recreation Board and would provide guidance on policies and procedures and be the programming group for the pools. The City staff is great at lifeguarding, mechanics and maintenance and is getting better at programming and has the capability. Missing is the family attachment the Swim Club has. The parents and families are invested to the pool. It is critical that the attachment and family programming is maintained.

Cantrell asked where purchasing the pool fits into the priorities of the Master Plan? Also, would this only happen by seeking additional funding verses would this take away from something else? Collins stated in the Master Plan the numbers were calculated that 5,000 people use the both the Swim Club (4,000) and Hunters Ridge (1,000) pools, that it is a significant number for any facility in Gahanna. There are several options for funding and the purchase fits into the Master Plan.

Messinger asked if 4,000 people are utilizing the Swim Club and this purchase is not an emergency fund to prevent the pool from closing will the pool still be open to the residents for use. Collins stated the pool will be available as long as it can remain open.

Clegg stated that if the front pool goes out the pool would have to close. The back pool is a competition pool that cannot be used by moms and toddlers. Collins stated he believes the residents would like the pool to be taken to the next level.

Miller requested additional clarity on the partnership. Collins explained the City would own the pool, administer, operate and program the day to day operations. The pool board would be the advisory organization that would work with the swim team parent volunteers, put on the family movie nights and hot dog nights. The advisory board would work with City staff to do the neighborhood fun stuff that keeps the residents involved.

Miller asked if you join one of the city owned pools would you also be able to get into the other city owned pool. Collins explained if you join the pool, you will be a member at both pools. Miller asked what types of upgrades are needed to the pool besides the front pool. Franzmann is a member at the Gahanna Swim Club and stated both restroom facilities are in really bad shape.

Clegg explained the front locker room/restrooms and back restrooms will eventually need renovated. The front pool can go at any time or last another couple of years. They had an expert come out for estimates to resurface part of the front pool.

Collins stated that the Master Plan; Key Area 2; Objective 3: Support viability and sustainability of outdoor community pools through cooperative agreements and diversification of facilities with the YMCA and private swim club pools in Gahanna. There are three tasks: Organize Hunter's Ridge Pool, Gahanna Swim Club and Foxboro Pool into a city-wide membership cooperative that allows members and guests to visit any of the three pools while enabling the pools to share resources, memberships, and expenses. Develop an up-to-date, diversified outdoor aquatics facility at a single viable location within the City that supports recreational, wellness, and educational aquatics programs. Close one or more of the community pool facilities proceeding the above.

Miller requested to know if there is any property outside of the fenced area owned by the Swim Club. Clegg stated the parking lot and inside the fence is owned by the pool. Collins explained that there have been partnership discussions with the VFW to support their sustainability as well as preserve the Big Walnut Corridor, there is the work to the south of the Swim Club and there have been preliminary discussions with St. Matthew School regarding planning of the overall site plan.

Clegg explained the Swim Club will continue to try and operate the pool, but if the front pool goes

out the only option is to close. Timing wise it makes sense to work with the city. Collins explained we could wait until it becomes an emergency situation; however, our staff believes this is the best move for both the Swim Club and the City.

McKenna requested to know what the pool going out meant. Clegg explained there are a variety of possibilities; the valve on the bottom of the pool could go out, it could spring a leak, etc. Cantrell asked if the pool is currently making \$20 - \$30,000 a year profit, can the City anticipate making a profit that can go back into supporting the pool. Clegg stated the profit will be even higher since there will not be a mortgage, no real estate taxes and lower insurance costs. Flint stated the City should expect a profit of \$80 - \$90,000 per year.

Tremante asked if the pool will be totally self sustaining. Looking at a potential profit of \$90,000 per year will that be the operational budget for the pool? Collins believes the budget will self sustain the pool. Tremante wanted to know if the purchase of the pool would make the City competing with the YMCA.

Collins stated that it might be a detriment to Foxboro Pool; however it is not known if any of their 300 members will leave if the City buys the Swim Club. It might have a small impact on the YMCA, but not sure if people joined just for their outdoor pool or because they have all the indoor programs as well.

