



Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

September 11, 2024
The Centre at University Park

Attendance: Ben France, Samuel Ellis, Cannon Fletcher, Linda Smith, Mike Bernardo, Ron Bara, Summer Campbell, Chemia Woods, Quinten Whiteside, Quincy Grant

Absent: James Ferstl

City Board of Director Liaison: City Director-Andrea Lewis, City Director-Capi Peck

LRPR Staff: Parks Director-Leland Couch, Deputy Director Administration Resources-Angela Nelson, Deputy Director Recreation-Shawanda Craig, Deputy Director Operations-Justin Dorsey, City Attorney-Beth Carpenter, City Attorney-Simone Blagg, Parks Marketing and Social Media Coordinator-Brittany Nichols, Recreation Programs Coordinator-Darryl Marbley, Administrative Assistant-Parks Director-Mahoganey Burkhalter

Welcome: Chairman France: Welcomed everyone. Meeting called to order at 12:01 pm.

Roll Call: Roll call completed. Ten (10) Commissioners out of Eleven (11) Commissioners in attendance. A Quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman France asked for a motion to approve minutes. Commissioner Ellis made a motion for the approval of the minutes. Motion 2nd by Commissioner Campbell. Motion carried.

Citizen Communication: No Citizen Communication

Director's Presentation/Staff Reports/Events:

Director's Report:

- Two Rivers Trail item was approved by the Board of Directors.
- Parks upcoming Board of Director's meeting agenda items:
 - ❖ West Central Ballfield Complex– will be utilizing Board approved ARPA funds.
 - ❖ I-30 Crossing Project – will be utilizing ARPA funds for Masterplan. Selection process has been completed.
- Hindman Park – Three (3) public meetings have been completed at Hindman Park Pro Shop. There were 30 to 50 people present at each meeting. Overall received feedback from 100 people. Will start master planning process based on collected feedback.
- Discussed the following topics:
 - ❖ Meeting one (1) - Mountain Biking for Nika
 - ❖ Meeting two (2) - All about Disc Golf
 - ❖ Meeting three (3) - General Session



Staff Reports

- Chairman France asked questions about Archery range at Murray Park funding.
 - ❖ Deputy Director of Operations, Justin Dorsey advised that funding is through the Outdoor Recreation grant. Waiting for confirmation of award.
- Commissioner Smith asked questions about the state of planning on the I-30 Crossing Project.
 - ❖ Parks Director Couch advised that plans have not been completed for the project and it would be for a firm to complete a plan first. The plan that has been completed is the Downtown Master Plan.
- Commissioner Bernardo suggested that the underpass area would be a good place for Pickleball.
 - ❖ Parks Director Couch advised that there will be upcoming community meetings and to come and share that input.
- Question about Pankey Park Ribbon cutting schedule.
 - ❖ Advised that Ribbon cutting event has not been rescheduled.
- Chairman France asked about Razorback games cleanup.
 - ❖ Director Couch advised that the City of Little Rock maintains the park area and the state cleans up after the games.
- Commissioners Bernardo and Smith asked questions about the upcoming Senior center.
 - ❖ Director Couch advised that the Senior center was funded by ARPA funds for 3 million. Currently working on design plans with Polk Stanley. Age Friendly Commission also provided input.
 - ❖ Deputy Director Craig advised about tentative facility programming, staffing, and hours.
- Director Couch advised of recent challenges due to theft and vandalism.
- Commissioner Fletcher asked what the Parks Commission can do to assist.
 - ❖ Recreation Coordinator Marbley advised of the challenges, what the barriers are and how the program functions.



Events:

- Social-Media & Marketing Coordinator – Brittany Nichols advised of the following events:
 - ❖ 9/12/2024 - Age Friendly Commission Expo at West Central Community Center
 - ❖ 9/14/2024 - Great Arkansas Cleanup at Murray Park
 - ❖ 9/14/2024 - City of Little Rock Golf tournament at Rebsamen Golf course.
 - ❖ 9/17/2024 - McArthur Museum – Monthly Movie showing.
 - ❖ 9/21/2024 - Mud Run Race at War Memorial Park.
 - ❖ 9/28/2024 - National Public Lands Day Cleanup/Rock Creek Trail Reopening.
 - ❖ 10/5/2024 - Logan's Memorial Run for All Abilities by Therapeutic Recreation.
 - ❖ 10/19/2024 - Creep N Crawl Run at Two River's Park.
 - ❖ Pankey Park Ribbon-cutting ceremony has been rescheduled. Check Parks website for updates.
 - ❖ Jim Dailey Fitness grand reopening next month. Parks Commissioners will receive an invitation.

Presentation:

- Recreation Department Presentation on Summer Playground Program - Deputy Director-Shawanda Craig and Recreation Programs Coordinator-Darryl Marbley
 - ❖ Presented data and results from the 2024 Summer Playground program

Unfinished Business:

- Chairman France advised that due to time will just discuss Subcommittees under Unfinished business.
 - ❖ Subcommittees – Chairman France recommended that not all subcommittees have to give a report every meeting.
 - Social Media Committee Chair - Commissioner Whiteside gave a Social Media subcommittee meeting report from their meeting.
 - Master Plan Committee – Director Couch gave update and invited subcommittee members to their upcoming meetings.
 - Commissioner Bernardo asked for information regarding the latest Master Plan.
 - Commissioner Bernardo asked a question about requesting information over email. Sr. Deputy Attorney Carpenter provided clarification.



New Business:

- How can the Parks Commission assist the Sales Tax initiative/forming a Coalition Committee. (Ex. Writing a Letter to the Paper, Parks Q&A Pop-up)
 - ❖ Chairman France asked for input on Letter of Support to the newspaper.
 - ❖ Sr. Deputy Attorney Carpenter and Director Peck provided feedback and input.
- Sales tax Initiative
 - ❖ Commissioner Fletcher asked question about signage advertising for Sales tax initiative.
 - Director Couch advised of the current state of advertising and discussed sales tax initiative and its funding process.
- Pickleball Tournament
 - ❖ Director Couch gave an update on LRPR hosting a Pickleball tournament at Rebsamen Tennis in 2025.
- New Commission Ideas
 - ❖ Ideas for raising money
 - ❖ Will table and place item on October meeting agenda.

Agenda items for next meeting:

- Deputy Director of Operation – Community Center Project updates presentation
- New Commission Ideas
- Sales tax Initiative
- Letters of Support
- Parks and Recreation Dashboard – Commissioner Mike Bernardo
- Social Media Subcommittee name change – Committee Chair - Commissioner Quinten Whiteside

Board-liaison Feedback:

- Director Peck – Litter Campaign partnership with Arkansas Beautiful at Murray Park on 10/14/2024
- Director Lewis – spoke on the progress that she sees and is happy with the information she has been able to provide to the West Central Neighborhood Association on the progress that is being made in the area with both Kanis Park, and Boyle Park updates.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:05 pm