PARKS, RECREATION & GREENWAY ADVISORY BOARD
FEBRUARY 16, 2017
MINUTES

The Parks, Recreation & Greenway Advisory Board (PRGAB) met on Thursday, February 16, 2017, in the City Council Chamber of the Municipal Building, 222 W. Hargett Street, with the following members present:

Amy Simes, presiding
Richard Bostic
Patrick Buffkin
Christopher Dillon
Jennifer Hoverstad
Brad Johnson
Carol Love
Clodagh Lyons-Bastian
Shane Mellin
David Millsaps
Charles Townsend
Jennifer Wagner

Absent & Excused: Dave Toms
Kendall Harris
Dexter Hebert

Staff Present: Diane Sauer, Scott Payne, Elizabeth Houck, Ken Hisler, TJ McCourt, Giavonia Harris, Cassie Schumacher-Georgopoulos, Ashley Deans, Mary Owens, Leigh Bragassa, Brenda Hunt, Shawsheen Baker, Wayne Schindler, Chris Frelke, Terri Stroupe,

Chairperson Simes called the meeting to order at 6:09pm. Discussion followed with actions taken as shown:

PUBLIC COMMENTS –RECEIVED

<u>Fees & Charges:</u>

Jeffrey Aarons indicated he is a MORS parent and they are a 501C3 organization. This is much more than a swim club noting they do a lot of work in the community. They partner with the City of Raleigh to help support several major swim events. He indicated they are passionate about the club. In regard to the proposed fee increase lane rental, what is being proposed by the committee is increasing short lane rentals from $10 to $12 and long course rental from $14 to $20 which will affect the Marlins $18,000 yearly. He requested reevaluation of this increase. The operation of pools in Raleigh is not income producing for the City and has to be provided. He expressed appreciation for use of the facilities. The website indicates swim clubs like the

Marlins have special agreements with municipalities and the average short course fee is $13.33. They were able to determine average cost is $9.60 across municipalities for short course rental across North Carolina and $9.50 long course rental. $13.33 average is not representative of what other clubs are paying. He suggested looking at that as an opportunity to not increase fees to that level. It is obvious the City is pushing towards increase in revenues and he understands that but hoped the committee could come back with lower increases or look at spreading it over 3 years. $18,000 is a lot to this club and at the lease they would like the increase spread out over 3 years. Mr. Aarons then referred to the lane allocations noting the club has utilized lanes for a long time and have always had huge success with people in their tier from an allocation perspective. Last year there was reference to 2005 legislation allowing reallocation of tier system for private schools which put them into their tier. He stressed the Marlins utilize the space year round and private schools use them 4 months per year. He expressed concern for private schools to have priority at prime time which doesn't seem fair since the Marlins all are 501C3. Mr. Aarons stated private schools are paid for with taxes and the desire is to level the playing field. He indicated they would be willing to provide data regarding the cost for lanes.

Jonathan Watson, North Raleigh, indicated his team had to leave Pullen facility due to the loss of lanes because of private schools. There were times that could have been granted to that group but they got prime times that his group had enjoyed for 7 years. He indicated his group is a primary rental customer and expressed concern with getting charged more and felt taxpaying systems are the ones that get hurt by increasing the fees. He realized running pools is expensive but feared there is no consideration given to how they are being managed and run. He referred to a light structure that fell and urged making sure the City's facilities are working right. He stated there is a leaking roof at the Pullen facility and was told it might take 1 year of closing the pool to repair it. He felt the tier system should require being fair to everyone and felt the board should consider the way that is being handled.

Mr. Tmen Tse, 1412 Opal Court, provided a handout regarding annual attendance vs revenue, market analysis date for lane rental, market analysis date for peak lane rental and non-peak lane rental and space allocation. He reviewed the handouts in detail.

PRESENTATIONS

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – ADOPT-A-PARK PROGRAM & INVASIVE PROGRAM

Ashley Deans, Resource Development Manager, recognized the neighbors of Poplar and Marshall Street Parks which is the first group under this program. She reviewed their activities noting they had done 12 projects over the past year. She also presented the Proclamation declaring February 27, 2017 to March 3, 2017 Invasive Species Week in the City of Raleigh. She indicated this group of neighbors is the best group she had worked with and were energetic and excited about the work. They volunteered 148 hours with the value of that being $3,048 in just over a year. Chairperson Simes presented a certificate of appreciation to the group.

