

SMYRNA PARKS AND RECREATION PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2020

The monthly Smyrna Parks and Recreation Parks Advisory Board Meeting was held September 15, 2020 at Sharp Springs Natural Area, Smyrna, Tennessee. Chairman Mark Hardy called the meeting to order at 5:01pm.

PRESENT Twelve people were present: Jerry Bradley; Mark Hardy; Mayor Mary Esther Reed; Councilmember H.G. Cole; Michael Potts; Holly Phillips; Mike Moss, Director; Courtney Morgan and Kay Arnold, staff; Brian Hercules, Town Manager; Rex Gaither, Assistant Town Manager; Charles King, Engineer

ABSENT Ernie Felts, Scott Poston, Carlos Rawls, Sr., Tommy Williams, Jimmy Stitt

SUMMARY Prayer: Rex Gaither

Citizen's Comments: None

Review and Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings: Mark moved to approve August's minutes; Holly seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

Old Business: Concerning Discussion of revised Playground Design at Old Rock School / J.J. McWilliams Park, Mike began the discussion by stating that Christina Manus has been working closely with a representative from Miracle Recreation on designing a new playground for Old Rock School Park. Mike distributed concept drawings of the design for the board members to review. They have been working together to design a library-themed playground with the intention of it becoming a destination playground. Overall, the playground replacement project includes slides, platform, play panels, climbers, poured-in-place rubber surface, and a perimeter sidewalk. The cost for the playground will be approximately \$100,000. Mike asked the board members for their thoughts or input about the project, or if they like it. He still wants to obtain the library staff's approval too. Councilman Cole asked what will happen to the existing playground equipment at the park. Mike replied that we will salvage what we can; he plans to move the existing swings to Sharp Springs. Miracle Recreation has the Sourcewell contract and they have a great installer.

New Business: Concerning LPRF/LWCF/RTP Grant Application Update, Mike explained that he and Kay attended a Zoom meeting recently for Tennessee Department of Environment and

Conservation's 2020 Public Recreation Grant Virtual Application Workshop. They are awarding up to \$500,000 matching grants, available to eligible local government entities for the acquisition or development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities, and they allow up to three years to complete the project. They have stringent guidelines that must be followed to apply for the grant application process. One of the guidelines is that an agency's Master Plan must have been updated in the past 5 years. Smyrna's current Parks Master Plan goes through 2020 but was completed in 2006. Fortunately, this year they are allowing agencies to submit a grant pre-application by October 8th, allowing additional time for agencies that need to update their Master Plan, and can then re-submit a grant pre-application by August 3, 2021. Mike has a few projects in mind to submit for grant funding but has not made a final decision yet.

Mayor Reed stated that the Parks Master Plan is a particularly useful document and is referenced often, especially during budget planning. She does not want to short-cut the process in updating the plan because it is used for long-term planning. Brian feels the existing Parks Master Plan can be updated in order to apply for the grant by August. Afterwards we will spend sufficient time on a proper update. Councilman Cole added that we will need to address growth in the west side of town, along with the growth related to the widening of Jefferson Pike.

Mayor Reed asked about the rehabilitation of the restroom building at Jefferson Springs Rec Area that will need to be completed prior to Town of Smyrna managing the park area. Brian stated that the Town cannot take on management of the area until sewer access is available there. Jefferson Springs Rec Area would be a great place to offer our Watercraft Rental Operation.

Reports of Officers, Committees, or Staff: Mike informed the board that the Grand Opening of Zama Park takes place tomorrow. He explained the vision of the park came from Brian after returning from a sister-city visit to Zama, Japan. Mike reviewed upcoming events listed on the agenda. He added that SOAC staff is out and about in the community offering programs.

Director's Report: Mike reviewed his monthly report. Mike informed the board that SOAC launched their new program, Watercraft Rentals, recently. We have canoe, kayaks, and paddleboards available for rent on daily, weekly, or weekend basis. SOAC recently held a two-night Movie Night event with 40 participants on Friday night and 50 participants on Saturday night. The popular home school program has started back at SOAC. Pickleball games are being held at Hilltop Park one night per week on three courts. The department is working on a modified Halloween event to be held at Sharp Springs. Currently we are talking about hayrides, a couple of food trucks, and a few limited activities. More to come. Staff recently submitted two TRPA Award applications: Cedar Stone Community Park as New Facility category and Depot Canopy as Renovated Facility category. The award recipients will be announced during TRPA Virtual Conference in November. Staff also submitted two GNRC Award applications recently for Cedar Stone Community Park and Depot Canopy.

Council Report: Mayor Reed reviewed highlights from the latest meeting.

Afterwards Brian stated that he has received phone calls from citizens regarding the lack of wearing face coverings by workers at local ballpark concession stands. Currently the county-wide face covering wearing mandate is still in place although Brian feels it may not be renewed at the end of the month. Brian and Mayor Reed agreed that concession workers should wear

face coverings while the mandate is in place. There was quite a bit of discussion of the necessity of face coverings while working ball games in town parks and issues that league officials must handle with disgruntled parents and others. Finally, Mike stated that the department will send a special request to the leagues and ask that it be posted in the concession stands.

Other: None

Meeting adjourned at 5:53 pm.