

MINUTES

April 17, 2023

RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Catherine Cotrupi, Ms. Nancy Brossoie, Mr. Sam Hubbard, Mr. Mark Layne, Dr. Rick Slavings and Mr. Greg Holbrook-Director of Parks & Recreation, Mr. David Ridpath – City Manager, and Mr. Seth Gillespie – Council Liaison

OTHERS PRESENT: Ms. Kim Repass, Mr. Paul Pallante and Ms. Donna Wolfe

- A. Call to order by Ms. Cotrupi and asked for the roll to be called.
- B. Roll call was called.
- C. Dr. Slavings moved to approve the March 18, 2023 minutes as written. Seconded by Ms. Brossoie. The Commission passed the motion, 5-0.

D. Old Business

- 1. Canoe/Tubing Update by Mr. Paul Pallante owner of Radford on the River.
 - Mr. Pallante is excited to be able to offer canoe/tubing/kayaking to Radford. He sees this as an important service.
 - The name of the canoe/tubing service was announced as Radford on the River.
 - The opening date is May 12 in conjunction with West End Weekend.
 - A website of www.RadfordontheRiver.com is being set up as well as a Facebook page. Patrons will have access to announcements and online reservations. Walk-ins are also accepted as appointments will not be necessary. Hours of operation will be 10am-6pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Wednesdays and Thursdays by appointment only.
 - Mr. Ridpath asked about accommodating events and groups. Mr. Pallante stated that he will reach out to them soon.
 - Season will be May-October
 - Mr. Gillespie invited Mr. Pallante to do a promo session with City Council at their next meeting.
 - Ms. Cotrupi asked if gift cards would be available. Mr. Pallante plans to have gift cards and season passes for individuals and families.
 - Ms. Cotrupi also asked if he was looking to hire some more employees. Mr. Pallante plans to do more hiring and offer summer jobs.

2. Update on Joe Hodge Field Renovations by Mr. Holbrook
 - Progress is being made. Reinforcement walls have been reconstructed. Water lines have been replaced. Dugouts & Fencing should be done soon.
 - Mr. Gillespie inquired about the bleachers being donated by the Radford High School. Mr. Holbrook stated that some of the bleachers will be put at Joe Hodge Field & Veterans Field but must wait until June when the new bleachers arrive at the High School. There is some concern on how to install the bleachers at these fields. Solutions are being looked at.
 - A Lowes grant was applied for upgrades on ballfields and playgrounds. Joe Hodge Field is 50 years old and need renovations. Decision on who is awarded the grant will be announced in June.

3. July 4th Update by Ms. Kim Repass
 - Still waiting for the headliner band to be announced.
 - Other entertainers for July 4th will be CAT 5 band and Motown Revue. Motown Revue will open for the headlining act and also perform the National Anthem.
 - Police Department Dog Exhibition will return this year.
 - Ms. Repass also updated the Commission on Summer Concert Series at Glencoe.

4. Update Banners and Signs by Mr. Holbrook
 - The Recreation Department is partnering with the Chamber of Commerce to sell banners for ballfields. Banners will be displayed April – October. Banners hung in the Gymnasium will be displayed year round.
 - Looking at 2 options for ads.
 - Mesh banners for ballfields
 - Kiosks for the Recreation Center

5. Pickleball/Tennis Courts Update by Mr. Holbrook
 - Courts have been pressure washed and are waiting to be resurfaced as soon as the weather is warm enough.
 - Poles are installed.
 - Striping will be done as soon as the courts are resurfaced and dried.
 - Pickleball courts will be on the riverside of the court area.
 - Tennis courts will be on the roadside of the court area.
 - Completion should be in early May-June
 - Mr. Layne suggestions for the courts were:
 - Once the nets were taken up and the old poles were down to patch those holes before resurfacing.
 - Also, 8' fencing would be more ideal than the 4' fencing that was proposed
 - Nets between the courts can be stored with a hook on the bottom of the fence line.
 - Bleachers for Spectators was suggested.

6. Update on Recreation Sports.
 - Participation of sports has increased since Covid.
 - Baseball, Softball, T-ball and Soccer are currently underway with leagues from surrounding area Recreation sports teams.
 - Mr. Holbrook updated the Recreation Commission on the weekend tournaments, soccer, and men's league basketball.
 - Mr. Holbrook advised that there is a referee shortage as a lot of referees are getting older and retiring and younger referees are hard to find. A discussion was made by the Recreation Commission on suggestions on how to find referees.
 - Upcoming Sport Events
 - All Stars Teams
 - Recreation Department will be hosting the Cal Ripken Boy's Baseball Tournament June 22-24.

7. Welcome sign at John Dobbins Park Update by Ms. Cortrupi
 - Mr. Hubbard submitted the new design by a local artist. It was well liked by the Commission members.
 - The welcome sign with welcome written in different languages was discussed with Mr. Hubbard by local residents of that community and some concerns were raised.
 - Community didn't want the languages as they were not used in that community
 - Vandalism was a concern
 - Safety concerns were discussed for the park
 - Mr. Ridpath suggested security cameras
 - Mr. Hubbard related the concerns by the community about the basketball court being too close to the road and loose ball going into the road. Mr. Ridpath suggested a small piece of fence be put up.
 - Mr. Hubbard will work with the artist on the materials he will need to complete the sign. It was suggested to invite the artist to the next Commission Meeting.

E. New Business

1. Senior Liaison position still needs to be filled. Mr. Holbrook recommended that Mandy Martin fill the position. The Commission approved the recommendation.

2. Shelter #1 – Handicapped Sidewalk
 - Area from the parking lot to shelter #1 is all grass. Mr. Holbrook proposed that a paved sidewalk would be nice for the handicapped and elderly to access Shelter #1.
 - Mr. Ridpath stated that the City had been looking into that and that concrete was very expensive and that an alternate paving material might be better. They are currently researching that.
 - Mr. Holbrook stated that it would be nice to have before the July 4th Celebration.

- Safety and Access issues are being studied.
- Mr. Ridpath encouraged the Commission that we need to keep up with other localities and have timely up keep to all current facilities, ballfields and parks. He also suggested that members of the Commission to mindful of any repairs or improvements.
- Bikeway/Walkway is 20 years old and in need of some repairs. The Walking trail nearest the river in some spots will need to be moved due to erosion and safety issues. Widening of some of the trail will need to be done also.

F. Liaison Comments

Mr. Ridpath – City Manager

- Commission should be made up of 7 members. We have two spots are vacant and asked that the Commission consider who could fill these spots.
- Possible pay raise for Park Aides as it is a strenuous job and might be an incentive for new hires.
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Mr. Gillespie – City Council

- Congratulated Greg Holbrook for his new appointment as Director of Parks & Recreation.
- Complimented Tourism for all the events coming up.

I. Commission Comments –

- Mr. Slavings in answer to Mr. Ridpath's question on the Community Gardens, stated that the gardens spots filled up quickly this year with more spaces rented this year. He asked if there was any way to add a few more spots. He also requested a picnic table be placed at the gardens.
- It was suggested that the gardens be named after Jim Graham as he had been the caretaker for many years.
- Mr. Ridpath will get the paperwork for the name change and take it before Council.

J. Directors Comments

- Upcoming Baseball Tournament on Friday June 22-25
- Upcoming Racquetball Tournament on Saturday March 25th.

K. Ms. Cortrupi moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Hubbard. The Commission passed the motion, 5-0.