

WHITEHALL PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

June 14, 2023

MEETING LOCATION: COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Call to Order 6:27 pm

The meeting of the Whitehall Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at 6:32 PM by John Fetters.

On a roll call, in attendance: Chris Bolich, John Fetters, Mike McQuate Absent: Mike Adkins, Gerald Leka, Nate Stewart

Review minutes from Bolich second by Quincel make motion to approve minutes for May 2023 meeting, all in favor, McQuate abstain vote due to absence in May meeting.

Items 5,6 and 7 combined for Directors Report

Follow up with the outcome and recommendations of the recent Charter Review Committee. The first reading of the recommendations were at Council this week there were about 5 of them. Director Sorrell encouraged Commission to watch the Council meeting as many of these were discussed at length or pull the minutes from the meeting to review. The one that would affect the Parks and Recreation Department would be to change the way the commission seats are appointed.

Discussion was presented that the proposal would be 4 mayor appointed, 2 community appointed, and 1 school board member. It was then discussed what it looks like now with the school holding more positions on council and what it could look like in the future. Quincel recalled the parks relying on the school district for more programs and sports use of space than they currently do. The idea being that the department would be more under the instruction of the Mayor where we function more now as a park district separate leadership but joint funding. Bolich states the school board let us down with T-Ball in not backing the Parks and Recreation. Bolich mentioned the addition of new coach pitch league and the department will follow up on this.

Director Sorrell joined the strategic planning and it was a great team building activity. Director Sorrell spoke up when all of the Parks and Recreation objectives had been cut out of the top priority lists. When addressed the Mayor and Administrator were under the impression that all of the master plan had been funded for the parks department. If we are not in the top 5 of strategic planning items it is not likely to secure funding. After speaking again to the Mayor, City Administrator, Deputy Administrator and Mayor Elect the department has been given the go ahead for the master plan. The published strategic plan includes the Parks and Recreation department in the top five priorities with the goal of bringing the department to NRPA standards in the next ten years including, staffing, increasing park acres, trail

developments, pocket parks, services & essential services to identify the needs and then bring our standards to them.

Discussion was presented in the acreage of parkland in Whitehall. Fetters talked about a previous map that had once been drawn out of the city in adding pocket parks put a park within a 10-minute walk/ mile and half through the city. Director Sorrell will follow up with these previously drawn maps.

Upcoming events: Juneteenth is this weekend and 10 days after that will start the TNT (Thursday Night Thrillers) the turnover rate this summer continues to happen and we have hand 5-6 employees hired and leave before starting or walk off of the job at hand. We are hiring an office assistant to help do on off tasks including meeting follow ups, tracking trainings, ordering supplies, answering phones for about 20 hours a week to just keep up the busy work that get put to the side. Community connections is set up for next week our 2nd out of 3 planned for the year. We already have 48 service providers registered to attend and the outcome of this program/ meet and greet have been great. The Franklin County Office on Aging has started in our Senior Center and Shannon Brady is working with them to re align what they are doing with what the center needs help with. Our revenue is looking good we have received one check from Hot Dog Wally's who has been great to work with as concession share. Wally has sponsored a ball team and it has been a great partnership. Katie Quincel spoke highly of how nice the staff have been at every event. Discover is jumping on board to help us sponsor many different programs this summer. Derrion is a great fit as full time hire in the maintenance department and the staff has said how easy the transition has been. The Commission would like to have a booth at the upcoming Magical Kingdom Park Party in a meet and greet type style. We are being approached weekly with different with existing programs that are looking to move to Whitehall Parks including hockey programs, Columbus Caribbean Family Day, mental health awareness walks etc.

Bolich motion to adjourn second by Quincel. Meeting adjourned 7:17