WALNUT CREEK ATHLETIC COMPLEX RENOVATION PLAN – PRESENTATION

Liz Houck, Landscape Architect, indicated she is managing this project. She introduced Brandon White, Kimley Horne who provided a slide presentation. Mr. White reviewed the history of the project and reviewed the priority matrix provided in the report included in the agenda packet. The renovation design rendering, vehicular entrance with security gate, accessible parking area, welcome entrance & drop-off, pedestrian entrance, maintenance facility, maintenance office building, field areas, bull pens and scoring stations were shown. Shade structures and upgraded fencing will be provided for the bleacher areas. Mr. White reviewed the various aspects of the wheelhouse that will include 2 levels. A food truck plaza will be provided which allows dedicated space with a huge range of menus. A secure vending area will be included and enclosed. When the staff is not present, the area can be secured. Next steps were reviewed with bidding for construction in the spring 2017 and construction and sod grow in occurring in Summer 2017 and Winter 2017. The project will be completed and open in Spring 2018.

Ms. Wagner referred to the pedestrian entrance into the main hub with stairs noting a ramp would be appreciated for those pushing strollers. Mr. White responded there could be an opportunity in the drop off area but turns into a much bigger project if a ramp is provided but would look at that possibility.

Mr. Buffkin questioned if the lighting would remain the same with Mr. White noting there is a budgetary issue and the current lights work fine. Some electrical upgrades will be done but are not physically changing the pole locations and fixtures which would have a big budgetary impact. Mr. Buffkin stated there are change out options for lights that have a short pay back and felt this is missing the opportunity to look into more modern lights that have a short pay back. Mr. White explained LED options can be used and this came down to prioritization. This is also something that can be done without disrupting the renovation work.

Mr. Johnson stated it is good to have the food trucks and this could be a destination for citizens.

SYSTEM PLAN IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE – RECEIVED

Cassie Schumacher-Georgopoulos, Senior Planner, was present to review the System Plan approved in 2014. (Members received a copy of the presentation in the agenda packets.) The presentation included the department vision and guiding principles. Sub-Systems Visions for Parks, Natural Environments, Greenways, Programs & Services, Athletics, Historic Resources, Arts and Growth Center were reviewed. The Implementation Report including updates on progress of action items, action item timeframes and short-term (1-5 years) action items. Highlights and needs of the sub-systems were reviewed in detail. Ms. Schumacher-Georgopoulos indicated the next steps include continuing actin item reporting, integrating the System Plan into 2030 Comprehensive Plan update and planning for the System Plan update starting in FY 18. It was noted public input was the key every step of the way. There are 320 action items staff is working on with 240 of those short term items. During this process, the name of the department was changed to Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources. With

adoption of the plan there was a $92 million parks bond approved to implement and invest into the system.

Mr. Johnson spoke to the need to get all parks on public transportation routes. Dr. Love indicated this is a job well done.

The update was received as information.

ACTION ITEMS

FEES & CHARGES – ATHLETIC SPACE ALLOCATIONS POLICY – APPROVED FOR REFERRAL TO CITY COUNCIL

Mr. Buffkin indicated he was a member of the ad hoc committee that reviewed this item. Four meetings were held noting there are two very broad issues involved – the fees and charges and the space allocation policy. In regard to fees, Mr. Buffkin stated staff proposed increases in certain areas and not just athletic rental spaces. He noted the MOR group was a large presence at the meetings and their comments made to the board speak for themselves. In recommending that the PRGAB adopt the proposed fees for approval by the City Council, the committee felt the data staff brought forward comparing different markets across the state and out of state supported the proposed fees and was consistent with City Council policy on cost recovery. This involves a pyramid where the more individuals benefit, the more they should pay in fees to the City. The committee unanimously recommended approval of the fees and believed the fee increase is an appropriate adjustment. Mr. Buffkin recommended the fee changes be approved for forwarding to the City Council.

