

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

July 7, 2020

Heather Carmona, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. for the virtual meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Heather Carmona, Pam Graham, Ross Kaplan, Jeffrey LaBelle, Ellie Noble, Dominick Pulis and John Rusche

MEMBERS ABSENT: N/A

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Mallory Windsor, Seaholm High School

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES ABSENT: Hayden Watkinson, Seaholm High School

ADMINISTRATION: Lauren A. Wood, Director of Public Services
Carrie A. Laird, Parks and Recreation Manager
Connie J. Folk, Recreation Coordinator
Brooks Cowan, City Planner

GUESTS: Susan Collins, Dr. Anna Groebe and Jackie Ruppert

It was moved by Ross Kaplan, seconded by Dominick Pulis to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2020 regular meeting as amended.

ROLE CALL VOTE: **Yeas,** Heather Carmona, Pam Graham, Ross Kaplan, Jeffrey LaBelle, Ellie Noble, Dominick Pulis and John Rusche

Nays, None

AGENDA ITEM #1: Bike Parking Advisory Memo

Brooks Cowan stated on June 4, 2020, the multi-modal board reviewed recommendations for bike rack recommendations throughout Birmingham and installations would coincide with existing commercial and recreational neighborhood destinations in the current version of the Birmingham planned drafts that are underway.

Brooks stated twenty-four (24) new U-shaped bike installations were approved at thirteen (13) locations and ten (10) bike racks were approved for parks, which includes three (3) for Barnum Park, two (2) for St. James, three (3) for Poppleton Park and two (2) for Booth Park.

Dominick asked how the locations were determined, displacement, and quantities based on demand or based on historical surveys.

Brooks stated the city is going through a master plan process and received our draft plan in the fall. Brooks stated he went through and only picked existing commercial areas as well as parks and then juggled what was available with the existing budget for the bike racks.

Dominick stated the plan is a little bit more forward looking than reactive to any other inputs and is a good plan.

Pam Graham stated the bike racks are nice looking and have recently notice rental bikes in Oak Park and was curious has there been any consideration in Birmingham offering a bike rental program.

Brooks stated the multi-modal board has discussed a bike rental program that has been seen throughout Detroit and other cities and has gone back and forth with the City Commission on the idea. Brooks stated the bike rental program would be a separate program.

Brooks stated he would communicate with DPS on the ideal locations for final installation.

It was moved by John Rusche, seconded by Dominick Pulis to endorse the installation of 24 new bike racks at 13 existing neighborhood destinations as outlined in Phase 5 of Bicycle Parking Plan.

ROLE CALL VOTE:	Yeas,	Heather Carmona, Pam Graham, Ross Kaplan, Jeffrey LaBelle, Ellie Noble, Dominick Pulis and John Rusche
	Nays,	None

AGENDA ITEM #2: Annual Piano in the Park Art Installation

Brooks stated that in 2019, the Public Arts Board had recommended that the Piano for Shain Park be sent through the Parks and Recreation Board and had more approvals to be required such as lockable wheels and painting off-site. Eventually the program was approved.

Brooks stated instead of going through an application process through the Public Arts Board, Park and Recreation Board and City Commission every year, the Public Arts Board would like to recommend it's an annual program and just receive a box piano and plan an annual painting event.

Brooks stated the same conditions of approval as the first year for them to go through every year, it would be on wheels, the piano would be covered during events and the painting would be held off-site.

Brooks stated in regards to COVID-19 and social distancing going on, the Public Arts Board discussed concerns for the virus and want to follow all state, county and city guidelines. The Art Board is comfortable for the piano being available for the public, so long as the playgrounds are open as well and believe the availability for these items can coincide.

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Brooks stated the Public Arts Board also amenable to provide some type of sanitation station with the piano if the Parks and Recreation Board or City Commission would like to see that. The Public Arts Board is also open to foregoing 2020 and having the annual program begin in 2021.

John Rusche stated it was a big success and remembered a year ago when the Parks and Recreation Board was discussing it.

Ellie asked if the Public Arts Board is wanting to have more than one piano at a time.

Brooks stated that the Public Arts Board had initially discussed having more than one piano and evaluating if they could maybe spread a few more around town but for the annual program, but because of available manpower and everything going on in the city, the Public Arts Board likes Shain Park pavilion as the requested location for the annual program.

John Rusche asked if the city disinfects the playground equipment. The idea of having some kind of sanitation station, at least for your hands near there, would really be a good idea.

Carrie stated the City of Birmingham playgrounds are currently open and have sanitation stations at every playground. Carrie stated the playgrounds are sanitized weekly, but it is up to parents to make sure they're having their kids practice the social distancing.

