



**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Minutes
September 13, 2022
Parks and Recreation Commission**

Commission Present: Farrell, Hurley, Duke, Johnson and Wiseberg

Staff Present: Wight, Roach, Sauve, Doyle, Madalinski, Adams-Kollitz and Putzier

The meeting was convened at 5:36 p.m. by Duke

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by Wiseberg, second by Farrell, motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the minutes on the consent agenda by Farrell, second by Hurley, motion carried.

A public participant from the Kelly Love event scheduled in City Hall on October 8th and approved at the last Commission meeting requested to have the event date changed to October 7th.

Farrell made a motion to amend the consent agenda and add, Request for Date Change of the Kelly Love event, with all of the requirements as the original request that was approved in August, and change the date of the event to October 7th, second by Wiseberg, motion carried.

Motion to approve the consent agenda by Farrell, second by Hurley, motion carried.

Public Forum (Time Certain 6:10 PM)

Public Forum was opened at 6:15pm

Seeing nobody from the public, Public Forum was closed at 6:16 pm

Playgrounds and Accessibility, Setting Goals

Wight read a statement into the record on behalf of the department and explained how she received critical input about lack of accessibility at Calahan Park playground as well as others and took actions to remedy, felt it erodes trust and takes responsibility, sorry fell short and committed to ensure deeper awareness, listening from weeks installed, does not meet guidelines, needs accessible path built to it, surface is only accessible if maintained, does meet basic standards from component evaluation. Explained where taking actions to improve Calahan and throughout the park systems.

Hurley asked what it would cost and what did it cost for Calahan park playground, Madalinski said the full budget came in at just under \$138,000 without surfacing, and to put in subbase and rubberizing, pathways are a bit tricky but long-term does not call for keeping the pathway in that location and would require significant earth work, another \$30-\$50,000 approximately another \$170,000 to make complete.

Johnson asked if building over existing pathway would create adequate covering, if just paving would meet the standards for compliance. Madalinski said if paved up to woodchips it would meet compliance for ADA. If woodchips are not maintained they would not meet compliance if not compacted on a regular basis. Would like some type of surfacing.



Duke felt could use as conversation to discuss what is meant by accessible playground. Great time to learn and develop what is an accessible playground and how to have criteria and standards and look at all playgrounds in the City and how to make them all accessible and speak with Parks Foundation for funding.

Annie Barden, part of Oakledge for All, spoke, stating she became involved when her children were 2 ½ years old, has a child with disability, helped with fundraising, group spent a lot of time getting people to understand the need and for all to be united and not segregated. Said the Calahan playground is a big disappointment after all the work at Oakledge. Feels that BPRW deeply regrets what happened but implores that a policy needs to be created and that it is standard to meet and why it is necessary and matters.

Johnson thanked speaker and said not familiar with differences and standards and asked about learning about universal design, Barden directed him to the website, Oakledge For All, said the site does link to great resources and standard principles and other communities are doing it well.

Johnson asked about getting public input and reinforcing and implementing in a fair way and see if needs are being met.

Wight said the department comes to the Commission for request each year for PFP monies and if there is a grid with that specific project for example Smalley Park, for community input.

Sauve also stated that the Accessibility Committee is getting more active and can be more included in the process and review. Johnson suggested having this committee also be included in other areas of the park and not just the playground and others agreed.

Barden stated that surfacing makes all the difference but does not matter if there is nothing to enjoy once you get to the play area. Said saucer swings, universal swing can be used by all.

Sauve explained in process of getting beach pad to the water at Oakledge and suggested going to Accessibility Committee and orient them to the playground and the fitness equipment that they are on the verge of purchasing, which will also be universally accessible.

Wight stated how much was learned by the mistake, hate to learn the hard way but it was very hard to learn and realize you didn't and in some ways nice as the City has many playgrounds to replace and by speaking up it will be done right.

Leddy Park Comprehensive Plan Update

Sauve prefaced that the park is still a work in progress, it has a bit more of a struggle than others, had outreach in 2019 and led to thinking have understanding of public needs, wants and desires and then had COVID, some things have shifted. Hoped to jump in quicker but unfortunately not the case. Have banner that announced the comprehensive plan and the branding, hired SE Group to lead sub consultants to lead with process, gave summary of what happened in 2019, had capital funds to retransform tennis courts and staircase behind Arena, in 2021 had public input on bike park and working with coalition as to where could be in the City and determined it could be at Leddy. Hired UVM to do drone flight to get better information of topography and all changes. Identified core principles based on



feedback and broke into three areas; Connectivity and Access, Ecological and Site sustainability and Expanded Recreation and Wellness Opportunities.

