

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Notes
Monday, June 5, 2023 5:30 PM

1. Call to Order

Chair Erika Saunders called the meeting to order at 5:47pm. Present: John Maynes, Steve Berseth, Ashley Ragsdale, Jay Larson & city staff: Asst City Manager Jake Meshke, Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry Kristin Zimmerman, Interim Assistant Director Park Recreation and Forestry Josh Bauman, Forestry superintendent Al Kruse. Absent: Doug Smith, Nathaniel Condelli Guest: Leann Hansen-Conn, Mike Lockrem and Ryan Johnson

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve agenda by John Maynes, 2nd by Ashley Ragsdale: motion carried

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve minutes with a request that minutes are sent out prior to meeting so the board has time to read the minutes by Steve Berseth, 2nd by John Maynes. Motion Carried.

4. Meet the Director:

Jake introduced Kristin Zimmerman as the new PRF director, Kristin comes from Mohave County Arizona. She has worked as the Mohave County Parks administrator for nearly three years. She worked in operations, maintenance and fundraising. Kristin was born in Iowa and has lived all over the country. After college she worked in Maryland and Missouri. She brings experience in the parks and recreation. Kristin spent 12 years in sports, aquatics and inclusion division. During her time in Arizona, she raised \$2.5 million to build a park designed especially for persons with special needs. The Brookings Park Board also introduced themselves to Kristin.

5. Discussion & Possible Action on 3M color run

Leann is part of the 3M health and safety commission as well as a member of the military support network. The health and safety commission encourages people to be healthy. The color run would be tied to cancer awareness using different colors that also represent different awareness ribbon colors for cancer. Leann stated, "that it's very hard to find anyone that hasn't been affected by cancer is some shape or form and this would be a great way to raise awareness as well as support the health of 3M staff and families." **Ashley:** How many people would you expect to attend? **Leann:** Roughly 200 to 300. **Steve:** You're just looking for the approval of the route and use of the park? **Leann:** Correct **Ashley:** What is the plan for clean up? Does the chalk just clean up with water? **Leann:** The chalk is nontoxic, washes off with water easily. **Ashley:** Does the city have an issue? **Jake:** The city doesn't have an issue; parking may be an issue but the event would be contained to the park. **Josh:** A parade permit would be required. The Park wouldn't be closed and would still remain open to the public. **Jay:** would a parade permit require insurance? **Leann:** 3M would provide the insurance and there would be waivers that would be signed. **Jake:** the chalk is washable, non-toxic? Are you aware of any allergies? **Leann:** not that I am aware of. **Ashley:** So, there is no cost to the city? **Josh:** there wouldn't be any city employees working the event, we may supply extra garbage cans and picnic tables but at no charge. **Leann:** 3M would take the responsibility of all the cleanup. John moves to approve with 3M being on the application, Ashley 2nds; motion carried.

6. Discussion & Possible Action on the Arts in the Park

Josh: Annual Brookings Summer Arts Festival is set for July 8th and 9th. Need approval to rent the park Tuesday through Thursday and the park would be shut down with exclusive use by the Summer Arts Committee. Moving forward with how it has been historically in the past. Jay motions to approve, Ashley 2nds; motion carried.

7. Discussion and possible action on corn hole tournament at Pioneer Park

Josh: Corn Hole group would like to have a tournament towards August or September. This event would be ran by a professional management company that over sees tournaments. There would be food trucks, teams would be charged a fee and the event would be a bring your own alcohol event. They would all agree to follow park rules. They would like a recommendation from the Park Board to make this an annual event. **Jay:** So, it's more than one group? **Josh:** Yes, it would be a number of different teams to have a professional tournament. **Jay:** Who will have liability insurance? **Josh:** The insurance is still in discussion; the group would set up the event and require waivers be signed by the teams. **Ashley:** Would the park be shut down? **Josh:** No, there would be about 30 teams and they would play and set up on the west side of the park. **Ashley:** What is the plan for alcohol? **Josh:** As long as there are not alcohol sales and there wouldn't be, they would just have to follow park rules. Steve moves to approve, John 2nds. **Jay:** I have concerns about liability insurance. **Josh:** The city clerk states they would just need a waiver and not need insurance and there would be no alcohol sales. **Jay:** What if someone wants to use the park? **Josh:** They wouldn't be using any of the shelters, only the park. Jay opposes; Motion carried.

