

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

City of Findlay
March 20, 2017

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Paul Schmelzer, Chair, Matt Cordonnier, Dennis McPheron, Greg Meyers, Shane Pochard, Gary Pruitt, Grant Russel, Mike Slough, Brian Thomas.

Staff Present: Matt Stoffel, Lisa Mansfield, and Kathy Launder.

Guests: Dr. Michael Reed, Paul Craun, Brett Gies representing Hancock Pathways.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to accept minutes of the January 23, 2017, meeting, by Meyers, second by Pochard. Motion passed 9-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Request to Waive Fees-Silver Blades: Silver Blades is requesting that the fee for four hours of ice time (\$800) be waived. This time will be used to practice for a show for Ronald McDonald House in Columbus. They will be practicing in May. Silver Blades have already reserved the ice time. Silver Blades is charged a lower hourly rate. Meyers suggested that we table the request and have them come to the meeting in April to discuss so that we can get our questions answered. Mansfield stated that the hours are at the same time Silver Blades would be using any way.

Motion to deny request of Silver Blades to waive the fees for four hours of ice time, by Schmelzer, second by Pruitt. Motion passed 9-0.

Fee for open space at Riverside Park: A few organizations have requested to reserve open space areas at Riverside Park, not the full park, for events. Should there be a fee set up for these types of requests? We have no current way to reserve these areas.

Motion to recommend that we bring back a proposal for a way to identify, delineate, and charge a fee to reserve the open space at Riverside Park to consider at the next meeting for consideration by the Board, by Schmelzer, second by Thomas. Motion passed 9-0.

Hancock Pathways: Hancock Pathways propose a pathway from Emory Adams Park to Hancock County Fairgrounds that will open up an avenue for future trails. It is an enhancement of the master trails plan. Great recruiting tool for businesses looking to attract employees, and can increase the value of homes that are near actively used trails. We have multiple trails in Findlay, but no connection to those trails. Going north from the fairgrounds the City already owns a lot of property to get to connect to Riverside Park. Long term picture is to connect an east-west trail from Riverbend Park to WalMart on Trenton Avenue. Open for discussion. What happens next? Who can carry project forward. Historically this type of project would be run through the City of Findlay. Have talked with property owners affected to see if they would be willing to enter into discussion regarding trails project.

Schmelzer stated we need to formalize a no fee option to pursue, so we don't go to a bunch of work and then find out at the end that the property owner is interested in it, but now interested in it for X number of dollars. Next step would be some sort of formal acknowledgement from the property owner that they see it as a benefit so that if an improvement is made a permanent easement would be recognized for some nominal fee.

Craun stated that the Hancock County Fairgrounds agreed to work with Hancock Pathways, but it will be Hancock Pathways' money and expense.

Dr. Reed stated Hancock Pathways' number one goal is to connect the six or seven segments of the trail that exist along the river, Blanchard Greenway. The overarching goal is to connect Riverbend Park to the Walmart on Trenton Avenue. As they started looking at different pieces of it they found some of the lower hanging fruit that could be easily produced as a trail and labeled and constructed as a trail for the least amount of financial input into

it. They do recognize a connection from Emory Adams Park needing to get north to the Blanchard River Greenway trail and this is part of that to get the southside to the middle of Findlay. The pathway will not be just for bikes. It will be for walkers/joggers also. Hancock Pathways is asking if the City of Findlay is willing to assume some leadership in the pathways project. Only way it is going to happen is if City takes leadership in the project and submits the grant applications. Is this something we want to direct the City Parks and Recs efforts to promote? If City does not want to support, then the Hancock Pathways group may as well disband.

Schmelzer stated that the work that was done on the comprehensive trails plan to identify routes feels better than the plan proposed today. It was not intended to say these are the roads we are going to use to tell people to ride bikes on. It was these are the routes that when we are looking at grants or we are looking at growth that we want people to be thinking about. Now you are telling me that that's not the case. That we want to pursue different roads. If we were to pursue, if we were to get our Cory Street project done if we get our Blanchard and Lincoln Street TAP project done, if we were to propose a connection that goes from Blanchard Street out Sandusky Street to Riverbend Park, would you say that is a good idea or would you say that is too busy of a road?