Brooks stated if the City Commission approved the program but the state passed new COVID guidelines that those rules would kick in and he would immediately talk with the city manager and DPS on how everything is being addressed within the playgrounds, playgrounds are being shut down, then the piano would be taken away.

Lauren stated the piano won't be placed out until 2021 since the state still does not have a handle on COVID-19, issues, potential that are around the corner that we want to be mindful of and best practices are in place at our outdoor facilities. The downtown sanitizers are put up by DPS as well, so we're going to hold off as that was Mr. Valentine's wishes as well.

Lauren stated with all the stipulations in place would warrant the Parks and Recreation Board support for this program but it won't be placed out until 2021, and even next year, all of those precautions will be there.

It was moved by Dominick Pulis, seconded by Heather Carmona to endorse the annual Piano in the Park program under the pavilion at Shain Park no sooner than calendar year 2021 or the lifting of the State of Michigan restrictions, whichever would come later with the following conditions:

- 1.) The Public Arts Board find an acceptable box piano to be donated to the City for use;
- 2.) The piano be placed on industrial grade lockable wheels;
- 3.) The piano be painted off-site before being moved to Shain Park;
- 4.) The piano be covered during any musical event in Shain Park;
- 5.) The piano be placed in Shain Park between June 1st and December 31st of each year, with the condition that the City Commission may request the piano to be removed at any time for any reason.

ROLE CALL VOTE:

Yeas,	Heather Carmona, Pam Graham, Ross Kaplan, Jeffrey LaBelle, Ellie Noble, Dominick Pulis and John Rusche
Nays,	None

AGENDA ITEM #3: Laurie Tennent Art on Loan Installation:

Brooks stated the Public Arts Board received an art application for a piece of artwork on loan, and in discussing with the artist, originally it was for one piece on Maple and Peabody but in talking with her there was discussion on exhibiting throughout the city's parks and trails. The artist had done a display at Bell Isle Park before in the natural environment.

Brooks stated the Public Arts Board reviewed the application and has forward the application request to the Parks and Recreation Board and City Commission for approval.

Brooks stated the artist selected locations and also discussed how she has used ambient solar lighting to illuminate the artwork at night for a glowing effect. There was general consensus that the trails connecting Booth Park, Linden Park and Quarton Lake Park would be ideal for a number of such art pieces for one year.

Ross Kaplan asked about the security and or damages to the art, who would be responsible for that, potentially? And then also, there's one picture of the frame. Some of these are in a position where you would see front and back, depending which direction you're traveling and it seems the back obviously is not as attractive and a little bit flimsy.

Brooks stated that it's the responsibility of the artist for all damages and repairs to the artwork and and liability issues that might arise. The artist is also responsible for all funds related to the maintenance of the art.

Brooks stated that photos face one way and you have this back of the aluminum frame facing from the other direction and the post goes into the dirt and then when they're done, they pull it out, so there's no -- there's no concrete casts in the ground for it.

Dominick recommended that the artist have them double-sided, so perhaps full display on both sides and maximizing the full viewing opportunity. Brook stated he would accompany the artist so the artwork is install to ensure that it's facing the right way.

Brook stated there could be conditions for city commission, something about the lighting, to say if the lighting becomes a problem, it has to be removed upon Parks and Recreation Board or by City Commission.

It was moved by Ellie Noble, seconded by Pam Graham to recommend a temporary installation of art on loan from Laurie Tennent along Booth Trail, Linden Park Trail, and Quarton Lake Trail as indicated on the applicant's map for eight polychromatic images imposed on aluminum canvasses to be illuminated by ambient solar lights as indicated in the applicant's images for a period of one year.

ROLE CALL VOTE:	Yeas,	Heather Carmona, Pam Graham, Ross Kaplan, Jeffrey LaBelle, Ellie Noble, Dominick Pulis and John Rusche
	Nays,	None

AGENDA ITEM #4: Natural Areas Maintenance:

Carrie stated that the City of Birmingham did not perform the burn this year but the department wanted to continue with our natural areas maintenance so at the time I hired Cardno to get the city started minimally until I could receive a more thorough proposal from them for the city maintenance program for this year. It would be a continuation of the city's maintenance program that is set up in several parks, including Barnum, Quarton Lake, Martha Baldwin Park and the museum.

Carrie stated that Cardno is an approved vendor in Oakland County and the county has a program in place for these type of services. Oakland County offers municipalities to opt in on the program to the same pricing is given without having to go out to bid. In 2015 and 2018, Cardno was award projects and are happy with their performance.

