



## PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE February 5, 2003 MEETING MINUTES

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the Parks and Recreation Committee of the City of Centerville held the regularly scheduled meeting on February 5, 2003, at City Hall, 1880 Main Street.

**Present:** Chairperson Karla DeVine  
Committee Member Wayne LeBlanc  
Committee Member Kathy Peil  
Committee Member Brian Walter  
Committee Member Tedd Peterson  
Committee member Suzanne Seeley

**Absent:** None

**Council:** Council Member Tom Lee

**Staff:** Kim Stephan

Approved

### I. ROLL CALL

Chairperson DeVine called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

### II. SET AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

### III. PUBLIC HEARING(S)

**Royal Meadows Park Public Input Meeting** Chairperson DeVine opened the meeting by explaining to the residents who were present the reason the committee invited them to attend was to gather input into what has been happening at Royal Meadows Park. Chairperson DeVine stated the last couple of years there has been a lot of vandalism at this park and one idea the committee had was to take the play structure out of the park and expand the current basketball area to a full size court. The reasoning behind this was that it appeared the basketball area was the one part of the park that was actually being used and cared for. Resident Thierry Chevallier, 1982 South Robin Lane, said the current problems are actually with the basketball court. He feels there is one family in the area that is responsible for all the vandalism. He reported the neighborhood has problems all the time with teenagers hanging out at the park smoking, drinking and starting trouble. The neighborhood kids are not of the age to play basketball and most of the kids who are using the court are not from the neighborhood. The feeling of the residents is that to remove the play structure would be punishing all the small children that use the equipment everyday.

The residents presented a petition opposing the idea of removing the play structure. The petition is signed by 13 residents and states:

*Dear Committee,*

*This letter is to express our concern regarding the removal of the playground equipment and replace with a full basketball court at Royal Meadows Park. We believe that removing the playground equipment will be a mistake for the reason that most of the kids that are currently using the park are too small to play basketball. Also, they are too young to walk to any other park that has equipment for them to play on. Our playground is also used by residents of the townhouses on County Road 20. A basketball court will not serve the needs of the kids that use the park on a regular basis. We feel that the park is perfect for our needs and request the park stay the way it is.*

The suggestion from the residents was to either leave the park as it is, or remove the basketball court. Residents John and Linda Ellis, 1976 South Robin Lane, said they have also noticed a lot of teenagers congregating in the area of the park, keeping traffic from going down the street and racing cars up and down the street. The police are called often, but the teenagers disappear before the officers arrive. Council Member Peterson asked the residents if they felt more lighting in the area would help and this idea was discussed. The concern was the type of light and if it were too bright would it generate complaints from neighbors. The other issue is the lights are repeatedly being broken. Committee Member Peterson said this light is owned by the city and costs approximately \$100 each time it needs to be repaired which averages six (6) times per year. Committee Member Peil suggested checking into a different type of light with a cage around it, the expense would be worth it if the city is paying \$600 per year to repair the existing light. Committee Member Lee asked if the light being taken out of the park completely would possibly help. This did not appear to be a realistic option. The residents present were adamant about the play structure remaining in the park.

Committee Member Seeley said the city cannot leave unsafe equipment in the park when it is damaged or vandalized, but it is expensive to repair the equipment. Is it possible to bill the parents of the children who are doing the vandalism? Committee Member Peterson said the city did receive restitution for damage done at Tracie McBride Memorial Park, but it involved actually prosecuting those responsible and while it is unofficially known who is doing the damage, those responsible have not been caught in the act or prosecuted. It was suggested a fence be put around the park, but Committee Member Peterson thought the vandals would just cut holes in the fence as they did to the fence surrounding the Rosso Property.

Committee Member Seeley suggested to the residents that were present that they talk to their neighbors and encourage them to become vigilant about caring for the park and calling the police whenever they see inappropriate activities happening in the park. The residents said they were already doing this. Mr. Rodney Atkinson said he is always sweeping up broken beer bottles, picking up garbage, cigarette butts, and has even found drugs. He regularly unwinds the swings and rakes out the wood chips. Mr. Atkinson suggested getting rid of the basketball court entirely, perhaps moving it to a different park. Royal Meadows Park no longer has picnic tables or a satellite because they have been destroyed by vandalism. Many of the trees and bushes are dead, branches have been snapped off and bark peeled off with knife. These will not be replaced at this time. The committee thanked the residents for their input and would keep the residents informed of any future recommendations to the City Council for action at Royal Meadows Park.

#### **IV. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING MINUTES**

Committee Member Seeley requested the last sentence of paragraph one on page 6 be reworded, as the sentence was incomplete. Committee Member LeBlanc requested the words '10% of the value of the land'

be added to the last sentence, paragraph four of page 2. Committee Member Peil requested paragraph two and three on page 6 be corrected to 'the committee would like to order one set of bleachers', opposed to two.