Reed answered that if you have the right of way to do a dedicated pathway out SR 568 yes. Not sure if that's a practical way to get there though.

Schmelzer stated that the City already pursued a TAP plan focused on narrow lanes on Sandusky Street, but was rejected. We could pursue safety dollars on Sandusky Street that would add an additional lane on Sandusky Street and would allow us to do a multipurpose path on Sandusky Street. A dedicated path is already planned and approved on Blanchard Street from Emory Adams Park to Lincoln Street, and then west on Lincoln Street to Cory Street. We can show that we are creating a pedestrian focused Downtown. Once the project is complete we will have connected the University of Findlay to Emory Adams Park. Then we will want to apply for a TAP to connect out to Riverbend Park. Good possibility of getting those dollars. We can decide to build that ourselves.

Meyers asked if we are thinking about connecting to the trail in Wood County.

Schmelzer stated we have been concentrating on completing the comprehensive trails plan.

Craun requested to have someone give Hancock Pathways group a status update. Schmelzer stated that he can. Schmelzer – to the purpose of the pathways group, is to identify from a rider's perspective first priority low hanging fruit what do we want to try to get done knowing we are going to get this done in pieces. That priority number 1. You had a grant application that failed. There is not another grant application planned. Overall budget for the grant was \$230,000. Schmelzer stated that the City may be able to fund a section of the path. The next question is does the City want to fund the full project or pursue grant dollars.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Recreation Department Report: Mansfield reported that they are wrapping up the winter ice season. Gliding Stars program was held last weekend and Silver Blades program is this weekend. As soon as the show is over, ice will be taken down for dry floor events. Discovering Lacrosse day is March 29 with 33 participants registered and paid. March 15 opened up registration for Lacrosse league starting in April. On April 1 the Recreation Department is hosting the Pitch Hit Run event. University of Findlay softball and baseball have started practicing and playing on Marathon Fields. There weren't a lot of small things this year that came from the Recreation Summit. A lot of what the user groups were talking about were the big items-second sheet of ice, multipurpose indoor space, swimming pool renovations. There was a request for more seating in the ice arena, however, a whole set of bleachers were empty during a recent event. Need to determine want vs. need. Outside of feasibility study, there wasn't a lot extra.

Schmelzer stated the next step is to develop a scope of work for a consultant to take a look at the facility expansion. That will most likely come back to the Board in April, and we will decide whether to hire a resource that Tracy and Lisa already know about that is working in Bowling Green and look at their qualifications and the scope of work and hire, or we can go out for formal RFQ. We are moving forward with that section of the Capital Plan to look at expansion of the facility. Don't see why we can't continue with the additional parking at Swale Park, not impacted by flood mitigation project.

Parks Maintenance Department Report: Stoffel reported that the Green Waste Site is getting cleaned up and ready to open. Weather permitting working on roofs on shelter houses in Riverside Park. Swale Park playground project is continuing. Riverside Park lighting project should be completed this year. Pool pump needs rebuilt before pool opens. 2017 park projects will get started once Capital funds are appropriated.

OTHER REPORTS

Hancock Park District Report: Pruitt reported that HPD have had a property lease with Bert Rayle and Bob Nichols adjacent to Civitan Park since 2002. It was so the trail could be connected from Civitan Park to Main Street. Got a letter terminating the lease effective April 23, 2017. Did not give a reason in the letter. Schmelzer stated that he is not sure if there is a deal to purchase the property through the County with flood dollars pending or not. Pruitt stated the letter said the trail will remain open, but will be owned/maintained by Rayle and Nichols.

OTHER BUSINESS

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Parks and Recreation Board is scheduled for April 17, 2017, at 4:00pm in the third floor conference room of the Municipal Building.

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Launder
City Clerk