

NORTH LITTLE ROCK PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

FEBRUARY 16, 2010

The North Little Rock Parks and Recreation Commission meeting was called to order by Ms. Vicki Stephens at 5:00 p.m., February 16, 2010, at the North Little Rock Community Center.

Commission Members Present: Tom Davis, Chandra Martin, Otistene Smith, Vicki Stephens and Bruce Waller. Jeanne Hyde was absent due to an illness in the family, and Charles Jones had to work. Both were excused.

Staff Members Present: Bob Rhoads, Jan Eberle-Wilkins, Willie Elizandro, Jeff Caplinger, Travis Young, Steve Ralston and John Crow.

Others Present: Gary Rogers, Carol Rogers, Alex Kienlan, Don Winton, David McFatrich, Paula Jones, Shannon Harris and Jake Sandlin.

Financial Report: Bruce Waller gave the 2009 fourth quarter finance report. He reported that the city's detailed report by category through the end of December 2009, showed the department -\$341.00.

Mr. Rhoads said to try to keep the budget balanced, positions that became vacant were not filled, and corners were cut where possible as a reaction to the Hamburger Tax decrease.

Mr. Waller said that with the declining revenue in the last seven (7) months of 2009, the ending balance showed excellent financial management.

Mrs. Martin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to accept the financial report as presented. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Waller and Ms. Stephens thanked Mr. Rhoads and the staff.

Utility Cost Report: Mr. Rhoads reported that utility costs were under budget in 2009. It was a mild year and that probably contributed to the decrease in cost.

Mr. Waller made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Martin, to accept the utility cost report as presented. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Minutes: Ms. Stephens presented the January 19, 2010, Parks and Recreation Commission meeting minutes.

Mr. Waller made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to adopt the minutes as presented. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Association Annual Report for 2009: Mr. Crow presented the 2009 Central Arkansas BMX Youth Development Association report.

Mrs. Smith said she has concerns about vandalism and problems at the BMX track. She asked if there was some way to gate or restrict track access, since track repair is costly and takes time.

Mr. Crow said there are definite problems with horses and four-wheelers on the track, especially when the track is wet.

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Approval of Association Annual Report for 2009 (continued): Alex Kienlan, President of the Central Arkansas BMX Youth Development Association, said they are working on a plan to stop these problems.

Mr. Crow said that a lack of money for the department is a problem. The BMX group has asked for money to rebuild the track as their first priority every year.

Mr. Rhoads said that four-wheelers are not allowed in the park.

Mr. Waller made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Smith, to accept the Central Arkansas BMX Youth Development Association report. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Association Agreement for 2010: Mr. Crow requested that the commission renew the Central Arkansas BMX Youth Development Association agreement for 2010.

Mr. Waller made a motion to renew the Central Arkansas BMX Youth Development Association agreement for 2010. Mrs. Smith seconded the motion. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Stephens thanked this group for coming to the commission meeting and for their hard work.

Arkansas Waterski Club 2009 Association Annual Report and 2010 Usage Dates: Mr. Crow presented the 2009 Arkansas Waterski Club report, and 2010 requested dates of usage. Mr. Crow said the Arkansas Waterski Club wants to have more INT tournaments in Burns Park, and has requested a change in dates from what has been submitted in writing to the commission. They are requesting that July 17 and 18, 2010 dates be dropped, and that July 10 and 11, 2010 be added to the schedule.

He stated that the INT is working with the Chamber of Commerce to bring a wakefest tournament to North Little Rock. There may be 500 competitors.

Mrs. Smith stated that the correct dates needed to be posted on the sign at Burns Park as soon as possible, so the fishermen will know the schedule.

Mr. Waller made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to accept the 2009 Arkansas Waterski Club report and 2010 usage dates as amended. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

CARTI Request to Serve Beer at Tour de Rock: Ms. Stephens stated that this agenda item would be postponed until the March regularly scheduled commission meeting, because Mr. Holsted could not come to the meeting today.

Request for Sand Volleyball: Mr. Rhoads introduced David McFatrigh, representing Fatchmo Volley, Inc. Mr. McFatrigh is proposing to build five (5) sand volleyball courts in Burns Park at no cost to the city. He is looking for acceptance of the idea with a contract to follow later. Fatchmo Volley, Inc, a non-profit club, will not build anything until they have raised the \$100,000.

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Request for Sand Volleyball (continued): Mr. McFatrigh said this is a junior Olympic volleyball club, and have outgrown their current location. Presently there are 250 youth. Four (4) of the five (5) courts will be sectioned off with a perimeter fence. This will allow the club to play year round. Camps, leagues, tournaments, state championships and clinics will be held at these courts. The fifth court will be outside the fence for public recreational play.

Mr. Rhoads said he has a copy of their non-profit status and by-laws. He reported that he told Mr. McFatrigh that this area has a potential to flood. This proposal is not on the master plan. It may be one (1) to two (2) years before this concept may be finalized, but Mr. McFatrigh wants approval and endorsement of the concept to go forward now. The location may change in the future.

