

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
PARK COMMISSION  
CITY OF UNIVERSITY CITY, ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MISSOURI  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2020**

**Agenda Item #1: Call Meeting to Order**

Park Commission President, Carl Hoagland called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

**Agenda Item #2: Roll Call**

Those in attendance included Commission President Carl Hoagland, Vice-President Kevin Taylor, Secretary Lisa Hummel, Commission Members Su Schmalz, Jay Redd, and Meg Ullman. Also, in attendance was City Council Liaison Steve McMahon and Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry Darren Dunkle, and guest Garrie Burr, a resident and former chair of Arts & Letters. Those not in attendance included Commission Member James Wilke.

**Agenda Item #3: Approval of the Agenda**

**Commission Member Schmalz motioned, and Commission Member Redd seconded to approve the Agenda. The motion was approved with a 4-0 vote.**

**Agenda Item #4: Approval of Minutes**

**Commission Member Redd motioned, and Commission Member Schmalz seconded to approve the minutes of November 19, 2019. The motion was approved with a 6-0 vote.**

**Agenda Item #5: Citizen Comments**

Former Arts & Letters Chair Garrie Burr wanted to give the commission a heads up on a proposed Public Arts project for the spring. Mr. Burr stated that the scope of the project would be photos of the history of the River Des Peres and that they would propose to place them where the photos were taken. They would propose that the photos be placed between mid to late April to the beginning of May. He further stated that a proposal would be more than likely coming to the next meeting in February.

**Agenda Item #6: Department Report**

Mr. Dunkle highlighted the following items:

- a) Audit Analysis – Staff continuing to work on the audit analysis and the development of a SWOT report.
- b) Maintenance Investment/Improvement Plan – Staff continuing to work on the development of a MIP.
- c) Capital Investment/Improvement Plan - Staff continuing to work on the development of a CIP.
- d) Refurbishment/Replacement Plan - Staff continuing to work on the development of a RRP.
- e) Fogerty Park – Asphalt trail portion of the project has been completed. Received an extension on the project as the splash sprayground equipment was on back order. Project is now back up and running with electrical work for the lights and splash pad are underway. Weather pending, work will begin on the splash pad. The project is now scheduled to be completed by the end of February.

- f) Lewis Park – Continued to work on stormwater issues. Currently placing a retaining wall on the north end of the park to slow down, direct and capture storm water runoff. Continue to explore other options to slow down and collect water coming off of Delmar.
- g) Greensfelder Park – Hosted a public engagement open house meeting on Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 to 6:30 pm at the Heman Park Community Center. Looking to schedule a second public engagement meeting in January.

Discussion took place as to if this was the right use or plan for the site and if the residents had reviewed or commented on the plan. Mr. Dunkle stated that prior to the development of the Concept Plan he had received phone calls and had some discussions with residents in the area who inquired about the future use and development of the park. In those discussions, Mr. Dunkle stated that the residents had stated that they didn't want athletic fields or highly active uses, but they would prefer a more passive use. Mr. Dunkle further stated that at the last Open House, the individuals who attended had positive comments about the design.

It was stated that the plan should have looked into connections with other parks and trails. Mr. Dunkle stated that the plan shows possible connections with a possible Centennial Greenway extension to the southwest and a possible development of a trail from the park to the northeast up to Fogerty Park and the school.

#### **Agenda Item #7: Council Report**

Mr. McMahon highlighted the following items:

- a) Hotels – Two hotels plans have been discussed within the City: first hotel has been identified as being placed at the current Harvard School location, with the second hotel being identified as being placed on the southeast corner of Delmar and 170.
- b) City Website – New website has been launched and is much easier to pull up on your phone.
- c) Economic Plan – Economic Development has interviewed consultants and will be moving forward with the development of a new plan.
- d) Comprehensive Plan – Planning Department is interviewing consultants and will be moving forward with the development of a new plan.

#### **Agenda Item #8: Unfinished Business**

- a) Park & Recreation Priority Planning

Mr. Dunkle gave a summary of staff's list of priorities and why staff had selected the projects they did. Mr. Dunkle stated that staff's priorities were primarily based on need over want, and that they looked at items that either 1) Was a liability or safety issue; 2) Didn't meet code/standards; and 3) Affected the use of the park or facility. In doing so, staff prioritized the needs, as well as placed specific projects by dates that associated with grants etc.

Discussion of the commission took place concerning having two separate plans (Commission and Departments). It was stated that the reason the commission had put a priority plan in place in the past was due to the fact that the City didn't have a Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry, but now we do, so why don't we accept the plan developed by staff. Further discussion took place that stated that since the commission had already come this far with a plan for this year that the commission look at both plans and merge them together.

**Commission Secretary Hummel made a motion, seconded by Commission Member Schmalz to merge the two documents together with some editing. The motion was approved with a 6-0 vote.**

#### **Agenda Item #9: New Business**

- a) Dog Park Surfacing – Mr. Dunkle stated that as part of the overall audit analysis of the parks system it had come to his attention that the surfacing at the Dog Park has become both a user and maintenance issue.

He stated that due to the number of dogs and humans who utilized the dog park, the turf grass surfacing has been beaten down to dirt/mud and has required staff to provide straw to place over the dirt/mud so that it isn't a mudding mess. He went on to say that it had been past practice to overseed the dog park surface areas twice a year (spring/fall) in an attempt to establish a good surface. Through staff's analysis they have found that this method is both time and cost extensive and doesn't provide the end results desired. As such, staff had explored various surfacing options and that the placement of wood chips would provide the desired end results.

The question was asked if residents or users had been debriefed on this idea and what was their reaction. It was stated by various commission members that no matter what type of surface that was placed or what type of maintenance that was performed, someone would disagree. It was further stated that the City didn't ask to take over the Dog Park, but rather was asked to take it over, and as such the City should maintain the Dog Park in a manner in which they feel is best.

**Commission Member Schmalz motioned, and Commission Member Redd seconded to support staff in the placement of wood chips within the Dog Park. The motion was approved with a 6-0 vote.**

- b) Solar Panel Use – Commission Member Schmalz asked about the possibility of looking into the use of solar panels within the City. It was stated that the Green Practices Commission had discussed the idea in the past.
- c) Memorial Day Run - Commission Member Schmalz stated that the participation in the run has been reduced and something needs to be done to get more participation. She further stated that more volunteers were needed. It was stated that the Memorial Day run wasn't a program or event of the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department and that it was run by the Friends of the Library. As such, it wasn't under the direction of the Parks Commission.
- d) Park Reports – Commission Secretary Hummel turned in her Park Reports.

#### **Agenda Item #10: Adjournment**

**Commission Secretary Hummel made a motion at 8:26 pm, seconded by Commission Member Schmalz to adjourn. The motion was approved with a 6-0 vote.**

**MINUTES SUBJECT TO PARKS COMMISSION APPROVAL.**