In regard to allocation of space and setting up a fair process for prioritizing groups who want exclusive use of athletic space, Mr. Buffkin explained the committee heard from MOR, it was felt more time is needed to consider the policy and hear more input, therefore, the items were split. Mr. Buffkin indicated the PRGAB heard that private schools were unfairly receiving priority over 501C3 nonprofit groups and noted that question has a history to it. The City Council decided 12 years ago that education facilities should be advantaged in that way and the committee felt that should be continued. What may provide some relief for MOR, under new partnership relationship they can pursue showing benefit to the community justifying them being a higher priority over private schools. They should pursue that which would solve most of their issues. Mr. Buffkin indicated important changes have been made and have gotten to 85%-90% of MOR's concerns. He felt the allocation of state policy is the appropriate way to approach the problem. Mr. Buffkin explained he came to this meeting expecting to vote on the fee policy at this meeting and suggested possibly holding the state allocation until the next meeting.

Ms. Hoverstad indicated she completely agreed with the fee increase and continued to be comfortable given the data and looking at this from a holistic perspective. She agreed with MOR that private school K-12 and universities should be considered 501C3 and would put that on the table as part of the committee's recommendation. She could not find a distinguishing factor making private schools equivalent to public schools in that scenario. Ms. Lyons-Bastian asked if the committee considered instituting the increased fees over 3 years with Ms. Hoverstad stated

this is the first time she had heard that suggestion but still was comfortable with the fee increases recommended by staff. Mr. Hisler explained the fees would go into effect July 1 if approved. In regard to rental space, MOR will have already have contracts on the books but MOR budget period can be flexible in implementation. In response to questioning, Mr. Hisler indicated MOR already receives a 10% discount since it is a 501C3 organization and the $18,000 fee is including the discount. Mr. Bostic asked if MOR can pay monthly with Mr. Hisler responding a payment plan can be set up dividing the fee up over the year noting the City does not charge interest. Mr. Hisler explained the draft policy outlines the space we make available comes after delivery of City programs, then there are partnerships and then space goes to universities, schools and other educational institutions. If there is a partner, it is a City of Raleigh program and the City is partnering with someone to deliver a program that the City does not deliver. Mr. Hisler stressed the goal is treat all equally and fairly. In response to a question, Mr. Hisler indicated there are various levels of agreements and there are some no cost partnerships and also have one where they deliver the program and they pay the fee but have priority for space. No 2 partnership agreements are the same. Wake County Public School System is under a joint use agreement where they get priority access. Mr. Dillon suggested staff negotiating a price with MOR that would be outside of this process. Mr. Hisler explained if they are looking for 30 hours, the dollar value has to be determined and whether we are getting equal or greater return on investment since partnerships is based on value. Discussion followed regarding normal length of contracts, joint use agreements, etc. Mr. Millsaps indicated swimming is expensive noting he spends a lot of money on cycling. He felt $18,000 is a lot to absorb but MOR has 650 swimmers and the proposed fee seems reasonable given the cost to the City.

Ms. Hoverstad moved approval of the fees as recommended by staff with the increase and the space allocation policy be approved as written with the change that private schools, both universities and K-12 institutions will be classified as nonprofits with clubs instead of alongside of public education. Her motion was seconded by Mr. Bostic.

Mr. Buffkin supported the motion and indicated Mr. Millsaps made a good point. In some ways having MOR involved made it more difficult but it also brought forth legitimate issues and we need to keep in mind there are people impacted by these decisions who haven't had a voice in the process. He expressed concern about equal access to facilities and keeping the gate very low. For many taxpayers, city facilities are the only things available to them and it is important to keep that in mind. Mr. Buffkin indicated the committee worked hard to address the concerns of MOR and felt they had done a good job.

A vote on the motion was taken and unanimously passed. Chairperson Simes ruled the motion adopted.

MINUTES – OCTOBER 20, 2016 – APPROVED

Members received the October minutes in their agenda packets. Mr. Townsend moved approval of the minutes. His motion was seconded by Ms. Lyons-Bastian, unanimously passed. Chairperson Simes ruled the motion adopted.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

STANDING COMMITTEES

Parks Committee: Mr. Buffkin reported the committee reviewed the Neighborhood Connection Program that staff is currently working on. Staff is continuing to refine models. An update will be provided at the next meeting and work will begin on the issue of use of drones in parks.

