



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Minutes
August 1, 2021
Parks and Recreation Commission

Commission Present: Traverse, Todd, Hurley, Johnson and Duke

Staff Present: Wight and Putzier

The meeting was convened at 1:02 p.m. by Traverse

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by Todd, second by Johnson, motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Traverse asked to waive the reading of the consent agenda and motions into the record for approval.

Approval of consent agenda by Duke, second by Todd, motion carried.

Welcome and Introductions

Traverse welcomed new Commissioner Duke and formally introduced himself and passed on to others. Abbey stated she was from Ward 7, owner of Sugarsnap and very excited to be a part of the Commission, and also added she has children that participate in the programs.

Johnson introduced himself, been on for a year, lives in Ward 2, lived in Burlington for about 8 years, enjoys conversations and being involved in BACG program. Todd introduced herself, been on for 2 years, from Ward 3 and loves being on Commission as it covers so many different issues and lots to contribute to. Wight said they had met previously on steps in City Hall Park for splash dance, lives in New North End also and has been with the department for 4 years, Putzier stated that she is the staff person for the Commission along with doing financials for the department and lots of other tasks and has been with the department for many years and with the City for 37 years total. Hurley introduced herself, been on Commission for a very long time, and is from Ward 3, welcomed Duke.

Public Forum (Time Certain 1:15 PM)

Public Forum was opened at 1:15 pm

Councilor Sarah Carpenter, Ward 4 and neighbor of Leddy Park, wanted to bring to attention the lack of accessibility to the Leddy Beach, understands the expense but would like to make sure it is put on the list of items that get looked at. Would like to look into what may be some issues but would like to have a planning discussion, maybe need a compromise on grade or options such as steps, or people that need an assist. Grateful to work that has already happened but would like to continue as many people need assistance and would very much like to have a bigger discussion about the options. Felt many neighbors that are unable to attend this park due to access issues.

Todd explained she also, is doing work around accessibility at Calahan Park and wanted to know how to engage with Accessibility Committee to make aware of that plan as well. Carpenter stated the Committee was fairly dormant previously, but now starting to get resurrected and will forward the contacts for more input and discussion to be involved.



Keenan explained the Accessibility Committee is a group that is in the Ordinance and can have up to 13 members, they have no regulatory ability. They feel hybrid meetings are very important in the future for all to attend. Administration provided \$15,000 to run the committee, projects have to be on City property, would need to bring project to Accessibility Committee. Carpenter also stated that she has been working with elders and handicapped for years and is an advocate and would like to see continue with all new and upcoming designs.

Public forum closed at 1:22pm

Future Meetings

Traverse said historically have on first Tuesday of month at 5:30 p.m., wanted to have a discussion with group as to what works moving forward. Before pandemic had set a schedule that would take throughout the city, but date and time is very important. Asked if the first Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. worked and all were in favor and Todd asked to have hybrid option as well, and if that meant going to City facility would prefer that, wants to engage as many as possible. 645 Pine will have hybrid setup but first Tuesday is taken currently, could do the 2nd Tuesday. All were in favor of doing the second Tuesday of the month at 5:30 p.m. at Pine Street.

Todd would also like to have more community engagement activities as well that would take the commission to different parks and areas.

Traverse suggests if you have an agenda item that you want to add to a meeting to get in touch with Wight or himself and can discuss.

The next meeting will be scheduled for September 14th, at 5:30 p.m. at 645 Pine Street, Conference Room.