Miller asked if the front pool had to be shut down for major repairs this summer, how long will it be shut down? Clegg stated it all depended on what was broken; it might get fixed in one week to 10 days or if it sprung a major leak it could be shut down for the summer. Collins explained that there could be operation efficiency; both pools are currently open Memorial Day to Labor Day, and one week on each end when school is in session which is very slow. Since members would belong to both pools it is possible to shut one pool down those weeks.

Tremante asked if there will be more aquatic programming through the Department of Parks & Recreation. Collins stated that the needs will be looked at; currently the Swim Club runs a lesson program and has a phenomenal swim team program, a great family schedule for evenings and events. Hunters Ridge has a good swim team, a great lesson program, a dog program and family/teen evening events. There is a lot of programming in place currently and the City would work with the group to see what needs are being met. The City would utilize volunteers and parents and use the money toward programming for the greatest number of people impacted.

Tremante asked if there is still discussion regarding a crossing from Friendship Park to the Swim Club. Collins stated there is a functional pedestrian crossing recommended in the conceptual plan. Nothing has been finalized.

Franzmann stated that at one time there was a relationship with LifeTime Fitness; they paid for their members to be members of the Swim Club; would that still happen. Clegg stated that LifeTime Fitness paid the Swim Club \$2,500 per month to use the facility.

Cantrell made a **MOTION** for a recommendation that the Department of Parks & Recreation proceed to purchase the Gahanna Swim Club and the formation of a partnership with the City of Gahanna and the Gahanna Swim Club; seconded by Tremante. **On roll call vote:** Naegele, Yes, Tremante, Yes, Cantrell, Yes, Franzmann, Yes, McKenna, Yes, Messinger, Yes, and Miller, Yes. **The motion carried 7 – 0.**

Service to the Community Awards

Collins explained the Board received a copy of the nomination form. The Department sent a release to the local papers. Collins requested Board members get the word out to the community about the Awards. The completed forms are due to the department by April 30, 2008. The recipients will be chosen by the Parks & Recreation Board on May 7, 2008. The Awards event will be on August 15, 2008, at 6 pm at Friendship Park.

Euton explained the Landscape Board has created the Residential Do-It-Yourself Landscape, Residential Professional Landscape, Residential Entrance Way Landscape, and Commercial Building Landscape Awards. The Landscape board will present their awards at the Service to the Community Awards.

Committee Assignments

Miller requested that each member state which committee they would like to serve on. Cantrell stated that since attending the Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) she feels the need for a Parks & Recreation Board member to serve on the Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) Board. Collins will speak with someone from CIC regarding the number of Board members needed and seek information regarding representation on CVB.

Cantrell will represent the Board on the CIC Board. Franzmann will represent the Board on the Veterans Memorial Committee and the CIC if they request an additional Board member. McKenna will represent the Board on the Veterans Memorial Committee. Messinger will represent the Board on the Natural Resources Advisory Committee. Naegele will serve on the Bicycle Advisory Committee and the Dog Park Advisory Committee. Tremante will represent the Board on the Dog Park Advisory Committee and the Natural Resources Advisory Committee.

Miller tabled the Foundation assignments until after the recommendation goes to City Council.

2007 Fee Waivers and Donations

Crossmock shared the fee waivers and donations approved in 2007. The Department of Parks & Recreation waived fees for Gahanna Non-Profit Organizations, Gahanna Jefferson Schools, Community Partners and Partner Youth Sports. Based on the Gahanna Non-Profit rate the total fees waived was \$12,305 and the total tangible gift donations were \$1,360.

563.16 Park Rules – Hours of Operation

Collins explained that Creekside has led to new and different opportunities and there is going to be a need for additional access. Also there are lighted sport courts/fields at several parks. The request is to change the park rules as follows:

563.16 HOURS OF OPERATION.

(a) Hours Closed. No person shall be permitted to enter, remain, stop or park within the confines of ~~Gahanna Woods~~ a park or any other open space under the jurisdiction of the **Department of Parks and Recreation** one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise ~~except aside for exceptions listed in (b).~~ ~~Friendship Park, which shall be closed daily from 11:00 p.m. until one-half hour before sunrise.~~

(b) Exceptions.

- (1) **Lighted facilities will close at 11:00 p.m. and re-open one-half hour before sunrise.**
- (2) **Creekside Park Plaza will close at 11:00 p.m. for gathering and congregation and will remain open for access until 3:30 a.m. and re-open one-half hour before sunrise.**

- (3) **Beyond those listed above**, only persons participating in a scheduled **Department of Parks & Recreation Department** Program or members of groups who have reserved facilities beyond normal operating hours are permitted in the parks after the closing hours stated in subsection (a) hereof. **In these cases parks are to remain open beyond hours stated for special events upon the authorization of the Director of Parks & Recreation.**

(c) Special Closing of Areas. No person shall be permitted to remain, stop or park within areas of the parks which have been closed by the Director or other officials of the **Department of Parks & Recreation Department**. (Ord. 6-84. Passed 2-7-84.)

After some discussion the following suggestions were made:
Euton expressed a concern that with b1 there might be some confusion on what is actually a lighted facility and what is just security lighting. After some discussion it is recommended b1 to read:
Lighted facilities at Academy Park, McCorkle Park, Friendship Park and Creekside Island will close at 11:00 p.m. and re-open one-half hour before sunrise.

Tremante made a **MOTION** for a recommendation for the adoption of Ordinance 563.16 as revised; seconded by Messinger. **On roll call vote:** Cantrell, Yes, Franzmann, Yes, McKenna, Yes, Messinger, Yes, Miller, Yes, Naegele, Yes and Tremante, Yes. **The motion carried 7 – 0.**

1109.08 Public Areas

Collins stated he e-mailed Board members the draft revisions of Ordinance 1109.08 Park Land Dedication. The Planning Commission was working a particular issue in the past year and Ordinance 1109.08 came up regarding how land was valued. Bonnie Gard, the City Zoning Administrator was asked to revise 1109.08 to make it more applicable to how the system works. There was a development project that came up and as in any development projects they are required to dedicate a percentage of the land for park land. If they do not want to donate land or if the City does not accept the land they want to donate the developer needs to pay Parks In Lieu of fees. The question was what is the fees in lieu of based from; their appraisal, our appraisal, or the auditors appraisal. There could be a huge difference in appraisals. The Master Plan recommended looking at the Parks In Lieu of fees and gave some specific recommendations.

Collins stated the document will go to Planning Commission in February for discussion, then to City Council requesting an ordinance change. The Zoning Department and the Department of Parks & Recreation spoke with approximately ten suburban cities and got copies of their Park Dedication ordinances. Points were added that the Master Plan was calling for and what the department considered important.

A purpose statement was added to give developers and citizens the understanding of why we are doing this, so it does not seem like we are taking land for no reason. There was already a section that explained where the fees come from. The standards for accepting dedication of land for public purpose were also added. The standards are a very important addition to the ordinance. The Master Plan calls for coverage and accessibility to usable park land (i.e. neighborhood parks, pocket parks). The City has 31 parks with an additional 17 reserves and open spaces (land that is just there). The 31 parks make up 547 acres; the 17 reserves and open spaces make up 84 acres. Looking at the Master Plan the coverage areas have some gaps in the accessible parks for residents.

Collins explained that the new draft of the Ordinance enables the City to accept park land based on usability; accept reserve space, trails or open space. The new ordinance enables the City to define what is acceptable. Section b.G. is additional language.

Cantrell stated that section c is confusing regarding whether the Parks & Recreation Board is making a formal recommendation to the Planning Commission. The previous 1109.08 is clearer on whose responsibility it is to make a recommendation to the Planning Commission. The current draft reads as though they come in and listen to the Parks Boards wishes and then do what they want. It needs to be clear whether the Parks Board is to do a formal recommendation or if the Board is just an advisory board.