Committee Member LeBlanc requested changing the last sentence of the Goiffon Road/Trail Access paragraph on Page 5 from 'There is a possibility a trail could go along the lake or Father Fitzgerald did not see a problem with the trail going west of the church as long as it did not go through the middle of the property.' To 'Father Fitzgerald suggested there is a possibility that the trail could go next to the lake too. There was also discussion about trails near LaMotte Park. There is an easement essentially between LaMotte Park and the church property south of their school. He was open to a trail going from LaMotte Park to Meadow Lane. He also thought it possible for a trail to go along the west side of the church property south of their school. He just didn't want a trail going through the middle of the church property south of the school and that it might be an obstacle for the future development of that property (the property south of the church school).'

Committee Member LeBlanc did not think the discussion on the Buckbee property on page 4 correctly explained his intentions. Committee Member LeBlanc said he took offense that what he said was not included. Ms. Stephan explained that the discussion on the Buckbee property was taken verbatim from the tapes of the meeting and he did not add his intentions to this particular discussion. This section will stay as is.

**Motion was made by Committee Member Peil, seconded by Committee Member Peterson to approve the January 6, 2003 Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes with the above corrections. Ayes - 4, Nays - 1 (LeBlanc), Abstain 1 (Walter). Motion carried.**

## **V. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

### **1. Royal Meadows Park**

The committee discussed options for the park and decided the information they had gotten prior to the residents attending the meeting was outdated and there are more small children in the area than previously thought. It was suggested a neighborhood watch group be formed in this area with the help of the police department. Committee Member Walter thinks the option of more light should be considered. Committee Member Peterson will check with Mr. Paul Palzer on the possibility of having a cage installed surrounding the light. Comparing the cost of installing the cage to repairing the light it would be more economical to install the cage. The committee decided to not recommend to council the removal of the play structure at this time and table further discussion until the next scheduled committee meeting. Each member will visit the park over the next month and consider other options. Public Works reports that there is always more garbage in this area in the streets and catch basins than in other parks, not just beer bottles and cigarettes. It would appear this garbage is caused by more than just the teenagers in the area.

### **2. Hunters Crossing Second Addition**

Discussion was held in regards to where the committee would like to see sidewalks and trails in this development. The committee would like to see the developer, Mr. Richard Carlson, extend the existing trail south along the west property line of development with a trail stub on the very southwest corner to meet up with said trail on west property line. The committee would recommend a sidewalk from Centerville Road west running on the north side of the street to Beaver Pond Way, and north along the west side of the street to meet with existing trail in Hunters Crossing. Mr. Carlson had mentioned he would be willing to work in

conjunction with the St. Paul Water Utility and the City of Lino Lakes about the possibility of extending this trail to Birch Street, although Mr. Carlson's responsibility would end at the southwest corner of his property.

Council Member Lee said the City Council agreed the Parks & Recreation Committee's budget of \$10,000 is not workable and if at all possible the council will try to allocate more funds for Parks & Recreation. It was felt if more funds were available to support the parks it would then be more feasible to take park land instead of Park Dedication Fees in some instances. Committee Member Seeley commented in other areas some cities have dedicated land for community gardens. Perhaps this would be something to consider if it would be a value to residents who are unable to garden on their own property, but had a desire to garden if land were provided. Committee Member Seeley said this way land could be taken in lieu of Park Dedication Fees, but the city would not have to maintain a park. The committee felt that although this was an idea worth considering, it would not work in Hunters Crossing. Committee Member Peterson said this idea had been tried a few years prior on the city owned land behind City Hall and there weren't any residents interested.

The committee then discussed whether land or money or a split between both would be most beneficial for Hunters Crossing Second Addition. Committee Member Peterson recommended talking to Mr. Carlson to see whether it would be possible to incorporate a tennis court in the development. Committee Member Peterson said the tennis court in Eagle Pass is used all the time and he felt another one in the area could be a great benefit to the residents. It was discussed whether a motion should be made to recommend to council to accept from Mr. Carlson a combination of land and Park Dedication Fees with the land being used for a tennis court to be figured in where Mr. Carlson deems feasible in the development. The stipulations would be added that the tennis court is on a trail with and built facing north and south.. The remaining balance would be taken in Park Dedication Fees with the value of tennis court and Park Dedication Fees to be determined at a later date. Committee Member Peterson said the Eagle Pass tennis court was approximately \$40,000. Committee Member Peil suggested adding lights on a timer and trees surrounding the courts. It was decided that instead of presenting this as a motion, the committee would like to discuss the options with Mr. Carlson. Council Member Lee said he would bring up the idea as a possible suggestion to City Council. Chairperson DeVine said she would contact Mr. Carlson and report back to the committee at the next meeting.

