

**PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**October 3, 2023**

Heather Carmona, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm at 851 South Eton.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Heather Carmona  
Susan Collins  
Pam Graham  
Sarah Kupczyk  
Anne Lipp  
John Rusche  
Steve Sweeney

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

**ABSENT:**

Katie Glasier, Seaholm High School  
Archie Reynolds, Seaholm High School

**ADMINISTRATION:**

Scott Zielinski, Director of Public Services  
Carrie A. Laird, Parks and Recreation Manager  
Leah Blizinski, City Planner  
Connie J. Folk, Recreation Coordinator

**PRESENTERS:**

Jane Dixon, McKenna  
Paul Urbiel, McKenna

**GUESTS:**

Patti Blair, Jessica Einstein, Bob Gibbs,  
Andrew Harris, Wendy McIntyre Peard  
and David Young

**ANNOUNCEMENTS, INTRODUCTIONS OF GUESTS & CHAIRPERSON  
COMMENTS:**

No announcements, introductions of guests & chairperson comments

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:**

Bob Gibbs stated he is in support for the master planning process for the parks and recreation and would encourage that the plan would include the recently adopted city plan.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:**

It was moved by Graham, seconded by Collins, to approve the minutes of the Tuesday, September 12, 2023, regular meeting as amended.

**Ayes,** Heather Carmona, Susan Collins, Pam Graham  
Sarah Kupczyk, Anne Lipp, John Rusche  
and Steve Sweeney

**Nays,** None  
**Absent,** None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Continued Discussion of Pickleball Complaints and Remediation Options**

PM Laird shared with the Parks and Recreation Board previous discussion from Parks and Recreation Board meetings, fencing costs and additional comments and complaints for Crestview Pickleball Courts.

Lipp asked if the acoustic fencing is cost prohibitive. Lipp stated there have been several complaints regarding the noise.

DPS Director Zielinski stated it would depend on what the Parks and Recreation Board decides as a whole. In all technicalities the Parks and Recreation Board would be open to recommend as little or as much mitigation options for us to evaluate and proceed with seeing what would need to be done. Just because it falls outside of our technical budget range doesn't mean it would be off the table. It is not uncommon when a board makes a recommendation for staff to approach the city commission if it's an appropriate option and request a budget adjustment in order to pay for whatever the items is.

Lipp stated she would like to recommend that the staff investigate option one (install "Acoustifence with option four (install berm and landscaping). Lipp stated she would also consider if the aesthetics of it is a huge concern for people, she would consider running it by those residents and saying, would you rather have a sound or would you rather have a fence.

Sweeney acknowledges there are concerns about sound and traffic. Steve's concern is that the neighbors that live by Crestview Park that are complaining about the noise will be questioning on spending money with option four and how unaesthetically pleasing the Acoustifence will be.

Sweeney stated the pickleball manufacturers are talking about creating technology to make the equipment less noisy.

Sweeney stated he would hate to go ahead and make this investment, spend all this money and a year later with all the changes in technology, there's paddles that are required now that are going to be less noisy. And the city installed landscaping.

Sweeney stated the gate absolutely will eliminate a lot of these issues with people playing after hours and the gate makes total sense for a number of reasons. Sweeney can't recommend any of the options.

Rusche agrees with Sweeney's comments and would like to investigate fob system like what is used for the dog park.

Graham stated if the city can find a qualified contractor that would do a sound test to verify the fencing material, the fence option will work.

Carmona stated that having some limitation of access in hours is going to help a little bit, but it's not going to address the sound.

Carmona agrees with Sweeney's comments and she would like to watch the industry materialize a little more, since we are at the end of the season. There should be something done for the residents but also feel there is an obligation not to spend \$10,000- \$30,000 if the city doesn't have to.

It was moved by Lipp, seconded by Collins to recommend city staff further investigate the ability for the installation of option one or option four and staff will bring back options and proposals of how to proceed. In addition to investigating selecting a gate that will be locked and unlock by city staff and having that installed at this time to help with the sound.

**Ayes,**

Susan Collins, Sarah Kupczyk, Pam Graham, Anne Lipp and John Rusche

**Nays,  
Absent,**

Heather Carmona and Steve Sweeney  
None

It was moved by Graham, seconded by Kupczyk to recommend city to proceed with four foot gates at the existing fence at the pickleball courts located at Crestview Park that will be locked and unlock by city staff.

**Ayes,** Heather Carmona, Susan Collins, Sarah Kupczyk, Pam Graham, Anne Lipp and John Rusche and Steve Sweeney

**Nays,** None  
**Absent,** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Request For Special Meeting-Parks and Recreation Master Plan Draft Review-Tuesday, October 24, 2023**

It was moved by Lipp, seconded by Collins to schedule a Special Meeting for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Draft Review for Tuesday, October 24, 2023.

**Ayes,** Heather Carmona, Susan Collins, Sarah Kupczyk, Pam Graham, Anne Lipp and John Rusche and Steve Sweeney

**Nays,** None  
**Absent,** None

**2024-2028 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update**

Urbiel and Dixon reviewed with the Parks and Recreation Board members the draft 2024-2028 Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Dixon stated that the graphs will be represented differently then what is being shown to the Parks and Recreation Board.

Urbiel stated that McKenna has concluded the public engagement phase of this process. The draft plan that summarizes all engagement activity to date and synthesizes the feedback themes that we heard and are incorporating into the analysis for the rest of the plan.

The draft plan content that introduces concepts in environmental sustainability, discusses how parks planning can help eventually participate in the City’s forthcoming environmental sustainability goals, and ‘low-hanging fruit’ strategies for enhancing sustainability in Birmingham Parks.

The Strategic Action Plan in its finalized form will represent recommended actions that result from the entirety of stakeholder engagement, technical analysis, and reviews with staff and this board. There are two portions of the Strategic Action Plan:

- 'System-Wide' Action plans, which represents a set of organizational actions and strategic initiatives that are not necessarily (or not yet) place-specific.
- 'Park-Specific' Actions, which are already targeted to specific parks and/or arose from public commentary or other analysis regarding more discrete issues.

Urbiel stated that following the meeting, planning team will continue our efforts to produce a draft document to discuss with you at your October 24th special meeting. We aim for this draft to be approximately 95% complete at that stage so that we can have a robust discussion with the board and answer any questions you have regarding the plan direction before we finalize the full draft for an anticipated release for public comment on November 1st.

Gibbs stated he supports the direction that the plan is going but would like to see the 1 1/2 mile Rouge Trail universally acceptable, a walkable surface.

**2024 Parks and Recreation Board Meeting Dates**

RC Folk presented to the Parks and Recreation Board the 2024 Parks and Recreation Board meeting dates for approval.

It was moved by Collins, seconded by Sweeney to approve the 2024 Parks and Recreation Board meeting dates as submitted.

**Ayes,**

Heather Carmona, Susan Collins, Pam Graham  
Sarah Kupczyk, Anne Lipp, John Rusche  
and Steve Sweeney

**Nays,  
Absent,**

None  
None

**MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS:**

E-mail received from John Rusche, 9.22.2023

E-mail received from John Rusche, 9.25.2023

**REPORTS FROM STAFF:**

No reports from staff

**ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING:**

No items for next meeting

Carmona stated a special meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 6:30 pm, at 851 South Eton.

Carmona stated the next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 at 6:30 pm, at 851 South Eton.

Chair Carmona adjourned the meeting at 8:11 pm

Connie J. Folk, Ice Arena and Facilities Superintendent

Approved