

Parks Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 14 2013
6:00 p.m., Council Chambers



1. Call to Order by Lewis at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Cobbs, Comeau, Fitzgibbon, Montgomery-Reinert, Toneman, Lewis
Absent: Fenske (excused)

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Fitzgibbon, second by Toneman to approve the regular Parks meeting agenda as presented.

All in favor. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes – April 9, 2013

Motion by Montgomery-Reinert, second by Toneman to approve the April 9, 2013 regular meeting minutes with correction of Montgomery-Reinert's last name.

All in favor. Motion carried.

5. Public Comments and Inquiries Concerning Items not on the Agenda

None at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

6. City Hall Landscaping Update

Gildea noted that this item is an update to the board about changes to City Hall landscaping. Last summer the board had approved a plan for City Hall, but due to requirements for a DIG grant that the City applied for, some changes were made to the City Hall Plan. Pat Cornelisse was present to explain the changes and answer any questions.

Cornelisse gave an overview of the entire scope of the project and the addition of two rain gardens instead of one. One will be a demonstration garden with explanation of why we have rain gardens and how they work and include an orientation plaza with events posted, shade trees and benches. Runoff will be going into the rain gardens. The board discussed plans for replacing the city's Christmas tree. Gildea noted that the current Christmas tree's top half is dead and city crews spray painted it so it wouldn't look so bad during the holidays. Cornelisse explained that there could be a barrier free entrance in the front as well as one which would come all the way from the back similar to what is currently in place. In the course of the proposed work, the memorials would have to be relocated.

Fitzgibbon asked why the trees are all located on the west side and suggested screening on the east side. Cornelisse noted that she agrees, and as money is obtained it could certainly be added. After questions Cornelisse explained that the trees at the west corner are shade or canopy trees. Cornelisse explained that there are several projects going on, and we are trying to mesh them all together, which is difficult. In addition, the city did not get one of the grants they applied for, which was to be the resource to do the city hall improvements. In discussing the existing island, Cornelisse noted that the existing trees will stay.

Fitzgibbon continued to question the lack of balance. Cornelisse said a few pine trees could be added to create balance. Gildea noted that the city is waiting to replace some dead trees for the reimbursement process from Dow to be concluded.

Montgomery-Reinert agrees with Fitzgibbon and thinks there could be some trees and shrubs added to the east side to create balance and partially screen the adjacent parking lot until more funding is acquired.

Toneman asked about the previous meeting where people requested a fountain or sculptures; Cornelisse noted that there will be many of opportunities for art and gave some examples.

There was discussion of the placement of the little girl sculpture which Gildea explained the donors, SHOUT, are in agreement with.

7. Splash Pad

Gildea noted that city staff has worked with Abonmarche doing site visits of all potential locations. Once three locations are chosen, Abonmarche will study those three locations. Abonmarche has made recommendations of their three top choices. Gildea noted that the locations Abonmarche suggested would be the locations she would recommend.

After questions, Gildea noted that the three Abonmarche selected were Stanley-Johnston Park, Black River Park and Riverfront Park. Gildea noted that many cities have started going to splash pads since there is no standing water. Liabilities might exist but they are not the same as the liability standing water in pools or lakes.

Fitzgibbons is against Kids Corner because of losing the ball diamond and not sure Black River Park would really be a good spot; "Riverfront Park seems perfect." Comeau agrees that Black River Park is not a good location; there is not enough parking. Stanley Johnson Park is too shaded per Fitzgibbons. Comeau noted that he agrees Riverfront Park is a good location, close to parking, restrooms and handy to the lake for days when the lake is too rough. The board discussed various ways it could be located in the Riverfront Park area.

Gildea noted some shrubs are old and overgrown and hard to maintain in the same general area that Abonmarche shows the two splash pad areas.

Gildea noted that there have been no plans started which would indicate size or how many fountains the splash pads would have. This step is simply to choose the top three recommendations from the board. After discussion the board concluded that there is really only one location that they can support.

Motion by Fitzgibbon, second by Toneman to strongly support exploring the Riverfront Park as the area to put a splash pad and not any of the other locations due to the reasons listed above.

All in favor. Motion carried.

7a. Lewis submits resignation

Lewis announced his intention to resign from the Parks Commissions which also means resigning as chair, citing hearing issues and health problems. Noted that he has sat in this chair for a long time and feels it is time for someone else to step up. Lewis recommended Montgomery-Reinert, enumerating the many positions she has held with various community groups and non-profits.

Motion by Fitzgibbons, based on Chairman Lewis resignation, that Patti Montgomery-Reinert be appointed as chair. Second by Cobbs.

Lewis introduced Ms. Montgomery-Reinert as the new chair of the Parks Commission.

Montgomery-Reinert thanked Lewis for his years of service to the City and for "thinking enough of me to recommend me for this position." Montgomery-Reinert stated that she usually likes to be on a board longer than two meetings before taking such a position, but will accept if the board agrees.

All in favor. Motion carried.

The board discussed who was co-chair and Toneman noted that he is the co-chair.

Montgomery-Reinert asked what the process is to fill positions. Fitzgibbons said it is hard to get people to serve so the City Council has been discussing eliminating term limits.

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Marsha Ransom
Recording Secretary