

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PARK COMMISSION
CITY OF UNIVERSITY CITY, ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MISSOURI
TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2023**

Agenda Item A: Call Meeting to Order

Park Commission President, James Wilke called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

Agenda Item B: Roll Call

Those in attendance included Commission President James Wilke, Commission Members Su Schmalz, Amy Gascon, Lisa Hummel, Carl Hoagland, and Patrick Fox. Also, in attendance was Council Liaison Steve McMahon, and Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry Darren Dunkle, Deputy Director of Parks Maintenance Todd Strubhart.

Agenda Item C: Approval of the Agenda

Commission Member Hoagland motioned, and Commission Member Fox seconded to approve the agenda. The motion was approved.

Agenda Item D: Approval of the Minutes

Commission Member Hoagland motioned, and Commission Member Fox seconded to approve the April 18, 2023 minutes. The motion was approved.

Agenda Item E: Citizen Comments

- 1.) Mr. Philip Eastin of 416 Alta Dena stated that he would like to see that they stay on target to install historic sign in Pershing Avenue right-of-way.

Agenda Item F: Department Report

Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry, Darren Dunkle highlighted the following from the submitted Parks Monthly Report:

- 1) Flynn Park Tennis Courts Improvements - Mr. Dunkle reported that City Council approved a bid on May 8, 2023. Currently collaborating with the contractor on the scheduling of work.
- 2) Centennial Commons/Heman Pool Electrical Work – Mr. Dunkle reported that Council approved the electrical work needed for Centennial Commons and the Heman Park Pool House. Work is anticipated to be completed by 5.19.23. This work was for the repair and replacement of wiring and panel within the buildings.
- 3) Pool Lighting Work – Mr. Dunkle reported that Council approved the pool lighting work needed for the Heman Park Pool on 5.8.23. This work is for the repair and replacement of wiring and lighting within the pool.
- 4) Fencing Work – Mr. Dunkle reported that Council approved the fencing work needed for the Heman Park Pool on 5.8.23. This work is for the repair and replacement of fencing at the pool.
- 5) Jack Field - Mr. Dunkle reported that staff continued to work on the opinion of probable costs and scopes of work for Jack Buck Field. This would be for the repair and restoration of the field from the flood.

- 6) FEMA/Parks - Mr. Dunkle reported that staff continued to work with FEMA on the scope of work etc. for the restoration of Parks. FEMA recently approved the scope of work and funding in the amount of \$193,796.51 for the restoration of work to be done at the Dog Park, Jack Buck Field, and baseball fields #1, 2, and 6, and \$20,924.58 for work on the memorial fountain and mona trail.
- 7) FEMA/Centennial Commons - Mr. Dunkle reported that staff continued to work with FEMA on the scope of work etc. for the restoration of Centennial Commons. He stated that on our last phone call, FEMA stated it could be approximately two more months until we could possibly be approved to move forward.
- 8) Heman Park Basketball Courts - Mr. Dunkle reported that staff met with representatives of the non-profit group on the possible reconstruction or construction of courts at Heman Park. Received a "Draft" of a proposed contract and the City is currently reviewing. We are still waiting to receive the proposed plan design etc.
- 9) Metcalfe Park - Mr. Dunkle reported that staff continued to collaborate with representatives of the Parkview Gardens Association regarding funding of improvements (pickleball courts, trail, site amenities, etc.).
- 10) Centennial Commons - Mr. Dunkle reported that staff continued to work towards expanding the hours of Centennial Commons. It is anticipated that we will be able to expand to Sunday hours on or around 6.1.23.

Agenda Item G: Council Report

Council Liaison Steve McMahon made the following report:

- 1) Quick Trip – Located on Olive and North & South is now open.
- 2) Crescent Plumbing – Located between Vernon and Olive on Kingsland has begun construction.
- 3) MSD – Made a presentation at the last City Council meeting in which they eluded that they have moved on from the storage tanks to a tunnel that in part would run through Heman Park. They further stated that they would provide limited clean up of debris within the River Des Peres at bridges and culverts.
- 4) City Taxes – Stated that the City was a Pool City for most taxes collected within University City, however, the City has a point-of-sale designation for the Parks/Stormwater Tax.

