

WHITEHALL PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

APRIL 28, 2016

The meeting of the Whitehall Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at 6:09 pm by Chairperson John Feters. In attendance: Feters, Katie Quincel, Greg Thurman, Zach Wright, Director Steve Carr, and Shannon Werner. Absent: Mike Adkins, Kyra Barnes, and Tiffanie Charles.

Thurman moved, seconded by Quincel, to excuse the absent members and the motion carried 4 – 0. Kyra Barnes arrived at 6:31 pm.

Quincel moved, seconded by Wright, to approve the minutes for the March 24 regular meeting and the April 13 special meeting and the motion carried 4 – 0.

Thurman moved, seconded by Quincel, to approve employees' wages/personal service for 3/18/16 to 4/14/16 and the motion carried 4 – 0.

Wright moved, seconded by Quincel, to approve bills and refunds through 3/31/16 and the motion carried 4 – 0.

The Commission reviewed the trust fund and budget through 3/31/16.

Director's Report:

We received only one bid for the Armory abatement/demolition project, which was 32.5% over the bid estimate prepared by EMH&T. The mayor has agreed to add \$50k to the project's budget, which means there is \$42k still to be trimmed from the budget. Carr and EMH&T are looking into building a pole barn versus renovating the drill room as a potential cost savings. The project will need to be rebid.

HCC Public Risk recommended to the city that all five-row portable bleachers to be taken out of service. Carr did not believe the age and condition of the bleachers made retrofitting a viable option. Carr notified the T-Ball league that the Commission would be making a final determination on the fate of the bleachers. Josie Euman told Shannon Werner that the bleachers were in terrible shape and agreed that they should be removed.

Carr updated the Commission on the splash pad project. Currently the consultants are vetting Vortex's proposal. If MSA gives the "ok", the project will be ready to re-bid soon. Council also appropriated additional funds and passed it as emergency legislation.

Feters asked if there was a target date from Heartland Bank for the maintenance complex to be moved. Carr said there was no firm date that he was aware of.

Quincel asked if the plans for the Activity Center renovation are still on hold. Carr answered that as soon as the splash pad has been re-bid, he will give the Mayor a contract with MSA to sign. Carr wanted

to assure that MSA brought the splash pad project to a satisfactory resolution first and so far he is satisfied they were doing that and hasn't lost any confidence in them.

Carr also met with Irish Stone, who will be giving a price for three new monuments. The mason's opinion was that it would be cheaper to build new monuments rather than move them, although the limestone caps could be saved.

Thurman stated that he didn't like the idea of adding more monuments if that wasn't the direction they wanted to go in the future. Carr said that the Master Plan calls for a new "wall of fame".

Wright suggested the wall could be designed in such manner that honors the "original 11" in a special way. He also suggested that the department commissions the three new plaques, but no monuments. The new plaques could still be presented and displayed for July 4th and perhaps even with an artist's rendering of a future wall.

The present Commissioners agreed.

Wright moved, seconded by Barnes, to remove and dispose of all five-row bleachers and the motion carried 5 – 0.

Next, the Commission discussed developing a youth sports philosophy. Carr distributed an updated version of his 22 recommendation for youth sports. He said he thinks a good starting point would be for the Commission to develop a youth sports philosophy. And any group receiving city assistance, needs to adhere to this broad philosophy (regardless by whom/how the leagues are run). Carr said he'd be happy to draft something for the Commission to react to and he encouraged suggestions. This philosophy would act as a guiding principle from which future decisions would flow.

Carr added that this should be done before they receive input from the leagues, although they could certainly give the leagues the opportunity to react to a draft philosophy. He thinks this will lend a framework/parameters to future discussions that will include the leagues. It will let the leagues know what the "deal breakers" are (ie: lack of financial transparency, age inappropriateness).

Ken Stover, of WBFL, said he likes the idea of an umbrella group. And while it's certainly okay for the Commission to watch and hold the leagues accountable, he thinks it's important to leave room for the leagues to govern themselves. He'd also like to see greater communication between the leagues and more involvement from the high school. Stover says Parks and Rec. could serve an important role facilitating this.

Carr agreed that you can't dictate everything to a group of volunteers, but there should be deal breakers. He would also like to see more involvement from the high school coaching staff.

Barnes also noted that parents are still looking for more financial transparency from youth sports.

The Commission set a time for a special meeting to develop a draft youth sports philosophy for Thursday May 12, 2016 at 6:00 pm. Carr said he would email a draft in advance of the meeting.

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Stover asked when changes or new regulations/requirements would be implemented. Carr said implementation would likely be a process.

There being no further business, Barnes moved, seconded by Thurman, and the meeting adjourned at 7:11 pm.

To the best of my knowledge these minutes are true and correct.

Chairperson