Fletcher Volunteer Awards Committee: Ms. Hoverstad reported applications for the awards have been received. There will be a meeting one week from tonight at Halifax Court Community Center. She advised members to be on the lookout for the list of winners. She noted she would like all members to attend the ceremony that will be on a Thursday this year and members of the board will introduce the winners.

CITIZEN PLANNING COMMITTEES

Barwell Road Park: Staff reported this is a great group and looked forward to working with them. He was impressed they are not just looking this as a park for the immediate neighborhood but are interested in something unique to the park system. The first public meeting was held on February 14 with 30 people attending. Good ideas were received. He indicated this center has a new director and it is busy. Key pad polling was provided for those attending to register their opinions which worked well. He stated connectivity is a big item with citizens wanting to connect to the Neuse River Trail. Issues go beyond the scope of what can be done in the master plan. The next meeting will be at the end of March or early April.

Erinsbrook Park: Mr. Buffkin reported this CPC has completed their work on the draft master plan and recommendations were nearly unanimous. This will be under public comments at the next board meeting and for action the following month. He explained the membership was primarily people living next to or close to the site. There are going to be a lot of elements everyone will like including a storm water feature, naturalized areas, a small dog park and 2 play grounds.

John Chavis Memorial Park: Dr. Love reported there were 54 children at the first public meeting. There was an additional meeting in the evening and there was good attendance. There was some controversy regarding an ice skating rink. She indicated things are moving forward.

Mr. Bostic reported there was concern about placement of the elevator at the community center and food vendors. The next hearing will be March 1. He stated he is impressed with the design and felt the board will be also.

LIAISON REPRESENTATIVES

Arts Commission and PADB: Mr. Johnson reported the Commission meeting will be next Thursday. The commission is doing grant interviews now for public arts grants.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission: Ms. Simes reported the commission met on January 23 and received an update on Walk Raleigh. They also received a presentation on the Oaks and Spokes on Urbanism. The commission also held a retreat on February 9. There was discussion on the Bike Plan, Pedestrian Plan, ideas for 2 lane bike streets and the Pedestrian Plan Update. The next meeting will be March 20.

City of Raleigh Historical Cemeteries Advisory Board: Wayne Schindler made the following report:

Historic Cemeteries Advisory Board
2/16/17 Meeting Summary for PRGAB

The Historic Cemeteries Advisory Board met on Monday, February 13.

Kate Pearce, Senior Planner with the department updated the board on work to be undertaken through the Dix Conservancy related the cemetery at Dorothea Dix Park.
The project work is broken down into four tasks and funded through the Dix Conservancy:

1) Development of a complete cemetery census to document all burials,
2) Use of ground penetrating radar to confirm the full extent of the cemetery,
3) Transfer to the City of interpretive displays and artifacts related to the cemetery currently in the possession of DHHS, and
4) Replacement of the existing post and chain fence around the cemetery with a more appropriate fence type.

The board indicated its desire and willingness to participate in this work plan and serve as a resource to the conservancy.

Alicia Kirwan with Kirwan Architecture reviewed their findings and recommendations related to repair and stabilization of two mausoleums in City Cemetery and a mausoleum, arch and 17 surface vaults in Mt. Hope Cemetery. After lengthy discussion, the board directed to staff to proceed with bidding of the work as presented.

Staff advised that City Council had approved the bylaws revision as presented at the last council meeting. Also City Council appointed Joe Dillon to fill a current board vacancy. The board currently has two new board seats to fill and will be soliciting nominees to forward to council for consideration.

The annual walking tour of Mt. Hope Cemetery is being planned for the latter part of April.

Under new business, Octavia Rainey has requested that a walking tour of O'Rorke-Catholic Cemetery be considered for this coming spring. The board will discuss this item at its next meeting.

The next meeting of the Historic Cemeteries Advisory Board is scheduled for March 13 at the Tucker House.