Mr. Waller said there had been problems in the past when exclusive use or control was given to an organization for a city facility or property. The commission cannot give the club exclusive use or control of a facility if it is built on city property. An agreement may be entered into, and even though the organization builds and maintains the facility, the facility's control would have to be under the commission. The school system cannot be locked out of any facility if it is on city property.

Mr. Rhoads said that parks and recreation can work with an organization wanting to use the facility for the purpose it was intended. Also, the facility could be rented out by the agreement organization (i.e. Fatchmo Volley, Inc.), but they (Fatchmo Volley, Inc.), would probably want to supervise the rental.

Mr. McFatrigh asked how often other groups would want to use these courts, and how often would their organization have to supervise the courts.

Mr. Waller said he did not know those answers, but wants to make sure he (Mr. McFatrigh) understands that his organization could not have exclusive use.

Mr. Rhoads said this policy is the same with all other associations and clubs that have an agreement with the department.

Mr. Waller said the agreement with the Arkansas Tennis Association to run the tennis center would be a good example.

Mr. Crow recommended that a fee be charged for volleyball court rentals.

Mr. Waller made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Martin, to give approval to Mr. McFatrigh to explore the concept and return to the commission later when more details are planned. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Fee Recommendation for Golf Course: Steve Ralston stated that five (5) years ago, the golf course changed fees for the possibility of a golf trail acceptance coming through Arkansas. The golf trail did not happen.

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Fee Recommendation for Golf Course (continued): The golf course has eight (8) different tickets, and rates are confusing to patrons. Currently, weekday play is the slowest. If the economy picks up, Mr. Ralston said he may come back to the commission for another change in the future.

Mr. Ralston recommended the following rate changes.

BURNS PARK TOURNAMENT COURSE

	Current	Recommended
Monday-Friday		
Regular	\$ 12.00	\$ 14.00
Senior/9-hole		
After 4:00	8.00	10.00
Junior	6.00	6.00
Saturday/Sunday/Holiday		
Regular	14.00	14.00

Senior/Junior		
After 4:00	12.00	12.00

The regular green fee and the senior fee were lowered from the new recommended rates four years ago, as a special rate on the Tournament Course when fees we raised on the Championship Course to try to qualify for the Golf Trail.

BURNS PARK CHAMPIONSHIP COURSE

Monday-Friday

Regular	\$18.00	\$14.00
Senior/After 4:00	12.00	10.00
Junior	10.00	10.00

Saturday/Sunday/Holiday

Regular	20.00	20.00
Senior /Junior	16.00	14.00
After 4:00	14.00	14.00

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Fee Recommendation for Golf Course (continued):

There are several reasons for these recommendations.

1. Regular Green Fee was \$14.00 on either Golf Course / \$25.00 with Golf Cart for Monday through Friday play for several years prior to our attempt to qualify the Championship Course for the Golf Trail. It was very easy to explain to potential customers at the counter and especially over the phone.
2. The increase in the Weekday Green Fee on the Championship Course to \$18.00 Monday through Friday has led to it being the least utilized ticket sale. By going back to a \$14.00 Green Fee on either course Monday through Friday, confusion is eliminated with the players as to which course they are going to play when waiting on other players in their group. It also eliminates the problem during the week with a player(s) paying the Tournament Course Green Fee and sneaking onto the Championship Course.
3. The Senior Fees Monday through Friday were also split during this time to correspond with the regular rates. The adjustment to \$10.00 on either course will put the Senior Fees back in proportion with the other changes.

4. Weekend Green fees are the bread and butter at this time and they need to stay where they have been except for the small change in the Senior/Junior rate from \$16.00 to \$14.00. These changes will make it much easier for staff to explain and for the public to grasp.

5. Burns Park still has the most competitive rates in the area. However, when a potential customer calls it will be much easier to say, "The Green fee is \$14.00 on either Golf Course / \$25.00 with Golf Cart during the week. On weekends it is \$14.00 / \$25.00 with cart on the Tournament Course, and \$20.00 / \$31.00 with cart on the Championship Course.

When the North Hills golf course reopens, the Burns Park golf course will have a competitor.

Mr. Waller made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Martin, to accept these new fees effective March 1, 2010. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Recommended Funland Fees and Hours of Operation for 2010: Jeff Caplinger stated that there has not been a change in the Funland fees for several years. Also, changing the hours of operation would make it possible to accommodate more people. Due to a lack of business, he is recommending to close Funland to the public on Friday evenings, but be available to open for group accommodations. One ride has been added and all other rides have been updated since 2007.

Mr. Waller asked if walk-ins would be denied use of the rides on a Friday night, if it is opened to a pre-scheduled group.

Travis Young said when he opens Funland to pre-scheduled groups, he has scheduled just enough staff to work for that group because they know how many people to expect. Therefore, they cannot take walk-ups on Friday night.

Mr. Caplinger said a reservation could be made anytime during the week. He wants to close the facility at 7:00 p.m. because it gets dark before 8:00 p.m. During summer if they need to stay open a little later and it is not dark, they can do so.

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Recommended Funland Fees and Hours of Operation for 2010 (continued): Wednesday, Thursday and Friday during the summer, the facility can open anytime by reservation and this schedule will permit more flexibility.