8. Discussion & Possible action regarding Friends of Baseball

Jake introduces Mike and Ryan with friends of baseball. They are looking to add batters' eye and batting cages. Their approach is donation driven. Proposal to improve 2 of the existing batting cages that are currently located on school property. They would also like to build 2 additional batting cages. A review team of the city and BMU was supportive of the proposal as well as park staff. **Jake:** The high school football team currently uses that space for practice, but we wanted to make sure we weren't getting between 2 user groups. The school is also supportive. Ryan and Mike believe that the need is driven by having 300 to 400 families that are apart of Friends of Baseball. A majority of the space is used by older players and high school players. Adding the cages gives more opportunities for our youth travel teams plus all of our in-house leagues and other kids that play. It would be a public facility and open to anyone. We would be responsible for the upkeep as well. **Jake:** Doner is wanting this to be open to the public. **John:** Will the balls be thrown by machines? **Ryan:** There will be electrical outlets so that can be something we do. **John:** What if a young person is hit by a ball, is the city protected by that situation? **Ryan:** We do carry liability insurance for those type of protections. John moves to approve, Jay 2nds; motion carried.

Jake: the batters' eye would be center field, it provides contrast so when the ball is coming out of the pitcher's hand, the batter can see the ball better. This is actually a safety feature to better see the ball to catch it or move out of the way of it. This is also a donation driven project. there would be two posts and a large net. BMU would be drilling the holes. **Mike:** Feedback has been very good because people are in agreement that it has been very hard to see the ball when the sun is going down. Sr leaguer's throw anywhere between 70 to 90 mph, so this project would be for player safety. The batter's eye is just a black back drop that is hung between the two posts. Donors want to cover construction costs and cover the purchase. **Ericka:** So, it's not there all of the time? **Mike:** The poles would be there all the time, but the screen/back drop could be raised, lowered or removed. **Ashley:** Will it need to be stored in winter? **Mike:** We aren't sure about that; they may have a cover that we can get. **Ashley:** There is no opposition from the city? **Jake:** No, we are supportive. **Ashley:** There would just be an amendment to add that the city isn't responsible for the upkeep? **Jake:** Mike and Kristin will be in touch to write the amendment. Jay moves to approve the motion, Ashley 2nds; motion carried.

9. Staff highlights

Josh: Found some issues with the pumps and lift tanks at the Dakota Nature Park so we are looking at replacements. Parks is preparing for the installation of a couple of playgrounds coming up. All planters at City Hall have been planted, the planting at Hillcrest Park is done. We have been working with the Ag teacher at the High School and they grew some flowers for us in their green house. This year about 20 students came out and helped plant. This week we have phone interviews set up for Park Tech. We are intervening 5 individuals. **John:** A new position? **Josh:** Yes, individual moved from ball fields to interim parks supervisor so we need to replace his position. Hillcrest pool is open and running as of Tuesday the 31st. Ongoing maintenance, replacing pumps and working on heaters. Rec is preparing for summer programing and scheduling is going on. At Larson Ice Center, Bill and his seasonal staff are busy painting, updating and cleaning. Forestry is working to remove trees, stumps and are helping to tear out some old trails. **John:**

Tearing out trails? **Josh:** Tearing out to replace, we are getting rid of the asphalt and going to concrete. **Steve:** So, we have staffing for the pool and rec programs? **Josh:** We have everyone that we need to get going. All life guards for the season have been hired. We are still looking to fill a couple positions in parks. Edgebrook golf course hired full time golf tech Daniel May, he was seasonal and is now full time.

Forestry moved 12 trees on the left side of the number 4 fairway to line up shots better. They also removed 8 dead pine trees. Fairways have been watered 3 times in the last week to keep up with the green. July is National Park and Rec month. At the June 27th city council meeting we will have the mayor proclamation announcing July as Park and Rec month. **Jay:** I really like the upkeep on the downtown flowers that is a huge task. **John:** Any information on the contract to remove trees at the nature park? **Josh:** Yes, we will have more information coming to share.

10. Forestry updates:

Al Kruse: Brookings has been recognized the last 42 years as Tree City USA. We manage and care for over 12,000 trees. We do this by properly planting, trimming and removing dead and diseased trees. Our forestry department involves 4 full time staff; Ryan Burggraff, Alex Cox, Ryker Ramlo and Caleb Schaller. They help to keep our urban forest looking great throughout the community. We started the forest initiative in 2021 with 84 trees reimbursed. In 2022 187 trees were reimbursed. In 2023 we released an initial 200 tree vouchers and they were gone within a day and a half. 94 have been turned in so far. We currently have 9,269 boulevard trees; this doesn't include the ones we planted in 2022. The final count should be around 9,450 trees. Currently we have 2,014 park trees counted, but not all trees have been counted. These numbers do not include the Dakota Nature Park. If we inventory all parks including Dakota Nature Park, we would have closer to 10,000 trees in our parks. The current number of Ash trees is 2,511. Out of our 12,494 trees Ash trees account for 20.1%. Each year we are removing between 100 and 150 Ash trees. In the last month we have removed 11 Ash trees from the Golf Course and 7 from the boulevards. The city has an Emerald Ash Borer Management plan in place. The number of trees that we plan to treat will vary by street and an overall strategy will be to mitigate canopy loss on streets where the majority of trees are Ash. One way that we would do this is to treat every 3 trees, removing the others and planting new trees. Not every street has the same quality of Ash trees. Derald Drive has many Ash trees but many have weak canopies and are not high value Ash. 10th Street South and Medary Ave South have much larger Ash, with stronger canopies and are of higher value so would be worth treating. We would need to treat every other year to prevent Emerald Ash Borer. **Ashley:** What is the cost to treat a tree? **Al:** If it is a private sector, it will be around \$200 a tree depending on the size. If it is us, it will be 1/2 or more because we will have the products and won't be out to make a profit. **Erika:** What is the life expectancy of Ash? **Al:** 50 to 70 years in an urban environment. Roughly 800 to 1,200 may be worth treating at some point. We are planting between 300 and 400 trees a year. The city has started planting in the fall to allow trees to sit in the sand bed over the summer increasing the size of their root system, this also cuts back on time spent watering throughout the summer. Trees are being inventoried as time allows. All boulevard trees are up to date with the exception of some new plantings from the fall of 2022. Tree inventory tracks the tree sites as tree stump, removal or planting. **John:** what are we doing about the cedar trees at Dakota Nature Park? **Josh:**(showed a map of trees that they plan to remove at Dakota Nature Park). **Al:** We have already lined up someone to go out and remove the cedars in the next few weeks.