Agenda Item H: Commission Members Park Inspection Report

- 1) Ruth Park Woods (Lisa Hummel) – Reported looks good; with the exception of the portion of the vehicle mentioned at the March meeting still remains.
- 2) Rabe Park (Lisa Hummel) – Reported looks good.
- 3) Millar Park (Lisa Hummel) – Reported on the erosion along the trail and that a piece of the concrete had broken off; both water fountains and hand dryer not operational, no soap available.
- 4) Lewis Park (Amy Gascon) – Reported tree limbs are still down near steps; two of the fountains were working; and rock needs to be placed along the steps to help with erosion.
- 5) Dog Park (Patrick Fox) – **Reported that there was a limb down that had been removed and that attention would need to be made at the water feature.**
- 6) Ruth Park Golf Course (Su Schmalz) – Reported that the retaining wall at the driving range had been removed do to issues, and that the area around the Johnny on the Spot looked nice. Commission Member Hummel shared that her husband stated that the course was in the best shape that he had seen.
- 7) Kaufman Park (Su Schmalz) – Reported that the water fountain near the playgrounds was not working properly.
- 8) Heman Park (James Wilke) – Reported that the parking lot wood barriers were falling apart.
- 9) Ackert Park (James Wilke) – Reported that there was damage done to the concrete by skateboarders and that there was a piece of broken concrete near the bottom of the ramp.
- 10) Flynn Park (Carl Hoagland) – Reported that the playground surfacing under the swings were getting worn down.

Agenda Item I: Unfinished Business

- 1) UCity 100th Birthday – Commission President Wilke stated that there would be a Park rededication ceremony to name Kingsland Park to Shelley Welsch Park. He stated that the celebration would take place on Saturday, May 20, 2023 at 11:00 am.
- 2) Monument, Memorials and Donation Policy – The Commission discussed the proposed Policy submitted by staff and made the following amendments:
 - a) Commission Member Hummel motioned, and Commission Member Fox seconded to amend page 8-#10 to use the same language as #2. The motion was approved.
 - b) Commission Member Fox motioned, and Commission Member Gascon seconded to amend page 2 - #3 to remove the last sentence. The motion was approved.
 - c) Commission Member Fox motioned, and Commission Member Hummel seconded to amend page 4&5 to add a title for section 1-8. The motion was approved.
 - d) Commission Member Fox motioned, and Commission Member Gascon seconded to amend page 2- #4 to add initial costs. The motion was approved.
 - e) Commission Member Fox motioned, and Commission Member Hummel seconded to amend page 5 between #6 & #7 to use language from #4 from page 2 and to remove Park Commisison. The motion was approved.
 - f) Commission Member Hoagland motioned, and Commission Member Fox seconded to amend page 8-#10 to change shall to may. The motion was approved.
 - g) Commission Member Hummel motioned, and Commission Member Gascon seconded to amend page 7 to remove #1. The motion was approved.
 - h) Commission Member Fox motioned, and Commission Member Hummel seconded to amend page 7 to remove #2. The motion was approved.
 - i) Commission Member Hummel motioned, and Commission Member Hoagland seconded to amend page 7 to remove #3. The motion was approved.

Commission Member Hummel motioned, and Commission Member Fox seconded to support the Policy as amended. The motion was approved.

Agenda Item J: New Business

- 1) Ruth Park Driving Range Update – Per the request of a few Commission Members, Mr. Dunkle gave the following update:
 - a) In August of 2007, the City applied for and was awarded a Municipal Parks Grant in the amount of \$255,000.00 for the initial development of the driving range. The City of Clayton participated by donating \$30,000.00 towards the project and as part of the deal receives resident rates for their residents to play golf. **Further discussion took place regarding the status of the City of Clayton receiving resident rates and if the status could be amended or modified to reflect the rising cost of maintenance to the golf course.**
 - b) In March of 2016, the City hired a contractor to repair erosion issues as well as to build a berm in the amount of \$346,753.99.
 - c) In the Fall of 2022, the City hired a contractor to once again repair erosion issues in the amount of \$233,906.40. Mr. Dunkle stated that this was another band-aid just to keep the driving range open for the spring and summer of 2023, however, more work would be required to fix all of the problems associated with the poor design and initial construction of the driving range. He further stated that staff has been in discussions with several contractors/consultants to produce workable solutions and to develop an estimation of probable costs which we understand could be over \$1m.

Discussion by the Commission took place regarding the pros and cons of sinking more money into the driving range and asked if would be cheaper to repay the grant than to spend more money to repair the driving range. Further discussion took place regarding the possibility of applying for another Municipal Parks Grant to enhance the driving range.

Agenda Item K: Commission Comments

Commission Member Schmalz – Stated that we need to have the availability to have soccer camps at Centennial Commons.

Commission Member Fox – Stated that the Commission should “Share good news.”

Commission President Wilke – Stated that he would like to see indoor soccer return to Centennial Commons by November of 2023.

Commission Member Hoagland – Stated that he had spoken to the City Attorney regarding the Parks Policies/Procedures and Ordinance status.

Agenda Item L: Adjournment

Commission Member Hoagland motioned, and Commission Member Hummel seconded at 8:22 pm to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved.