

**PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

APRIL 24, 2023

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Committee Members present: Scott Creighton, Cory Ellingson, Ketti Green, Ken Halverson, Kameron Hanson, Doug Peterson, and Megan Weber.

Also present: Streets, Parks, and Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels and Recreation and Communication Coordinator Corrie Scott.

3. ADOPT AGENDA

Committee Member Green motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Committee Member Creighton, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Committee Member Green motioned to accept the February 27, 2023 Parks Advisory Committee minutes as presented. Seconded by Committee Member Creighton, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

5. BUSINESS

5A. PICKLEBALL COURT LOCATION DISCUSSION

Michels reviewed that he is looking for a location to install two new pickleball courts in Big Lake. He recommended that the Parks Advisory Committee consider Wrights Crossing as a potential location, but encouraged discussion on the topic.

Halverson asked how the pickleball courts will be funded. Michels stated that funding could come from the Park Dedication fund and it generally costs about \$18,000 for a pickleball court without any additional sidewalk or amenities. Halverson asked if the court would need to be ADA compliant in order to use Park Dedication funding. Michels stated that he doesn't believe it would need to be as it isn't replacement of existing courts, but instead the installation of a new amenity. He stated that if sidewalks aren't installed this summer, they can always be added later.

Green asked about River Oaks Park as a potential location. Michels stated that the lower half of the park is flooded and that there aren't any utilities at the park currently. He stated that he is also considering using that park as an archery range in the future. Halverson stated that it would be difficult to make it ADA compliant at River Oaks Park as there isn't any infrastructure there at this time. Halverson stated that he would prefer to use Park Dedication Funds for pickleball courts rather than the general fund.

Ellingson asked about Bluff Park. Michels stated that there isn't any off-street parking at Bluff Park which is why he isn't recommending it. Hanson recommended Lakeside Park so that it can be seen from the highway. Halverson stated that the volleyball court isn't being used at Wrights Crossing as much as the three at Lakeside Park and that it would make more sense to use the space where the courts aren't used as often. Michels stated that Wrights Crossing doesn't see as much traffic in general and the addition of a new amenity could help highlight the park more.

Peterson stated that he prefers Lakeside Park for phase one of installation of pickleball courts due to the visibility there. He recommended that Wrights Crossing be a potential second phase for additional pickleball courts in future years. Scott stated that there is a cost to park at Lakeside Park and that parking is free at Wrights Crossing. She also stated that on weekends and holidays it is hard to find parking as Lakeside Park get very busy. Ellingson stated he doesn't feel it is the right approach to remove an existing amenity at Lakeside Park that is already popular. Halverson agreed with Ellingson's statement about Lakeside Park's amenities being heavily used. He also stated that free parking at Wrights Crossing is a benefit.

Weber stated that she likes the idea of the tree canopy shading players at Wrights Crossing on hot summer days. Green asked if the City can partner with the schools on this project. Halverson stated that similar to the current ballfields setup, it could be problematic if pickleball courts are installed on school property as it limits the City's ability to use the courts. Green asked if there are any grants available for installation of new pickleball courts. Michels stated that he hasn't researched the costs yet. He stated that he is looking for recommendations on location before he looks into costs and will bring that information at a future PAC meeting. The PAC recommended Wrights Crossing to staff for future pickleball courts.

Scott stated that another option is to survey the community to see where their preference for a pickleball court would be between the two options. Green asked if SurveyMonkey could be used. Scott mentioned that SurveyMonkey is an option as well as paper surveys that are mailed out to a specific area. Halverson recommended not doing a survey so that there isn't a need to explain to those who potentially oppose the location when something is installed. Michels stated that he would like to move forward with Wrights Crossing as an initial location and that staff would consider doing a survey for a potential second phase with additional courts.

Weber asked where the closest pickleball courts are located. Scott stated that the schools have painted their existing tennis courts for pickleball, but that there aren't enough courts to keep up with current demand to play.

5B. PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE DISCUSSION

Michels recommended that the Parks Advisory Committee consider moving monthly meetings to bi-monthly in an attempt to make more efficient use of the Committee and staff's time.

Green stated that she would prefer to cancel a meeting that isn't needed rather than hold a special meeting or put have to put off an agenda item for two months. Ellingson agreed that he would rather the meeting be scheduled and not used. Halverson agreed to stick with monthly meetings as he hopes that more parks projects will pick up. Peterson recommended that if historically there are certain months that the PAC cancels, we could consider not scheduling that meeting at the beginning of the year.

5C. STAFF UPDATES

Scott reviewed the status of various programs and recreation taking place in the community's parks. Michels reminded the Committee to turn in their paperwork for direct deposit to the Finance Department. He stated that he is wrapping up spring playground inspections and they have noted a broken piece of equipment at Lakeside Park that is being ordered and replaced later this spring. Michels stated that the parking kiosk will be turned on in May and the bathrooms are going to be cleaned and opened in early May.

Halverson asked about having soap dispensers installed in the bathrooms at Lakeside Park. Michels stated that there are not currently dispensers at Lakeside Park because they are often vandalized and torn off of the walls. He plans to look into a way to put a cage around the dispensers to avoid potential vandalism.

6. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' REPORTS

Halverson requested that Michels bring forward an overview of Prairie Meadow' park and an update on Brom Park. Green stated that the City Code Revision Project is going to City Council for final approval on April 26th.

7. **OTHER** – None.

8. ADJOURN

Committee Member Green motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:49 p.m. Seconded by Committee Member Creighton, unanimous ayes, meeting adjourned.