

City of Fort Smith  
Parks and Recreation Commission  
Minutes of Meeting  
June 12, 2018

The Parks and Recreation Commission met at noon on Wednesday, June 12, 2018 at the Creekmore Community Center.

Park Commission members present: Chris Raible, Lacey Jennen, Jim Rowland, Madeline Marquette, and Nancy Raney.

Park Commission members absent: Casey Millspaugh

Staff members present: Jeff Dingman, Doug Reinert, Sara Deuster, and Amber Plank

Others: David Harris, Paula Linder, Bobby Aldridge, Keley Simpson, and Samuel Price.

Marquette called the meeting to order at 12:03p.m. Toliver made a motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Rowland and unanimously approved.

**1. Tree Planting in Recognition of Arbor Day**

Commissioners, Staff, and citizens gathered outside in front of the community center to plant a plum tree in recognition of Arbor Day. Marquette read a proclamation issued by Mayor Sandy Sanders prior to planting the tree. Following this gathering, Commissioners, Staff, and citizens returned to the community center to proceed with the meeting.

**Recess Park Commission**

**Convene Tree Committee**

Jennen noted the City has been recognized as a Tree City USA for the last 12 years, and as part of that requirement, the City must have a tree ordinance. She added the City does have such an ordinance, but it is specific to City parks, not the City in general. Jennen recommended the Commission discuss the possibility of revising the current ordinance to fall in alignment with other cities, such as Fayetteville and Springdale. She further stated the Unified Development Ordinance does not include the preservation of trees for new developments. The UDO does require new developments to plant one tree for every 50 linear feet in right-of-ways. Jennen emphasized the need for a tree ordinance is in order to enhance the quality of life by creating and implementing positive standards for developers, which promotes responsible development practices. She added the need to preserve and protect the greenspaces throughout the city. Marquette referenced back to the proclamation read earlier as including the positive impacts of a tree ordinance that were provided by Jennen. Following Jennen's comments, Reinert noted the need include Development Services in any further discussion concerning expanding the tree section in the UDO. Raney made a motion to invite the Development Services staff to attend the Parks Commission's July meeting to discuss the tree ordinance as it applies to the UDO. The motion was seconded by Jennen and

unanimously approved. Reinert stated he would invite a representative from Development Services to attend the July meeting.

Raible made a motion to adjourn the Tree Committee. The motion was seconded by Jennen and unanimously approved.

### **Recess Tree Committee**

### **Convene Park Commission**

## **2. Project Updates**

### Fort Smith Park:

The fishing pavilion and parking lot are completed. Reinert noted we have submitted all necessary paperwork to Arkansas Game and Fish Commission for payment of the \$100,000 grant attached to the parking lot portion of the project. He added we are in the process of gathering the necessary signatures for the contract for the playground project. Maintenance Staff have poured the concrete pad and laid the bricked pavers for the entrance to the dog park. The fence is currently being installed.

### Greg Smith River Trail Phase III:

Construction has reached the end point of the trail. There are still sections of the cedar fence along the trail. The intent is to have a ribbon cutting for the trail and projects at Fort Smith Park at the end of July/beginning of August.

### Splash Pads:

Signatures for the contract for the construction of a splash pad at Tilles and Woodlawn Parks are currently being gathered.

### Creekmore Park Pool:

The pool is open and has received several compliments as a result of a few changes to the operation of the pool.

### Riverfront Drive Skate and Bike Park:

The parking lot is still under construction and irrigation is being ran. The pump track has been delivered and is set to be installed in the coming days.

Raible asked about any updates regarding the trails at Chaffee Crossing. Reinert noted we are still waiting on one easement before the project can go out for bid.

Raney asked about the bricks at the dog park Reinert noted earlier. Reinert communicated the Parks Department is going to sell the brick pavers at the entrance to the park for citizens to honor, memorialize, or recognize their pets. This will be the same process as was done for the bricks for the Darby Legacy Project. As of now, a definite price has not been set. Deuster noted we are utilizing a

local company to laser engrave the bricks, which will cut down on the turnaround time for the completion of the bricks.

### **3. Public Comments**

David Harris was present in the audience and noted the importance of the Commission and public being aware of the impending sunset date of the 1/8% Sales and Use Tax.

Keley Simpson was present and asked about the public meeting scheduled for this coming Friday. Deuster noted this meeting was a requirement for the Outdoor Recreation Grant for the inclusive playground at the Riverfront Drive Sports Fields.

Marquette asked about the activities the department had planned. Deuster noted the first Pop Up Play Day was held the prior Thursday, which was an activity hunt throughout the park in which citizens had to complete various activities to get a code. Once all the codes were completed, they had to “decode” them to assemble a necklace and received a free snow cone from Creekmore Park Putter. Deuster stated the next Pop Up Play Day is scheduled for next Thursday. The activity planned is slip n’ slide bowling at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. She added Baking Bootcamp will be held June 25<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>, and response had been overwhelming and registration was closed for the event.

Raney stated she had gone to the Anniversary Rose Garden and discovered several roses had been dug up and removed from the park. She brought up the idea of turning the location into a dog park and transporting the roses to a location in which citizens have ample time to care for the roses properly. Reinert stated the Parks Department is responsible for the mowing of grass and irrigation. We have an agreement with the Rose Society in which they maintain the roses in the park. Dingman recommended inviting a representative from the Rose Society to have a public meeting regarding the Rose Garden. He also stated public input would need to be gathered given the history of the park and the organizations affiliated with it prior to further discussion concerning the future use of the property. Raney made a motion to invite the Rose Society to attend the next meeting to discuss the condition of the Rose Garden. The motion was seconded by Toliver and unanimously approved.

Raney mentioned the condition of the flowerbeds along the Greg Smith River Trail. She suggested the running community volunteer to help pull weeds and maintain the beds similar to what the biking community does on other trails.

Paula Linder was present to give an update on Park Partners. Linder noted Karen Roberts donated \$10,000 to be used for a dog park. Raney mentioned the organization is looking for a new Treasurer, as their current one is moving to another city.

### **4. Commission and Staff Comments**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:58 p.m.

Madeline Marquette, Vice Chairman  
Amber Plank, Records Coordinator