Cantrell stated section b should include natural resources in the last sentence along with size, shape, topography, etc. Euton stated in section b the first sentence should include information regarding natural resource preservation. Tremante asked where the needs assessment section is in the new document or if that section has been replaced with something else. Collins stated that the needs assessment has to stay. The Master Plan states you have to have documentation to back up why you want the number of acres requested. Collins will research the current ordinance and the draft ordinance. Collins stated the Planning Commission will take a look at the draft ordinance on February 13, 2008. Several Board members requested to see the document one more time with the suggested updates. Collins will make the changes and add it to Parks Board March agenda.

CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS

None

DIRECTORS REPORT

Collins distributed and reviewed the Parks & Recreation Department's 2007 priorities, status of 2007 priorities and the 2008 priorities. Collins stated the 2008 top priorities for the Department are Creekside, Bikeways & Trails and the Bond Projects Implementation and construction of Hannah Farms Park, Central Hamilton Park and Rice Ave/Foxwood Park.

Collins shared with the Board that on January 25, 2008 the Department received notification from Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) that it has been recommended to receive funding under the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant in the amount of \$140,000. The final approval will come from the Federal Highway Administration. It is envisioned to be the trail construction of the southwest floodplain to connect the Big Walnut section. Euton stated the 3,500 ft from the existing trail terminus down to James Road will connect southwest Gahanna to Olde Gahanna.

Collins stated as a department one of the commitments is to obtain alternative revenues; the department has received over \$500,000 in grants in the last couple of years.

Collins stated that the department is presenting to Council a request for an ordinance to authorize the City Attorney to file for appropriation of the property of George Weber, 258 James Road, Gahanna, Ohio 43230 for park land in court should negotiations fail. The department has discussed with Mr. Weber at great lengths purchasing the property. Mr. Weber signed a letter of intent to sell the property to the City. However, Mr. Weber is requesting significantly more than our appraisal. The property we want to purchase is 10 acres of a 13 acre property; the rear 10 acres are all in floodway. The parcel is the last piece of property needed to connect/complete the trail.

Miller requested an update on Woodside Green South. Euton stated that benches, trash cans and signs have been ordered. Once the weather breaks the slabs will be poured for the benches and the benches, trash cans and signs will be installed. The department is getting bank erosion recommendations.

Collins stated that Columbus is hosting the Ohio Parks & Recreation Association conference in 2009. Mike and Abbey have secured Richard Louv author of "Last Child in the Woods" as the key note speaker for the conference. The Parks & Recreation Board will be invited to the conference.

COMMITTEES' REPORT

Bikeway Advisory Committee

Collins stated the Bikeway Advisory Committee is inviting the residents of Nob Hill community to meeting regarding the proposed Bikeway plan.

Community Improvement Corporation (C.I.C.)

Cantrell stated the co-location of Gahanna Convention Visitors Bureau, Gahanna Events and the Gahanna Chamber of Commerce to 181 Granville Street, will be this month.

Natural Resource Advisory Committee

Nothing at this time

Dog Park Advisory Committee

Nothing at this time

Foundation Committee

Collins stated that this information is in legal and financial review prior to introducing to Council.

Veterans Memorial Committee

Nothing at this time

POLL MEMBERS FOR COMMENT:

McKenna discussed the latest school board meeting; The Superintendent's State of the Schools address to the community. There was a special board meeting to approve the hiring of the new high school football coach.

Tremante shared information he received regarding treatment to trees on the Emerald Ash Bore. ODNR's quarterly bulletin had a story on Gahanna Woods. Tremante is part of the Central Ohio Rain Garden Initiative and is happy to assist with the cities rain gardens. Tremante requested an update on the City facility study. Collins stated the focus has been on immediate needs; the police property room and the Cities record retention room. Those projects are being finished as a result of the study. Other pieces of the study still need to be finalized. The City is waiting on the final report.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Parks & Recreation Board at this time, Messinger made a **MOTION** to adjourn.

The Parks & Recreation Board meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Crossmock, Administrative Assistant

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2008

Eric Miller, Chair