### **3. Summer Programs**

The committee began with making a list of all the possible summer program ideas they had come up with. Committee Member Seeley suggested the committee sponsor the Wargo Summer Program again, perhaps with more advertising with the addition of programs which involved busing children to different activities such as bowling. Committee Member Seeley would like to see all age groups represented. Some suggestions she had were for some type of exhibition at the skate park with an expert in skateboarding, a softball tournament for mothers & daughters and fathers & sons, and education geared toward adults like the tour of the cemetery which was sponsored in the fall of 2002 by the Historical Society. The idea was also suggested for working with Wargo to coordinate adult programs such as canoeing, kayaking, bird watching or perhaps the same programs for parents with children participating together. The question was asked what options are available for seniors in the community and would it be possible to involve Chauncey Barrett with things such as building bird and bat houses. Committee Member Peterson will check with Menards and Home Depot about having a representative from their respective stores giving demonstrations. The idea of using the plot behind City Hall as a community garden will be tabled until the next scheduled meeting along with the possibility of using land at the Chauncey Barrett property.

The web site can be utilized to get information to the public and to possibly coordinate efforts. Committee Member Peil expressed frustration at this point saying what is the point of discussing programs when there is no one to run them? To have any type of summer programs a coordinator needs to be hired as neither staff nor committee volunteers have the time it would take to coordinate something like this. Committee Member Peterson reminded the committee that many of the programs they are suggesting are all ready offered to residents through the City of Lino Lakes and is it really necessary to duplicate programs for a city of 3,200 residents?

**Motion was made by Committee Member Peterson, seconded by Committee Member LeBlanc to recommend to City Council the hiring of a summer program coordinator. All in Favor: Motion carried unanimously.**

#### **4. Park Maintenance Priority Schedule**

At the December, 2002 Parks & Recreation Meeting Council Member Broussard-Vickers suggested having Mr. Paul Palzer, the Public Works Director, develop a park maintenance priority schedule based on his budget. This would give Public Works and Parks & Recreation a list of every thing that needs repair and/or maintenance and a way to help prioritize what needs repair. These items would be funded out of the maintenance area of the budget. Council Member Broussard-Vickers requested Mr. Palzer look at this project through the first quarter of 2003, documenting what he sees as priority. Mr. Palzer supplied the committee with a memo showing that as the budget currently stands he is basically short \$5,000 without including any of the park maintenance items. Satellites for the parks cannot even be covered from the Public Works budget at this time. Council Member Lee suggested tabling this item until the next scheduled meeting as City Council has a budget workshop scheduled where this will be discussed.

### **VII. UPDATES**

#### **1. Sno Biz**

Committee discussed upcoming Skate Night Event at Laurie LaMotte Park and coordinated efforts. All the Parks & Recreation Committee members will participate in the Friday night events.

#### **2. Goals Update**

Committee Member Seeley summarized the project she worked on to replace and upgrade the timbers at Tracie McBride Park. This item was tabled because of lack of funds, but also due to the issue Mr. Palzer brought up in regards to should the timbers just be repaired or upgraded to be ADA accessible. Committee Member Peterson's project was the paving of Laurie LaMotte Memorial Park parking lot. City Council will readdress this issue this spring. Committee Member LeBlanc reported his goals were to continue focusing on trails and Committee Member Peil did the research for Royal Meadows Park. Committee Member Peterson reported the bleachers for Laurie LaMotte Memorial Park have been delivered to Public Works and will be assembled. Chairperson DeVine said her project was the warming house renovation and there was nothing new to report as the committee is still waiting for a design from the Centerville Lions.

#### **3. Grants**

Chairperson DeVine was to contact City Administrator Moore-Sykes in regards to applying for 2003 Grants, but she decided not to pursue it since it was her feeling there is not money available for matching grants and

the state is making budget cuts. Committee Member Peil asked Chairperson DeVine if it would be acceptable if she contacted City Administrator Moore-Sykes to discuss the possibility of applying for grants. Committee Member Peil will pursue this issue.

## **VIII. FINANCIALS**

Committee Member LeBlanc feels there is still some confusion as to what fund is used for what and how much money is actually available to the Parks & Recreation Committee. Ms. Stephan explained the financial information provided from the Finance Director, Ellen Paulseth is thorough and complete. The reason Committee Member LeBlanc shows \$108,190 currently available is because he is including the \$26,000 in the Charitable Gambling Fund which was already allocated to renovate the Laurie LaMotte Memorial Park warming house and is not included as Parks & Recreation funds. It was felt it was a good idea to include projections of future monies to be able to plan for future expenses

Committee Member LeBlanc added some items in the Parks & Recreation budget that was completed in September, 2002 under Future Currently Unfunded Items. Committee Member Peterson said that while these were valid items, he would like to see them included as a separate page, not as part of the committee's budget as it looks like they were included and decided on by the committee in September, when they were not. Committee Member LeBlanc said he would change the document to reflect the changes suggested.

**Motion was made by Committee Member Seeley, seconded by Committee Member Peterson, to adjourn the February 5, 2003 Parks and Recreation Meeting at 9:37 p.m. All in Favor: Motion carried unanimously.**