

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

MEETING DATE: August 22, 2019
LOCATION: Webster Groves Recreation Complex
CALLED TO ORDER: 6:30 p.m.
MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:45 p.m.
NEXT MEETING: October 24, 2019 Regularly Scheduled Meeting

ROLL CALL

NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT
David Addison, School Board Liaison	X	
Elizabeth Bailey	X	
Marijn Braadbaart	X	
Toni Hunt	X	
Tammy Hoyt		X
Lindsey Michaud	X	X
Erica Morrison		
Peg Pedersen		X
Jim Shearburn		X
Scott Davis, Staff Liaison	X	
Laura Arnold, Council Liaison	X	

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Braddbaart moved to approve the minutes. Hunt seconded. Minutes were approved by voice vote with no dissent.

STAFF REPORTS-presented by Scott Davis

PARKS

Dedication ceremony for Barbre Park was done on June 1.

The design phase for renovation of the Memorial Park tennis courts took several months longer than it should have. We were unable to start construction on those this summer and be finished by the time varsity tennis would have started. We now have to wait till the spring varsity season is over in May.

This year we are applying for Muni Park grant for renovation of Blackburn playground and ADA ramps to allow access to tops of play structures.

RECREATION

We put in the new ice last week, and the rink reopened on Sunday. The Stanley Cup was at the rink in July for photo opportunities.

New brochures have recently gone out, if you did not get one we have copies available at the desk. We are looking into the possibility of not mailing these brochures to each household in the future. Could only mail to

those who want them, or have them available for pickup at certain locations plus online.

Pool has gone to school hours. We are looking at different hours for August 2020 as the schools will be starting later next year.

We are applying for a Muni Park planning grant for a fitness studio. This will allow us more rental opportunities in our meeting rooms, and provide a better space for fitness classes. It was originally in our building design but was cut during construction due to costs. This commission will be asked to be a focus group during the planning process.

Fireworks-one shell exploded prematurely causing the next shell to come out perpendicular. 11 people were treated for burn injuries on-scene. None wanted to be transported to hospital by EMS. We have discussed with J&M about how it happened, and what we could potentially do in the future to prevent it again. Some potential suggestions have been made. We are under contract with them through the end of this calendar year. We are not planning on shooting fireworks on NYE this year. Staff will be presenting to Council at next work session. If the City decides to continue with future fireworks shows, we will likely put out another RFQ for pyrotechnic services in January. The winning contractor will be required to provide a safe show or shows in the future. Braadbaart requested a press release or some way to notify public was direction we will go after Council discusses.

Lions carnival numbers took a hit due to not shooting the July 6 show. They are trying to decide if they will continue with carnival in future years as their membership age continues to increase. We met with them on Friday last week to discuss 2020 and future years. They requested to use the field, we told them no, unless they can cover and protect the field with an ArmorDeck type of product. Last I checked into that it was approximately \$100,000 to rent that product to cover the field. Lions say they are down about \$100,000 in gross revenues in the years since they have moved to the parking lots. Those years have also included the 4th of July being in the early to middle of the week, which would also lead to less attendance.

COUNCIL REPORTS-presented by Laura Arnold

New Diversity and Inclusion statement was read. Council has been working on home based businesses and is focused on construction projects around the City.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Staffed discussed the need to increase revenue again this year based off of rising employee cost mostly associated with the increase in the minimum wage. Last year we increased daily admissions. This year we are looking to increase annual memberships and some rental rates based on market trends. Most memberships have not been increased since 2008. The current budget has an increase of \$69,000 in PT wages and a \$23,000 increase in FT wages. Staff's proposed fee increase would bring in an additional \$60,000 in revenue. We would again look to increase daily admissions in 2020, and annual memberships and rentals in 2021. Braadbaart asked about field lights being converted to LED. Hunt stated that the prices were not outrageous and if we keep it at 10% it is a reasonable increase. Addison asked if we are aware of people who can not afford memberships at the current rate. A discussion about scholarship programs ensued. Braadbaart stated he thinks increase are ok. Would like for us to look for opportunities to increase memberships, not just fees on current members.

Hunt moved to approve the fees as presented by staff subject to minor adjustments to make numbers easier for staff. Braadbaart seconded. Minutes were approved by voice vote with no dissent.

- B. Staff asked the commission members if there are any park amenities that they think we are lacking or specific niche type of park such as splash grounds, archery courses or dog parks. There may be some opportunity for new parks in the future and we are always looking to fill any holes our residents think we need.

Braadbaart thought improvements to Larson over the years has been tremendous. Should look into alternative electric options in the future. Michaud want to look into splash pads in more parks. Bailey would like to see more restrooms in the smaller parks. Michaud asked about outdoor classrooms and partnerships with school district for such, and disc golf.

Staff brought up that a resident sent a letter to Council asking them to look into a dog park. Council forwarded that discussion to this commission. Commission didn't think there was a great need for a dog park. Michaud stated they are usually in more densely populated cities, Webster is more single-family residents, and is very walkable with sidewalks on most streets. 4 of 5 commission members present are dog owners. Staff provide construction cost of several dog parks throughout the regions:

Brentwood-\$30,569 for fence. Full design estimate was \$482,733.

Sunset Hills-\$350,000

Clayton-\$110,421

Queeny Park (StL County) \$860,000 + in house labor

Ellisville-\$67,110 + in house labor and concrete from PW staff

Eureka-\$40,000

The parks that have full dog park facilities with water hydrants, safety surfacing, play amenities can cost in the hundreds of thousands. The lower priced facilities are basically just a fence around current turf. Either way will incur high maintenance cost in future years.

Staff provided pricing for Webster residents to use other dog parks in the region. Average cost is \$50 for a non-resident to get a membership. Pricing and locations can be found at graphics.stltoday.com/apps/dog_parks

Commission was unanimous that a dog park is not needed. Resources of both dollars and staff time are better spent on other park operations.

SET NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting scheduled for October 24, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. at the Recreation Complex.

ADJOURNED

Hunt moved for adjournment. Braadbaart seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.