



MINUTES OF THE PARKS COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, JULY 10, 2019, 5:30 PM

CITY HALL, ROOM 207

NOTE THE TIME CHANGE OF THIS MEETING

A. ROLL CALL.

Ald. Chris Wery, Ald. Brian Johnson, Ald. Jesse Brunette.

Excused: Ald. Andy Nicholson

Others Present: Ald. Kathy Lefebvre, Ald. Mark Steuer, Dan Ditscheit, James Andersen

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.

Moved by Ald. Jesse Brunette, seconded by Ald. Brian Johnson to approve. Motion carried.

Yes- Chris Wery, Jesse Brunette, Brian Johnson, No- None, Abstain- None

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

Moved by Ald. Jesse Brunette, seconded by Ald. Brian Johnson to approve. Motion carried.

Yes- Chris Wery, Jesse Brunette, Brian Johnson, No- None, Abstain- None

D. REGULAR BUSINESS.

I. Consideration with possible action on the request by Ald. Lefebvre that as the Park Department has no policy on notification of residence/neighbors of major additions or alterations that would directly affect them, I'm therefore asking for a policy or ordinance be put in place.

Moved by Ald. Jesse Brunette, seconded by Ald. Brian Johnson to refer to staff to adopt and implement a policy to notify residents/neighbors of major additions or alterations to the parks. Motion carried.

Yes- Chris Wery, Jesse Brunette, Brian Johnson, No- None, Abstain- None

2. Consideration with possible action on the request by Ald. Stevens to look at the Baird Creek Parkway along Basten Street for possible upgrades to this park area.

Moved by Ald. Brian Johnson, seconded by Ald. Jesse Brunette to refer to staff. Motion carried.
Yes- Chris Wery, Jesse Brunette, Brian Johnson, No- None, Abstain- None

E. INFORMATIONAL.

1. Director's Report on updates and recent activities of the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department.

Moved by Ald. Brian Johnson, seconded by Ald. Jesse Brunette to receive and place on file. Motion carried.

Yes- Chris Wery, Jesse Brunette, Brian Johnson, No- None, Abstain- None

2. The next Park Committee is scheduled for August 14, 2019.

F. ADJOURNMENT.

Moved by Ald. Brian Johnson, seconded by Ald. Jesse Brunette to adjourn. Motion carried.

Yes- Chris Wery, Jesse Brunette, Brian Johnson, No- None, Abstain- None

VERBATIM MINUTES

- Good to go? We are good to go.

- Okay, awesome. All right, the Parks Committee will come to order, and we'll note that Alderman Johnson's present Alderman Brunette, Alderman Wery, and Alderman Nicholson's excused. Okay and I have an approval of the agenda.

- Approved.

- Second.

- Motion carried. Alderman Burnet, second by Alderman Johnson. Any changes, those in favor?

- Aye.
- Aye.
- Opposed, motion carried. See approval of the minutes.
- Move to approve.
- Second.
- Motion by Alderman Burnet, second by Alderman Johnson. Changes, those in favor?
- Aye.
- Aye. Opposed, motion carried. Regular business, number one, consideration of possible action on the request by Alder Lefebvre that is the Park Department has no policy on notification of residents, neighbors of major additions or alterations that would directly affect them, and therefore asking for a policy ordinance to be put in place. Well, Director do you wanna...
- Yeah, I guess I don't know if you wanted to start the conversation, to kinda
- Did you wanna go first?
- give a little background? Otherwise, I'll just kinda start reviewing the policies.
- Alderman Lefebvre.
- [Kathy] Yeah, I just think it's good policy to have, 'cause sometimes the Parks do some big, you know, modifications, additions, anything like that, and the neighbors should know, so that they can be involved, maybe. Maybe with some of the plans, helping maybe you know, some input. It's just, it's for all parks, I believe all parks in this city, and it's also for public relations, I think too. That was something...
- You got a copy?
- Yeah.
- Everybody got a copy then?
- [Kathy] Yeah, yeah. Yeah, we said talkin' about it. The only thing I wanted to add was, the second point, is to add that all through the district. I thought that would be good too, because there might not be a neighborhood association in that district, so...
- Where did you want to add that?
- [Kathy] Um, let's see. In the situation Park staff will reach out to either the neighborhood association and Alder of the district. Well maybe it should be after or and all effective

- How about...
- [Kathy] Wherever you think it would sound better.
- Park staff will reach out to the Alderperson of the district and, yeah, association.
- Okay, and them association. Wherever you wanna put it in there.
- Any questions for Alderman Lefebvre?
- Okay, what would be considered a major addition or alteration? How would you define that?
- [Kathy] Well it would have to be something that would impact the neighborhood, something... something with a lot of noise, noisy? You know, when it's a quieter area, maybe? All of a sudden you've got something that's gonna contribute a lot of noise that has never been there. Well I'm not saying Bay Beach, 'cause Bay Beach has got noise anyway. You know, you always do have some with that, but some of the other parks are smaller, quieter, and we might put something in, maybe, that would...
- Sure. Let me kinda go over some of these bullet points, just to give a little bit of background here. Currently, the City Parks Department does not do anything on the City webpage, as far as notifying the public of what projects are even funded, so really, if somebody wants that all encompassing list, they either need to contact the Parks Department directly or attend the budget meetings or the capital improvement bond request meetings. So what we'll do is, we'll go on the city webpage. We'll put together a section on the Park home page, and we'll list all of the approved projects, and we'll kind of give a brief description of each one, of what that project consists of, and then, as part of that, we'll also provide a little comments section, where they can either email comments, or they will give them a phone number where they can address questions or comments directly with staff. So we'll put that on the city website, so that'll be open for any resident to have access to that whenever they want. In addition, what we'll do, which is not in the policy, but to kick that off, we'll probably bring this up at one of the Neighborhood Leadership Council meetings, and kinda let them know that we're putting this online, so that they can then get the word out to the public that this is probably the best way. If they wanna know what projects are coming up, they can go into the City website and find that information. Then, as far as the second bullet point goes, if additional meetings are required for public input, that will be to my discretion or the Park Director's discretion to facilitate those meetings and determining who the appropriate individuals are to invite to those meetings. We originally looked at, you know, putting something in place where it was kinda more concrete and substantial, but you know in reality, you would probably, on occasions, wanna have public input meetings that maybe we're not affecting the use of park, we're just changing things. So it's really hard to write that in such a way that encompasses every situation and who you would contact for those situations. So what this does is it would leave it up to the Park Director's discretion to set those meetings, and we would also invite, you know, possibly user groups to those meetings, which that wasn't included in here.
- But you know...
- Oh sure.

- It's like the baseball groups were doing things with the Little League fields or Pickle Ball groups. You know, one example of something that we would have a public meeting for that wouldn't be included in this policy but we'd have the meeting anyway would be like the Astor Shelter. When we replaced the shelter, we didn't change the usage of the park. When you replace an old shelter with a new shelter, so we still wanted public input in that project, because it was an important project.

- [Kathy] Because they use that, don't they?

- Yeah.

- Yeah they use that so much.

- So we went through the public input process, and you know, that was really helpful to help guide the design,

- Mm-hm.

- and we ended up with a shelter that the neighborhood really wanted. Another you know, potential situation would be like Colburn Pool. We replaced the pool with a pool, so we still wanted the public input, and so we held those public meetings. But no, other things that will come up is, you know, if we're adding a parking lot right next to somebody's house. Obviously we would contact those owners and you know, have a discussion with them. You know, I guess I can't tell you every situation when it would occur, but there's times when it makes sense, and there's times when it doesn't make sense, so that's how we would deal with the second bullet change.

- And maybe if you don't need the whole neighborhood, but maybe you could have a little discussion with the Alder.

- Correct.

- Just so you know, he kinda knows what's goin' on.

- Are there objections or questions?

- [Kathy] You know, in case somebody brought something up to the Alder, and they say, oh yes, I know.

- Alderman Johnson?

- This just seems like good practice, Dan. I mean, is this something we actually have to take action on, and I mean...

- Yeah, and it's something we've been doing for years. We will continue to do it. This is just putting it on paper, as far as what the policy would be for it.

- So where does this get housed? I mean, it's not like an ordinance, right? I mean, I've heard a lot about like policies that we use but where are those?

- We have written policies for the Parks Department, and that gets updated, I know, every so often, and when there's changes to 'em, we do bring the policies forward to the Park Committee for approval. The last policy that we brought forward was one for the website, advertising fundraising on the City website, so we did the same thing. We have a booklet in our office where we keep a master list of all of these policies that have been implemented, and as they change, we modify 'em, and bring the changes back to the Park Committee for reconsideration.
- So, do you actually need us to authorize a policy, or is that something you can just do?
- It's something that we can just do. I don't think it's required to formally have the Park Committee adopt the policy, and maybe they do.
- I mean, it's like any other requirement for you, there's policies and procedures manuals, right?
- Correct.
- This is how we do things?
- Mm-hm, that's basically what this is. I mean, it's being brought forward today, because of the request to actually create a policy and actually bring it to a discussion.
- [Kathy] It's actually in place so that if somebody wanted to go check. They can go to any department and can say, you know, we want to know certain things. What kind of policy you got for it, and you would maybe tell 'em this is the policy. You can go online and probably get it, right?
- Yeah, and so it'd be up to you whether or not you just wanna refer this to staff to implement it, or if you actually wanna formally adopt and approve the policy, which you could do.
- There's not a actual process in place that requires us to approve the policies, right?
- No.
- In which case then, I would just I mean, receive and place on file, with the understanding that you're gonna adopt this, and put it in your policy and procedures manual, right?
- That would be adequate.
- Does that satisfy you?
- Yeah. As long as it's a policy that they have in the department, yeah.
- Alderman Brunette?
- My only fear with that is that if the motion is receive and place on file, and we look at the minutes years from now, we won't know what this discussion...
- Oh, what happened?

- What was this discussion, so receive and place on file makes it seem like we didn't...
- Maybe just direct them.
- Hold on Alderman Lefebvre.
- Sure, that's right, yeah.
- Alderman Burnett?
- What's that.
- You had the floor.
- Yeah, so if I could, we didn't second the motion with I think on motion...
- Well let's see. Anybody else here for the second? We don't really need an open floor, so sure. Anything else you wanted to add before we get into?
- [Kathy] No, just gonna say you could just say direct the department to, and that would be in the minutes, right, to go ahead with this policy?
- Well, Alderman Brunette?
- I'm freezing, I don't know what to say. I'm nervous.
- We're lookin' at ya; cameras are on ya.
- Yeah, I'd like to make a motion to refer this to staff in order to make it an official policy and procedure of the department.
- Okay, motion by Alderman Brunette to refer staff to approve and implement, or just to make an official policy, I guess.
- Refer to staff to... Dan, did you get that?
- Yes.
- Make it an official policy and procedure in your department.
- Is there a second to that?
- Second.
- Second by Alderman Johnson.
- Okay.

- Discussion?
- Those in favor?
- Aye.
- Aye.
- Opposed? Motion carried.
- Yeah, it's all good.
- Thank you.
- [Kathy] Appreciate it.
- Number two, consideration of possible action on the request by Alderman Stevens to look at the Baird Creek Parkway along Basten Street for possible upgrades to this Park Area.
- I spoke to Alderman Stevens, and he wasn't about to attend the meeting, but really what it comes down to is, there's a map, that was included in your agenda packet, of the area that's in question, so this is just east of Danz Avenue, east of Danz School. There's a little green way there where for years we've had a small soccer field there. There is a storm water wetland that's there. There's also a tot playground structure. It's not a full playground structure; it's only a tot one. And then the Baird Creek Multi-use Trail cuts through the property where the old railroad tracks used to be, and this is a good access point for the trail. So he has spoken to a few residents in the area, and they would like to refer this to staff to basically just take a look at what other options are out there for redevelopment of this site, either adding features or updating the playground or you know, better trail access, so what he's looking for is just to refer to staff that he'd bring it back for recommendation.
- Questions?
- Move to refer to staff.
- Second.
- Motion by Alderman Johnson, second by Alderman Brunette to refer to staff. Discussion, those in favor?
- Aye.
- Aye.
- Opposed? Motion carried. Informational Director's Report on updates and recent activities.
- Just give me a moment here. Just a couple of things I wanna touch bases on. Park crews, I believe, use this time of year preparing for and cleaning up for all of the various activities and events, such as

Kids Day, the Fourth of July, Track and Field Day, Kite Fest. This time of year is really busy with special activities, so that's takin' up a lot of our time. Emerald ash borer treatments are ongoing with the Forestry Department. We're currently looking at treating 2,400 ash trees this year, and we're well on our way to reaching our goal. The Big Wheel, that opened to the public on July 4th, huge success. The Friends of the Bay Beach Amusement Park, they did have a fund raiser on July 2nd, so it was a little soft opening, and all the proceeds from that fundraiser went directly to the Friends of the Bay Beach for future development. Great success, so within the first four days of operation, we had over 16,000 rides given on the ferris wheel, so that's been very popular.

- How many times you been on it?

- I've only been on once, believe it or not, but it's a nice ride.

- Stevens? I bet my kids would go on it.

- I was waitin' for that one to come out there to go on it.

- Yeah.