It was moved by John Rusche, seconded by Ellie Noble to approve the project for Natural Areas Maintenance with Cardno for a total cost not to exceed \$18,400.00. Funds are available from the General Fund-Parks Other Contractual Services account #101-751.000-811.0000 for these services. Further, to recommend this project to be considered for approval by the City Commission.

ROLE CALL VOTE:	Yeas,	Heather Carmona, Pam Graham, Ross Kaplan, Jeffrey LaBelle, Ellie Noble, Dominick Pulis and John Rusche
	Nays,	None

COMMUNICATION/DISCUSSION ITEM #1: Resignation from Bill Wiebrecht, Parks and Recreation Board Member

Lauren provided to the Parks and Recreation Board an email from Bill Wiebrecht resigning his position from the Parks and Recreation Board.

Heather stated he has been on the Parks and Recreation Board since 1991.

Ellie stated that Bill was so knowledgeable about everything.

No Action was taken by the Parks and Recreation Board

COMMUNICATION/DISCUSSION ITEM #2: Golf Report- July 1, 2020

Lauren presented to the Parks and Recreation Board the July 1, 2020 golf report that was prepared by Jacky Brito.

Lauren stated the memberships, revenues and rounds have increased. Despite not having electric carts initially in the beginning, beverages, and food, not so shabby. Hats off to Jackie, Brian, and the crew at both courses. Lauren stated it's the workers and the staff and of course the golfers that make it what it is.

Dominick with respect to the golf courses and the numbers that we saw, certainly impressive rebounding in the month of June. That's a high demand and it's significant by the course conditions and the leadership of our golf staff, so I wanted to commend them for a job well done.

Pam asked if there been increased expenses needed to deal with increased sanitary measures.

Lauren stated that Jackie is putting together some reports and as soon as latest finance golf report is available it will be provide.

No Action was taken by the Parks and Recreation Board

COMMUNICATION/DISCUSSION ITEM #3: Parks and Recreation Bond Update (verbal)

Lauren stated that at the June 22nd City Commission meeting Commissioner Long raised the question where the City of Birmingham is with the Parks and Recreation Bond and let's revisit that.

Lauren stated the Parks and Recreation Bond will be discussed at the next City Commission meeting on Monday, July 13th.

Lauren stated that the Parks and Recreation Bond once approved by the City Commission the bond would be placed on the November ballot

No Action was taken by the Parks and Recreation Board

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Pam asked about the Parks and Recreation Rules. Lauren stated the department is still waiting for a response from the city attorney's office

No Action was taken by the Parks and Recreation Board

NEW BUSINESS:

Ellie asked on how to rent parks or getting a permit at parks in order to have exercise classes for the use of businesses in Birmingham to use COVID.

Connie stated since the businesses are not able to open up so a program was put in place which allows for businesses to schedule blocks of time for classes whether it be yoga or Pilates and the organizations are not being charged for the use of the facility and the organizations are providing the City of Birmingham as an additional insured.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

Jackie Rupert inquired about the skate park and how might scooters be allowed at the skate park.

Carrie stated that at the skate park is regularly reviewed by our insurance MML and it's been discouraged from MML. Carrie also stated scooter handlebars ruin material that are on the ramps. Carrie stated that skate park is not intended for scooters, unfortunately.

Jackie Rupert stated that her and Dr. Anna Groebe have visited three local skate parks, Troy, Sterling Heights and Auburn Hills that allow scooters and if there is an opportunity to look into this further and see if the insurance could be reevaluated.

Dominick asked if the skate park rules be reviewed at the same time the park rules and regulations are presented.

Dr. Anna Groebe stated there's some argument about damage, things to consider, such as non-motorized scooters only, maybe restricting the age, you know, under 18 are allowed to scooter, because those children are smaller and lighter, therefore doing less damage.

John asked if the department could find out what different material being used at the three local skate parks that were mentioned and to see if they've had the same concerns and how they solved them.

Lauren thanked Jackie Rupert and Dr. Anna Groebe for attending and sticking on this long. Lauren stated the skate park was built in the mid-2000's and it was primarily for safety precautions and the type of ramps, and not only damage, which is secondary, it was mainly the way it was designed and the crossover of the attendees and the users and things of that nature but warrants a comparison and a data check.

Lauren stated staff will research and we'll put it on a future agenda specific to the skate park.

Heather Carmona stated the next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday August 11, 2020 virtually at 6:30 pm.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:13 pm
Connie J. Folk, Recreation Coordinator