

City of Lawrence

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board March 14th, 2006



MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair, Bill Penny, Vice Chair, Chris Schumm, Tom Bracciano and Kelly Barth

MEMBERS ABSENT Sharon Spratt

STAFF PRESENT: Fred DeVictor, Mark Hecker, Ernie Shaw, Roger Steinbrock, Lee Ice and Interim City Manager Dave Corliss

Meeting was called to order by Chair, Penny. The Board welcomed Dave Corliss to the meeting. Minutes of the February 14th meeting were approved on a motion by Bracciano, 2nd by Barth.

The Board brought up the boundaries of the new dog park in Riverfront Park since it was reported some ATV's have been in that area. Staff reported no motorized vehicles are permitted beyond the access road and parking lot by the boat ramp. A main dog park sign is posted with rules and boundary signs are posted at various locations.

Staff reported long time City Manager, Mike Wildgen was asked to resign and he submitted his resignation effective March 10th. Staff thanked him for his long service as City Manager and pledged to work with Dave Corliss during his tenure.

DeVictor reported on the March 9th City Commission study session to utilized the Carnegie Building. Parks and Recreation Department presented a Carnegie Community Center proposal to keep the vacant facility in public use for classes and to emphasize needed space for community group meeting and activities. LPRD and the Americana Music Academy were both asked to develop written business plans for the City Commission to consider. LPRD should complete the business plan by early April.

Hecker reported on the recent City Commission approval of the Downtown Beautification Plan which will provide more beds, larger flowers and new trees in the downtown area. Additional staff and a greenhouse were part of these approvals for increased maintenance.

DeVictor reported the first meeting of the Partners for Athletics and Youth (PLAY) committee will be March 16th and the sixteen member committee will help develop goals and a request for proposal (RFP) for a needs assessment and facilities and venues for Lawrence. DeVictor asked for a Board member to serve on this new committee. Chris Schumm volunteered to be on the committee.

DeVictor reported the City Commission approved a list of park projects under a "2nd generation" parks program in the amount of \$1,940,000. Bonds will be issued for this work and the first step will be to hire engineers to finalize plans and specification. Since they all can't be done immediately, a timetable will be prepared for each project to begin over the next several years.

These last two items led the Board to a discussion about future parks and recreation projects and needs for additional indoor facilities. Staff indicated they were working to update the annual six year capital improvement plan. On a motion by Barth, seconded by Schumm, the Board voted to send a letter to the City Commission expressing concerns for continued support and funding of parks and recreation needs in the community as Lawrence continues to grow.

Board members who attended the March reception at the Depot for Friends of the Parks were thanked. Over \$93,000 was generated in cash, in kind and volunteer work during 2005.

DeVictor reported an employee survey was completed last fall and a department improvement committee is being established to address our strengths and weaknesses for continued improvements.

Lee Ice, Youth Sports Supervisor, presented a new "Our Promise to Kids" program, which promotes fun and sportsmanship in our programs for kids and parents. The program was enthusiastically endorsed by the Board.

Hecker reported on major storm clean up and additions of staff for preparations of getting parks opened and ready for spring use. Shaw reported the budget process would begin soon for 2007. Steinbrock invited the Board to the April 2nd "Day of Fun" in South Park, to celebrate 60 years of organized recreation in Lawrence.

Meeting adjourned at 1:20P.M. Next meeting April 11, 2006.