Public outreach in early June explaining existing conditions, huge parking lot, smaller lot, no formal drop off location and no universal access trails. Several difference areas, ecology of the site, lovely tree canopy but limited condition, beach access, outfall needs updating.

Got a lot of feedback and it was overwhelming for all, lots of options and did not line up with each other. Shared some of the comments on the proposed boards that people wrote comments on. Based on meeting and staff reactions felt a need to step back and do better assessment of site and ecology of site, and how to dive into the social aspect of the site. Paused to get through to find a vision and what data needed to get to a proposal. Got reports from sub consultants on water sheds and if ways to rectify. Spoke about an east west connection, many people were in favor. Hired field naturalist and done ecological health assessment would be best to work on the yellow area indicated and not the blue area that was designated on the map.

Summarized next steps;

- Evaluate timeline and fees for sub consultants to conduct further studies of the eroding channels and parking assessment
- Meet with Water/stormwater division on approaches to addressing eroding channels
- Connect with VT DE on upper drainage area
- Connect with adjacent land owner on opportunities for shared parking
- Evaluate beach habitat for rare species
- Work with UVM students who will be exploring ideas on playgrounds that integrate with the surrounding landscape in late fall
- Work with SE group on layering additional data onto their park assessment to include all known information
- Identify opportunities to test concepts including the access road to garner feedback from both staff and the public

BPRW Asset Management Program

Roach introduced himself and explained he manages inception of putting out work orders to crews in the field. Introduced to View Works system and how tasks accomplished throughout the workgroup and tracking and into the specific experts.

Showed splash page of SeeClickFix City app to engage City to fix or repair something throughout public system, now have new program called View Works system platform, layers of information on top of the City, shows Parks on the right hand side and shows all of the amenities and items that parks has, very robust system, took a few years to gather all the information to input into the system to create the program. Populated about 500 work requests through the system, worked on improvements, all symbols have meanings and numbers have a specific work request attached to them. Have preventative maintenance, planned, inspections, and several different symbols. Stated that reports can be created to show how much work is being spent on specific areas, can be used on mobile devices, will also have an internal platform for better ease for simpler issues. Still working on all staff training and all groups have a good perspective of how things are being done differently and effectively.

Wiseberg said he used SeeClickFix and the graffiti is still in place and asked how it works in terms of order and prioritization. Roach said he had a person working on Graffiti alone and lost that person, having huge staffing issues. Have not been printing out the reports, without managers currently, and



doing other positions, getting more positions filled and have a backlog of requests. Was told that the request stays into the system until it is closed out, does not go away.

Standing Item:

Report from Commission on Volunteer Hours

Farrell had an additional 2.5 hours, Hurley had 1 additional hour, Wiseberg had 1 additional hour, and Duke had 5 additional hours

Report on PACC Dog Force

Wight said was a meeting last month, small group editing survey talks about off leash areas and getting feedback on what is recommending. Meeting Friday and getting out at the end of the month.

Report on Parks Foundation

Farrell said more of a step back and what does the Foundation want to be, due to significant turnover in membership. Started with signature project of Greenway, City Hall Park and then Frame. Pivoting, a lot of discussion of scholarships, what things such as maintenance and turned to honing in on what they want to be instead of what the department does best and maximize what Foundation can do, felt it was good thought producing conversations.

Duke said finished a lot of the projects that had initiated and felt great meeting, spoke of developing criteria, progress in discussing what makes sense for Foundation to be raising funds for and other department needs for children and projects. Next meeting is in October. Wight will present at that meeting.

Wight said Sauve and team will present about playgrounds and will be very visual with presentation. Have very significant changes with playgrounds needed coming up.

Farrell said another discussion that came up was funding and benefactors, it should be important in taking on project but should not take on because specific person/resident will participate in funding as well.

BPRW Special Events

KJ Doyle introduced herself, proposed adding a night to annual Halloween Event, very family oriented and reaches lots of neighborhoods. In conversation about new event on Friday in addition to Saturday, looking to add for adults, based on Salem type event, with fortune tellers, tarot readers, witches market, food trucks, music, a new small event, capping number of folks based on shelter/tent, need to extend hours to 10pm would have amplified sound. Focused back to Oakledge site as location for the event.

Director's Items

Written attachment in packet, did not speak to the item.

Commissioner's Items

Hurley asked about the size of the soccer field at Calahan Park and there was some discussion on who was in charge of that.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:00 pm