11. Discussion & Possible action on Mayors Award Nominations

Jay moves to nominate group Friends of Baseball and both Rick Wenande and Larry Amman for Mayors awards. Rick and Larry come as a pair because they have always worked together and have done a lot for baseball in the community. **Ericka:** Are they associated with Friends of baseball? **Jay:** They are donors and volunteers. Discussion on if we can nominate a pair instead of individual. Jake says that it's not set in stone that you aren't able to nominate a pair. Steve seconds Jay's nomination; motion carried. Ashley seconds the group Friends of Baseball; motion carried.

12. Project & Program Updates:

1. **Pioneer Bandshell:** Budgeted 100,000 for basket ball park renovations, received a quote for 20 to 30,000, which would save us 70,000, we could use that savings to go towards the band shell. It would

most likely be an early 2024 targeted project. **Erika:** What about grants? **Ashley:** Grants can take up to a year to get approved. Josh discusses grants. Ericka motions to prioritize any additional funds to be used towards the band shell, John 2nd; motion carried.

2. Golf Course: plan to meet with city staff June 16th to go over findings regarding the water. Focus is on manipulation the ponds by adding a liner and having an emergency alternative well site. Update in August. **John:** Please send us a summary of meeting. **Kristin:** I have already made a note to do that. **John:** What about the tee box build to look straight east? **Jake:** forestry moved trees, Greg got a quote to relocate the trees and the cost does fall in line with the budget in 2024, They prefer not to relocate, but funds would be available.

3. First Bank & Trust Rink- Dehumidification system: System has been ordered, should be here in October and will take about 3 days to install.

4. Dakota Nature Park: 10,000 in donated funds, initial plan was to use \$7000 on contractors and \$3000 for staff but since staffing is short, we would like to use all \$10000 for contractors.

5. McClemons Park: Playground to be installed June 6th. Should take about 2 weeks start to finish.

6. Lions Park: 2 weeks away. we removed the 2 to 5-year-old playgrounds, all mulch is gone and start date to install is June 19th. **John:** I have spoken with many people that have spoken very highly of Josh regarding the parks.

7. SoDak Spurs: **Jake:** Park staff are working with everyone to build relationships. We are reliant on user fees and because we are a facility provider, we met with the spurs to explain the cost of maintaining fields. The spurs wanted to do the work themselves but decided that our cost were reasonable. This will guarantee more revenue for the city while providing high quality to the user groups. We have discussed that we would consider offsetting fees if nets were donated.

8. Pickle Ball: We would like to go with concrete right away, but the group is looking for donors since we do have a gap, so we plan to reconvene in a month or so. Currently we had a line striper come in and gave 2 addition courts so currently have 6 pickle ball courts. We are working with the school, to make sure there is not conflict with tennis. **John:** What is the Gap? **Jake:** Price was 700,000. If we take the lights out, we are looking at 50,000 to 200,000.

9. 2 to 5-year-old playgrounds: Indian Hills, Camelot and Hillcrest are set to get new playgrounds. Kristin contacted a company that will give us 50% off in August. We would order in August and install all 3 next spring.

13. Upcoming Programs & Events:

- Juneteenth June 17 from 11 am – 4pm at Pioneer Park
- Summer Sol Volley-ball tournament for ALS June 24th at Sexauer Park
- Next Park and Rec Board meeting will be August 7th at 5:30pm

14. Call for Future Meeting Topics:

Jay would like to discuss the master plan in the next board meeting, Jake thanks everyone since it is his last Park, Rec and Forestry board meeting.

14. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by John, Ashley 2nds, motion carried. Meeting ended at 7:41 PM.