Mrs. Smith said there would need to be a lot of marketing and signs to reflect these changes.

1. Ticket and Unlimited Armband Prices

Current Fees

Recommended Fees

Unlimited Ride Armbands	\$ 8.00	\$ 10.00
Individual Tickets	\$ 1.00	Books of \$ 5.00
Season Pass	\$ 39.00	\$ 40.00
School Rates (<i>Public Schools in Pulaski County</i>) (per person fee)	\$ 5.00	\$ 5.00

Group Rates (other schools, day cares, church groups, etc. and can be scheduled during the week)

10 – 24 (per person fee)	\$ 7.00	\$ 9.00
25 – 49 (per person fee)	\$ 6.50	\$ 8.00
50 – 99 (per person fee)	\$ 6.00	\$ 7.00
100 + (per person fee)	\$ 5.50	\$ 6.00

An inflatable slide may be added. Inflatables are the #2 used rides at State Fairs and will also be able to be used for promotional display at events. Federal labor wages increased a minimum of \$0.50 per hour, in 2009.

2. Party Fee	Current Fees	Recommended Fees
Party Fee	\$100.00	\$125.00
Per Additional party guest	\$ 6.00	\$ 10.00

This change will keep Funland's parties affordable and good deal for parents. A party includes a pavilion rental for 2 hours, 10 hot dogs, 10 chips, 10 drinks, and 10 unlimited ride armbands (armbands are valid all day for parties held on Saturdays or Sundays). This fee increase will help offset some of the increased food cost (which has doubled in the past 2 years), as well as labor costs.

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Recommended Funland Fees and Hours of Operation for 2010 (continued):

3. Operating Hours

Current Hours:

Recommended Hours:

Wednesday

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. (group appointment only)

By group appointment only

Thursday

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. (group appointment only)

By group appointment only

Friday

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. (group appointment only)

By group appointment only

Friday Evening

5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. (open to public)
only

By group appointment

Saturday

10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. (open to public)
public)

10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. (open to

Sunday

1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. (open to public)
public)

1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. (open to

Wednesday - Friday (by group appointment only)

Funland would have more flexibility in scheduling groups and parties by not limiting the available hours. Groups and parties could be scheduled to begin earlier than 10:00 a.m. or after 2:00 p.m.

Friday evenings (by group appointment only)

On Friday evenings, average revenue for the 2009 season was \$150.00, and staff (7 staff members) cost was \$190.00, not including payroll taxes. By booking groups and/or parties on Friday evenings would reduce the number of staff needed to operate the park so Funland can increase revenue without increasing costs. Funland staff would know the size of the group and would be able to assign workers accordingly.

Saturday (10 a.m. - 7 p.m. open to public)

Both early and late in the season, Funland has to close by 7:00 p.m. due to darkness. June and July are the only two (2) months where it is still light at 8:00 p.m. The 7:00 p.m. closure would allow Funland employees ample time to clean, close, and exit the park before it gets too dark. In 2009, after 6:00 p.m., an average of three to four (3 to 4) armbands were sold each Saturday evening. Patrons

purchasing armbands after 5:00 p.m. would receive a voucher for a free armband the next day (Sunday).

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Recommended Funland Fees and Hours of Operation for 2010 (continued):

Mrs. Martin asked if the rates needed to jump from \$6.00 to \$10.00 per armband.

Mr. Young said food prices and salaries have increased. These proposed rates are competitive with other groups. Funland still has the best birthday party rates in central Arkansas.

Mr. Young said he would send a flier to the schools. Daycares are notified by mass mailings. Ten (10) people qualify as a group for reservations.

Mr. Waller made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Smith, to accept the proposal as presented, and that these changes be publicized in the next *Neighborhood Newsletter*, published by the Neighborhood Services Department. Information will need to include fee schedules, dates, times open and a phone number to call. Other ways of advertising need to be started immediately. All voted aye and motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Stephens said the Funland staff is doing a great job,

Director Reports:

Mr. Rhoads submitted written director reports, and Ms. Stephens said she appreciated them.

Mrs. Smith stated that she liked getting the key accomplishment summary for the year.

Regional Soccer Bid: Mr. Crow stated that the Ultimate Frisbee bid went to Austin, Texas.

2011 National Soccer Tournament Bid: Mr. Rhoads said that North Little Rock and Phoenix, Arizona are competing for the United States Youth Soccer Association National Soccer Tournament (USYSA) for 2011 in Arizona. Oral presentations will be February 27, 2010 in Ft. Worth Texas. The location will be announced in April or May 2010.

Calendar of Events: Ms. Stephens stated that the next commission agenda deadline is Tuesday, March 2, 2010, at 2:00 p.m. Any items need to be called in by that date and time to the Parks and Recreation Administration Office. The next regularly scheduled commission meeting is Monday, March 15, 2010, at 5:00 p.m., in the North Little Rock Community Center.

Adjournment: Mrs. Smith made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Martin, to adjourn at 5:50 p.m. All voted aye, and the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments: Ms. Stephens opened the meeting for public comments, but there were none.

Submitted by,

Otistene Smith, Secretary