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**Parks & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes**

**March 17, 2021
3:30 PM**

***Minutes are unofficial until approved by Parks and Recreation Commission.
APPROVED AS PRESENTED***

1. ROLL CALL/INTRODUCTIONS:

Chair Sullivan called the meeting to order at 3:41 p.m.

- a. **Commissioners Present:** Brad Bafaro, Vice Chair; Aaron Johnson; Mackenzie Johnston Carey; Tammi McLaughlin; Susan Taylor; Paul Waterstreet and Howard Sullivan, Chair
- b. **Commissioners Absent:** Ralph Brown, Glenn VanBlarcom
- c. **Council Liaison Absent:** Malynda Wenzl
- d. **Staff:** Matt Baum, Parks Supervisor, Tom Gamble, P&R Director
- e. **PLACE and Community Garden Rep:** Jocelyn Bates, Miguel Comacho and Greg Kriebal

2. CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS: None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: P&R Minutes of January 20, 2021.

MOTION: Commissioner Susan Taylor moved, seconded by Commissioner Waterstreet to approve the minutes as presented. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

4. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS: None.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

a. **Rogers Park Update/Harper's Playground**

- I. Tom: With partnership with Loverocks Foundation, Roger's Park collected just under \$200,000. Final walkthrough with Harper's Playground certified Rogers Park and Harper's Playground will be giving a check to the City for \$400,000. There has been an incredible amount of community support and we are officially ready to close the books on our project.

b. **Parks and Rec Director Recruitment Process**

Tom: Process still in the works. An announcement to council will be made first, then publicly. Hopefully within the next few days to next week.

c. **Budget Discussion**

- I. Tom: We have been told to maintain current budget and plan on current levels. We have made a proposal to have part-time Parks employee moved to full time. Our proposal is using the argument that we used to get 80-90 hours per week of jail system to help with Parks and that is no longer happening. We also need more help with park maintenance.

- II. Question from Commissioner Taylor: How many full time employees does Park Dept currently have? Tom answers: 5 full time and 1 part time.
- III. Question from Commissioner McLaughlin: Would you like word to spread for community groups to help maintain parks to help park crews? Matt answers: It would not be very helpful if our staff still has to monitor those groups, as we are using heavy equipment during maintenance and that causes liability issues.
- IV. Question from Commissioner Taylor: How can commission lobby for a full time employee for parks? Tom answers: This needs to be brought up to the finance dept first
- V. Tom: Aquatics Dept proposal has been given to upgrade heating system in pool before it breaks down completely.

6. **NEW BUSINESS:**

a. **Stites Park Presentation by PLACE**

- I. Miguel from PLACE presentation: Showed the committee the slides of Stites Park with specifics of it being a nature park with nature play to build around the characteristics of the natural character of the park itself. The community garden will be integrated with picnic shelter and play area. As of now, the team is designing entry and parking areas on the west side of the park with a path that connects 26th ave and goes through the park.
- II. The parking lot will consist of 16 parking spaces, 2 ADA spaces, 4 electrical spaces and a roundabout will be included for loading/unloading. There will be a restroom with a storage shed/fenced area attached for garden equipment.
- III. The garden will consist of 48 garden plots of 20 x 20 modules and 36 plots with 10 x 20 modules. There will be a 7 ½ foot tall deer fence perimeter around garden area.
- IV. Nature play in the fir tree grove as well as rubberized play surface in the park. There will be a meadow between the play areas.
- V. Jocelyn Bates - Schedule for Stites: Currently in design/development phase to refine design. In April cost will be estimated and then preparation for documents for permit and construction. Construction to begin in fall on 2021 and should take approx. 3 months to complete.
- VI. Question from Commissioner Waterstreet: Can you please resend the schematic with the legend? Also, will the new homes block out the sunlight to community garden? Last question, will there be a gate on 26th to enter park or just to enter the community gardens? Miguel answers: Yes, I will resend the schematic with legend. No, we don't think the sun will be blocked by houses. There is just a gate to get into gardens not the park itself.
- VII. Question from Commissioner Bafaro: How many phases? Tom answers: We're anticipating a 2 phase process.

- VIII. Matt: There have been two plantings with Friends and Trees and the Rotary Club so far. We have removed all turf grass and replanting with pollinator plants. We have cut a trail through the woods to cut out and establish a path with a rock trail. When it is finished, it will not be ADA compliant. That's as far as can be done without a second round of funding.
- IX. Greg Krieber – Concerns: Blocked sun by houses over garden; may lose members through transition of property; water lines need to be placed in proper places and would like to be involved in the placement of the water lines. Overall though, a good plan and pleased to be part of it.
- X. Tom to Greg: We are taking this to contractor so we can take the load off of the community garden. We are trying to create a place of additional amenities for those that garden there. Giving a new opportunity since moving the gardens altogether.
- XI. Question from commissioner Waterstreet: Who supplies dirt/soil for boxes? Greg answers: Many gardeners will bring their own soil. Tom to Greg: Be careful with bringing own soil as we need to watch the soil elevation which could potentially impact wetlands.
- XII. Question from Greg: For children involved in garden, do they have direct access to the play area directly from garden? Miguel answers: yes.
- XIII. Commissioner Bafaro motion to adopt and approve Stites plan. Vote was taken and approved 7 – 0.

7. COMMISSION UPDATES REPORTS:

- I. Question Commissioner Waterstreet: Is there a museum being built or is it just a rumor? Chair Howard answers: yes, the owner of the property has decided to use 25 acres that is in a trust and make a historical site. He is currently communicating with the City and County but in the infant stages. Question from Commissioner Taylor: Does this project have anything to do with Parks and Recreation dept or just the trust? Tom answers: Nothing to do with P and R.

8. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT:

9. STAFF REPORTS:

- I. Matt: Parks and Rec staff is doing their best to keep up between the combination of spring weather and an aggressive influx of people. Rogers Park is doing great, although occasional issues with equipment. Rotary will be planting at Stites. A bench and chest board have been installed at Rogers. Grill not installed yet but hopeful for next week. Question from Commissioner Taylor: Are there any other places where volunteers could help? Matt answers: Not really. Susan has a clean-up group.

II. Tom: Pool restrictions have moved to moderate but the 6 foot restriction still remains in effect. In mid-May swim lessons may begin again with 6 and older lessons to keep distance and aerobic exercise classes as well. Pool has been very busy. When high school swim begins again, it should get very interesting.
Commissioner Taylor: I am happy with the pool at this time.

III. Chair Sullivan: Parks look great, Matt!

10. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT P&R MEETING:** Next meeting will be held Wednesday, April 21, 2021, 3:30 p.m. via Zoom or Webex from the Community Auditorium, Conference Room (east door).
11. **ADJOURNMENT:**
Meeting adjourned 4:47 pm