- The Summer Playground Program is well on its way, so today was Games Day, and I'm sure that that went off pretty well. I haven't had a chance to touch base with James on it, but we do have a city-wide talent show that'll be held on July 23rd, and that's an annual event through the Summer Playground Program. We do have a adult Pickle Ball Tournament that will be at Edison Park on Saturday, July 20th. This tournament is extremely popular, and we usually have participants from four different state that's attended. The Karnival and Parade will be held on August 6th. FIT Fest will take place on July 13th in conjunction with the Open Streets event downtown. Glow Zumba event will be held on Thursday, August 1st at Leicht Park, from 3:30 to 10:00. Just as we did in the past, we will hand out glow bracelets and necklaces to all the participants, and it's an interesting event, so it's kinda fun, with all the glow sticks out there. Sixth annual Lego event will take place at the Bay Beach Pavilion on July 27th and 28th. The next two free pool days are scheduled for July 22nd and August 5th, and over at the Wildlife Sanctuary, the summer camps are really full for the season. There's only a few camps that have availability, but in addition to the summer camps, there's also a lot of different program opportunities out there, such as Friday Fun Days, Nature Art on July 12th, fishing on July 19th, and then a birding event on July 26th, so there's a lot of events going on out at the Sanctuary too. So Summer is our busiest time of year, and there's never a shortage of things to do in our department, so that ends my Director's Report.

- I just wanted to mention, well go ahead, Alder.

- Thank you Dan. Just two questions regarding Kiddie Karnival. One, and I'm part of the Directors Department, so I know it's not an agenda item, but when I was a kid, it used to be later in summer. Is there a reason why it's like early August now?

- I don't the history of that. I can look it up and get back to you. Are you familiar with that, James?

- It's really, probably only a week prior. It used to be the last week.

- It used to be like a send off of the...

- It used to be the last week of the Playground Program, but what happened is, the big part of the Kiddie Karnival actually is, all the funds that are raised actually go back to the Parks for their end of the season picnics, and all the money that we get from the five cent tickets we sell goes right back into the park, so it actually was a very, not to get too into it here, but our accounting and trying to get all that money settled and then redistributed to all the parks, and then them to purchase all the things they need for...
- It makes sense.
- We moved it up one week essentially.
- Yeah.
- So then they had time to do all that stuff and make it a good experience for all the kids.
- It makes sense. And then the other thing's, whenever, was it the previous mayor, moved it to where it is currently. When I was a kid it was at Joannes, and I always like it at Joannes. It seemed like less congestion of traffic and safer going. Have we had any discussion's about possibly relocating it?
- It was moved out of Joannes more because of the bullfrogs were there, and we ran into some conflict with scheduling. If they made it into the playoffs, then it affected the Kiddie Karnival, so that's the reason it was moved to Leicht Park. We can explore possibly moving it back.
- I'll put a agenda item. I just thought it was a good idea to consider moving it.
- Our biggest concern with moving it back is the damage that it does to the turf, depending on the weather that you have that day. If it's a wet day, and you get all those people in the stadium there, in the outfield, it can damage the outfield turf, so I would have a concern with moving it back there, but it's something that we can definitely look into a little bit more.
- The other consideration too is, not that we can't look into it, but the other consideration is we have an irrigation system at Joannes now, and the way we currently do Kiddie Karnival is all those fence posts get... There's 36 booths. Each have at least four fence posts that get pounded into the ground, and you know, the irrigation system, just we can't do it over there currently how we-- And we can look into different way to do it. We actually had the Kiddie Karnival at Bay Beach, at the softball field at Bay Beach before. We've tried the Kiddie Karnival different places. Honestly, we've gotten the most success overall, of getting the number of people there at Leicht Park, so, I mean, that's part of it.
- That's fine. No one's crying for a change. I just always liked it at Joannes.
- No, I'm always willing to. I like looking at different options though, so I don't mind change.
- Do you have another item?
- The agenda said you had two.
- No, both turned out already.

- I just wanted to compliment the Forestry staff. They've always been incredibly responsive. We had a tree go down in Colburn, in somebody's back yard, and they were there the same day. Tell 'em, just compliments to them. They're always like Johnny-on-the-spot.
- We will pass that information on.
- I spend a lot of time at Edison for Babe Ruth Baseball now, and I can tell you that definitely those pickle ball courts are always full. They're always busy.
- It's true.
- Anything else? All right. Motion to receive and place on file.
- Second.
- Motion by Alderman Johnson, seconded by Alderman Brunette. Those in favor.
- Aye.
- Aye.
- Opposed, motion carried. Tentatively August 14th, next agenda we'll approach that one when it comes up. Motion to adjourn?
- Vote.
- Second Johnson. Brunette, those in favor?
- Aye.
- Aye.
- Opposed? Motion carried.
- Thanks kids.
- Thank you.
- Don't you dare try to pull that stunt.