Historical Resources and Museum Advisory Board: Ms. Simes reported the board met on January 25. In the spring, an RFP will go out to do a master plan. The Community Engagement Committee is discussing an oral history project. On February 18 and 25 there will be African American walking tours starting at the Pope House at 11:00 a.m. The Pullen Park 130th anniversary will be March 25. The next board meeting will be February 22.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – RECEIVED

February 7, 2017

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF HISTORIC CEMETERIES ADVISORY BOARD – BYLAWS - APPROVED

As part of the annual work plan the board has completed a review and update of the current bylaws. Included with the agenda packet are the current bylaws and proposed bylaw revisions. In summary, changes to the bylaws include:

- Reflect the current name of the Parks Recreation and Cultural Resources Department;
- Expand the membership by adding two voting members for a total of nine board members;
- Removal of two City staff positions as non-voting, ex-officio members;
- Clarification of board member attendance requirements; and
- Adjustments to the board calendar year and alignment of terms of office for officers.

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE PARKS RECREATION AND GREENWAY ADVISORY BOARD (PRGAB) PULLEN ARTS CENTER IMPROVEMENTS – SCHEMATIC PLAN- APPROVED

The schematic design for Pullen Arts Center Improvements has been presented to the public and the Parks, Recreation, and Greenway Advisory Board. At the January 19 meeting, the board reviewed the design and recommends approval.

Announcements (Dedications, Public Meetings, etc.)

Committee Meetings

Fletcher Awards Committee – February 23, 2017, 6:00 at Halifax Community Center in Meeting Room B

Parks Committee – Thursday, March 2, 2017 at 6:00-7:30 p.m. at the Halifax Community Center, 1023 Halifax Street

GWUT Committee – The GWUT does not have a meeting scheduled.

Public Meetings

Mayor's Community Dialogue – Community Conversation – District A

Monday, February 20, 2017 from 6:00pm-8:00pm at Anne Gordon Center for Active Adults in Millbrook Exchange Park-1901 Spring Forest Road

Mayor's Community Dialogue – Community Conversation – District E
Wednesday, February 22, 2017 from 6:00pm-8:00pm at Laurel Hills Park Community Center-3808 Edwards Mill Road

Mayor's Community Dialogue – Community Conversation – District B
Monday, February 27, 2017 from 6:00pm-8:00pm at Abbotts Creek Park Community Center-9950 Durant Road

John Chavis Memorial Park Schematic Design
The next public meeting #3 for John Chavis Memorial Park will take place on Wednesday, March 1st at the JCMP Community Center. The meeting will be from 4:00pm-7:00pm.

CHAIR REPORT – RECEIVED

Mr. Johnson reported a template has been prepared for use by committee chairs in making their reports to the PRGAB. He noted members can look at the chair reports on line.

BOARD COMMENTS – RECEIVED

Mr. Bostic reported he had been receiving comments regarding the computer problems for summer camp registration. Ms. Hisler indicated 11,000 registrations were moved in one day. Staff recognizes the frustrations and it took until Wednesday to respond to all calls and emails. He indicated additional camp sites were opened. Staff is working it IT on this issue. Mr. Payne reported an RFP will go out tomorrow for a new system which goes out to the public so we will have a new product that will help as we move forward.

Mr. Buffkin expressed concern that it sounds like the rules have changed on receiving public comments. He referred to the beginning of the PRGAB meeting where citizens had to speak on items that would be heard later in the agenda. He stated the PRGAB is here to hear from the public. Ms. Sauer explained this is not a change noting unless the agenda item asks for public comment on an item, all comments are held at the beginning of the meeting. Mr. Millsaps indicated maybe there should be flexibility with the agenda order to avoid citizens having to sit through a long meeting until their item is voted on.

Mr. Mellin stated he walks Downtown and noted the trash at Moore Square is horrible.

Dr. Love indicated she appreciated the way the Chavis Plan was presented and the way the community and young people were able to participate. She indicated staff handled any issues that came up well. She stated the plan is going well and the majority are pleased with the way things are progressing.

Mr. Johnson indicated he likes bringing young people into the planning process for parks. He stated this might be an opportunity to include young people in the CPC meetings.

Ms. Wagner reported there will be a playground renovation meeting for Optimist Park this Saturday from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Ms. Hoverstad indicated some of the equipment at Optimist Park playground was there when she was a child. She stated the neighborhood is very excited about the renovations noting just Northclift has 500 homes and people from other areas also come there. She stated children are also invited to come and there will be activities for them.

ADOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Hunt

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