

Chesterfield Parks and Recreation Advisory
Committee Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2014

Minutes taken by Tricia Whelan

Attendees: Alan Politte, John Gruender, Don Collins, Tricia Whelan, Cindy Lau, Mike Whelan, John Nations, Guy Tilman, Gary Stein, Mike Casey, Darcy Capstick, Laura Schellenberg
Staff Liaison: Tom McCarthy Committee Chair: Michelle Keesal

Michelle Keesal called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the November 9th, 2013 meeting were approved.

Mission Statement and Top 5 Priorities

Michelle Keesal updated the committee on the mission statement. Michelle Keesal and Tom McCarthy met and came up with the priority list of projects as identified by the committee earlier this year. They are as follows:

1. Recommend land acquisition and available land for purchase
2. Evaluate new ideas for park development and assist in the development of existing parcels
3. Water Recreation
4. Serve as special support for the Parks Department
5. Serving as Ambassadors for the Parks

Tom McCarthy stated that he is working with the planning committee on putting parcels together. There are some parcels that are in the works and council is dealing with that. Tom McCarthy discussed Wilson Park, Rivers Edge, Railroad Park and Conway Cemetery. Tom McCarthy stated that Rivers Edge will be a conservation nature park. Tom McCarthy stated that there may be additional property for sale in the future by Railroad Park. Railroad Park was a free park as it was donated to the City. Tom McCarthy recommended that the committee members notify him if any potential parcels become available.

John Nations stated that the question is what is driving the land acquisition, what is driving the decision making process on park development? John Nations said that it would be helpful to have a strategic focus. In the past, a map was obtained and parcels were identified as to whether they were for sale or not. Mike Casey asked about how to get to a site before a developer does. The property at Clayton and 141 was discussed. It was noted that the topography at that site was not conducive for a park. Tom McCarthy stated that land acquisition is out there and we are looking at the pieces. Michelle Keesal discussed how the committee can serve as support to the Parks Department. This has been done over the years and will continue.

Park Reviews/Ambassador Program

Michelle Keesal discussed the Ambassador program. This is where members could talk to people who may have visited the parks. If we are Ambassadors for the park it will help the parks. Tom McCarthy discussed the park review forms. Alan Politte suggested better signage at the Dog Park to give people information. John Gruender stated that he went by Dierberg Park and that the water is frozen. Cindy Lau stated that she had noted ice on the trails at Central Park. She also had contacted Tom McCarthy regarding someone driving a truck at Rivers Edge. Tom McCarthy stated that if it is an emergency or if it is an uncomfortable situation, then the police need to be called. Cindy Lau stated that there were some chairs that were exposed in the water at Rivers Edge Park.

Tom McCarthy asked if anyone would be interested in organizing the volunteers for various events throughout the year. Tricia Whelan stated that she would volunteer.

Police in our Parks

Tom McCarthy stated that we have a better police presence in the parks. Eight officers are shared between our parks. The parks are slow at present due to the weather but will be busy in spring, summer and fall. If the police are called they will respond quickly. There have been some vandalism issues at the CVAC and there are now cameras and security coverage and a better public address system. There have been some issues at the Amphitheater and security cameras have been installed there also. Tom McCarthy stated that there are Police Officers who have been designated for the Parks. Some of them are new hires and some are veterans. They will have identification.

Meeting Days, Dates and Times

Michelle Keesal discussed the meeting days, dates and times. It was approved to continue meeting on the second Saturday of the month at 8:30 a.m.

Staff Reports

Tom McCarthy stated that James left and went to work in Webster Groves. Liz is the new person. She is expecting and will be out for 12 weeks. Kari Johnson is going to Cambodia for two weeks in April, 2014. Tom McCarthy stated that council allowed for two additional parks maintenance people. There is a lot of work involving Rivers Edge, 141 and Olive and Spirit.

Construction Updates

Tom McCarthy stated that the bridge is now in at Lake 2 by the Amphitheater. They are in process of putting in additional retaining walls and extending the stream walk west to the pool. The bleacher covers are in at the CVAC. The solar power units are working. They are working on the fishing dock and gazebo at Rivers Edge. There are new improvements at the pool including a new diving board and painting of the pool area.

Program Facility Updates

Tom McCarthy stated that food truck Fridays will continue this summer. Also the food trucks will be at the Sounds of Summer Concert series. Tom McCarthy stated that the City has been approached about moving Taste of St. Louis to Chesterfield. Negotiations are continuing. If this occurred it would be merged into Forks and Corks going forward. It is anticipated that it would be held in September 2014. It is very exciting for the community and an awesome event.

Additional Business

Darcy Capstick updated the committee regarding the Monthly Electronics Recycling which returns February 22, 2014. Web Innovations and Technology Services a not for profit organization and the City of Chesterfield have teamed up again to provide residents with a FREE drop off location to recycle electronics. Other items collected include all sizes of reusable clothes, shoes, toys and baby items that will be donated to families in need. There will be a fee of \$5.00 for small televisions, \$10.00 for large and \$15.00 for console or larger, with a limit of two per household.

Darcy Capstick updated the committee regarding the Solar Fair which is hosted by the Chesterfield Citizens Committee for the Environment. It will be on Thursday, February 20, 2014 from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. It will be held in the Council Chambers of Chesterfield City Hall for residents, businesses and organizations such as subdivision trustees. The Fair will be an open house with a number of highly-regarded St. Louis area solar companies who will have their own booths-tables staffed by informed personnel with appropriate handout materials. Interested attendees can ask questions and receive information about the basics of solar energy from experts in the field.

Darcy Capstick updated the committee on Earth Day. It will be held on April 26, 2014 at Parkway West High School. There will be a Free Re- and E-cycling drive-through. There will be a Youth and STEMR Competition. There will be free giveaways of Planting Kits, Seeds, and Native Understory Trees and Shrubs. There will be displays by the Boy and Girl Scouts. There will be a sign up sheet available for anyone who wishes to participate. This helps encourage our youth to get into the sciences.

An update was provided on the relationship between the city and schools. We do not maintain the green space/playground around the schools. That is the schools responsibility. The playgrounds are open to anyone during non school hours. The schools maintain the playgrounds. Periodically we will have a request to replace the playground.

John Gruender discussed a school bell from an old school. They talked to Amy from the historical society and they thought they had a found the bell.

Michelle Keesal stated that next month Tom McCarthy will be doing a power point presentation updating the committee on the parks.

The Meeting was adjourned.