Director's Items and General Park Update

Wight explained put together update, started with parks and that division has 6 teams, all are very busy during summer with day to day work. As time allows will do special projects, gave a few specific projects. Poetry Walk, landscaping in front of 645 Pine, continue planting perennials. Central Facilities putting in new equipment, good year financially at the cemetery, lot sales are up, access to beach improved, Oakledge work starts on Monday, two teams, realignment is ongoing, second Calahan meeting coming up on August 5th, Schifiletti dedicated youth softball field, work at Schmanska walkway has started and an accessible path and parking up top. Admin side working on partners Bike Park, Fellowship of the Wheel and others on a grant to grow outdoor recreation businesses, \$5.1 mil available this year, meet with Conservation Board for additional funding to bring 311 up to standard. 9 hole disc golf going in in October, very positive project. Rec side programs have been very good, almost maxed out, added couple of Rec and Nutrition sites, City Hall Park, did not go well first few days, based out of Fletcher Free Library and going weekly to City Hall Park, with security. Candice Holbrook is on deployment and retired since, will do part-time guard work and then full-time Mom. Two more Leddy Beach Bites events and Seniors moved upstairs at the CORE, had lots of new members. Waterfront steady but financial loss without many Canadians unable to come, significantly down on Marina side. Waterfront will oversee the new Urban Rangers positions program along with other City Departments cooperation.

November Capital Bond



Keenan began by stating that the capital plan was adopted in 2016 and went to voters and got approved to cover 5 years, passed and looking at moving forward, done a lot in that time. Accomplished streets, sidewalks, structures, created capital committee, BPRW, DPW, CEDO, CT and created Asset Management Committee to have good data, to help make better decisions moving forward, created fleet program and previously had no equipment or vehicles. First step was to create strategy to move forward with bonding and master program. Have improved understanding of assets, keep finding assets that were not included. Had not included public safety infrastructure, had the buildings but not the rest of the items, did not have bridges at all and have great need. Still evolving, with asset management software will help plan moving forward. Also ties to operating budget, capital is like car, once you obtain then you have to maintain and that is operation not capital, so need to coordinate with operating to make sure enough money to extend the life of asset and last longer. Found that over time really deferred a lot of maintenance in the past, will take a long time to catch up. Hope to go to voters in November for bond to continue to reinvest in the infrastructure and deferred maintenance in future. Can't ask for \$100 mil can only borrow \$30 Mil. Looking at maintaining the initiatives started 5 years ago. \$5.7 Mil for safety structures alone. Does not include a lot of grant and visioning, had consultant come in and do, it is possible, number of items that are not covered under this request. Need to make decisions and continue reinvesting in infrastructure. Gave a schedule of all meetings and committees to educate and inform what the need is and why and answer all questions.

Hurley asked how to talk about the money that just came like ARPA Keenan said does nothing for other fees in general fund, has separate bonds that are not covered. On-going need and not covered. Looking at all opportunities.

Todd said a way of communicating the needs and what would be ARPA, it covers other things and the numbers are so big that if received will help to get further along on all the other projects. Only about a third of what is needed.

Commission would like to wait for September meeting to make a decision and send a letter of recommendation and/or approval for the bond.

Standing Item: Report from Commission on Volunteer Hours

Duke had 1 additional hour, Todd had 1 additional hour and Traverse had 1 additional hour

Commissioner's Items

Todd wanted to have more public outreach on the commission meetings put out and advertised and engage more communities. Also wants to speak with Wight about updates on several other items.

Carpenter said that she encouraged to get a specific ask together for the various Wards in terms of communicating outreach and she would be happy to help facilitate.

Hurley asked about Howard Chapel at Lakeview and Wight said she would discuss with her.

Wight and Putzier agreed to get the agenda's for meetings together and out earlier.

Traverse spoke about the success about water in Burlington as well as other surrounding area towns. Would like to advertise and solicit as to what the community is looking for and would like and have for discussion topics for September. PACC committee approved a dog task force and made up of different



constituencies, and has a position reserved for a member from Park Commission, asked if anyone was interested, if not, he would volunteer but is not a dog owner. Put out to the group and was told end of August will accept applicants for the group. 4 Open spots for at large, sometime in September the committee will start working again. Johnson said he was interested but not a dog owner and if someone else was interested they could do.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 2:21 p.m. by Traverse.

DRAFT