

City of Wheat Ridge Parks & Recreation Commission

Wednesday, May 17th, 2023
6:30 PM

Wheat Ridge Recreation Center Conference Room
OR

Join via Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82346022916>

MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Cambria Rollo, Andy Rasmussen, Kathy Koniz, Christine Samaniuk, Pat Cervera, Karen Stanley

Commissioners Absent: John Route, Patrick Quinn, Ralph Habben

Guests: None

Staff Present: Karen O'Donnell – Parks & Rec Director
Benny Paiz – Parks, Forestry & Open Space Manager
Susan Bennett – Environmental Interpreter
Susie Anderson – Recreation Manager

1. Determination of Quorum & Call to Order

- a. Meeting was called to order at 6:33 PM

2. Introductions – Guests

- a. **Susan Bennett** – Environmental Interpreter for Parks, Forestry & Open Space

3. Approval of Minutes

- a. **April Minutes** – Commissioner Cervera moved to approve. Commissioner Samaniuk seconded. Minutes approved.

4. Unfinished Business

- a. No unfinished business

5. New Business

- a. **MFSD Funds Presentation** – Susie Anderson

- i. Slideshow presented by Susie is about the MFSD funds and how the team went about getting feedback from the youth of Wheat Ridge on how they'd like to see the funds used. Karen O'Donnell clarified that the funds are stadium redistribution funds for the sale of the Broncos stadium. There was a little over 41 million dollars that is divided among communities. We were awarded \$523,551.
- ii. The team for this consisted of Susie Anderson (Recreation Manager) and Beth June (Special Events and Volunteer Coordinator)
- iii. Timeline for this project
 1. Reviewing the Plans & Options
 2. Discussion
 3. Receive feedback
 4. Present Final Project to City Manager and City Council

- a. On the City Council Agenda for the study session on June 5th with hope of approval on June 12th.
 - 5. Secure Proposal & Contract
- iv. Options
 - 1. Anderson Park – Large nature themed playground by GameTime
 - a. Cost would be about \$386,000. Was designed by Parks & Recreation Staff and proposed to the youth. Video was presented that showed a rendering of what the playground would look like.
 - 2. Anderson Park – Rail rider with fitness equipment by GameTime
 - a. Already have the Rail Rider playground component so would like to implement it with this option. The rest of the play area would be more of a ninja-style youth fitness equipment.
 - 3. Anderson Park – Rail Rider with Fitness Equipment by Recreation Plus
 - a. Alternative to option #2 and the cost is similar as well but done by a different company.
 - 4. Anderson Park – Rail Rider with All in Once by Game Time
 - a. Utilizes the rail raider still but the other equipment is all one-piece verse separate pieces.
 - 5. Anderson Park – Memo by Yalp – Interactive play pillars
 - a. 3 pieces that are on a pad that have pillars that have different interactive games for kids to play that has them running around and touching the pillars. These are solar powered so don't require any electricity and gives wider options of placement in the park.
 - 6. Green at 38th – Sona by Yalp – Interactive dance and play arch
 - a. Arch is a solar powered and when you touch it, it puts you through a game that gets you moving.
 - 7. Wheat Ridge Recreation Center – Fono by Yelp – Interactive DJ Booth
 - a. Directed more towards older kids and the thought was to install it near the Rec Center Barn. Was questioned about if the sound level can be controlled – yes you can set it up so the volume does not get super loud and disruptive.
- v. Questions
 - 1. Commissioner Cervera
 - a. Are we looking at just one option? This depends on what is chosen. If the big park is chosen, due to funding, one additional option could be selected. If for some reason the big park is not selected, then probably could put together 3, possibly 4 options.
 - b. Are the first playgrounds at Anderson Park, one at 38th? The large playground would be in the large open area to the West of the current Nature playground. The other Anderson options would be in the location of the current Anderson Park playground is located. That playground is marked for replacement so one of those options being selected would be good in a budget sense. Then the Arch option is being proposed for the Green at 38th park and the DJ booth in the open area next to the WRRC barn.
 - c. Is the DJ booth okay with the winter weather we have? All Yalp items are all weather proof.
 - 2. Commissioner Stanley

- a. How sturdy is the Yelp equipment? Built for the age groups that are rougher on equipment. And are supposed to be made from material that makes graffiti removal easier. Specifically for the DJ booth, the thought is to place it right outside the Rec Center to keep a better eye on it with staff and the public going by so it might keep the chance of vandalism lower.
 - b. Concerned about the feedback not including middle school ages groups and wondering the feedback can be gotten from middle schoolers? Sun Camp ranges from 6- to 12-year-old but Susie will check the ages. Also keep in mind that the playground components are more directed at the 5- to 12-year-old age ranges.
 - 3. Commissioner Rollo
 - a. What is being asked of the commission? This whole project is being driven by the youth and this presentation is more to keep the commissioners aware.
 - 4. Karen O'Donnell
 - a. Where is the feedback coming from? Original feedback request was sent out to all youth that have utilized programming through the recreation center. Will be getting more from the Sun Camp participants on June 5th.
 - 5. Commissioner Samaniuk
 - a. Concern about the feedback not including those youth with disabilities and that the playgrounds did not look like they had much accessibility for those with disabilities. Susie clarified that the Sun camp does have some participants with disabilities and mentioned specific playground components that are more disability drive. Beth June is the ADA person as well as ran the therapeutic recreation for those with disabilities, and she was part of this projects team. Although the playgrounds are not fully accessible, they do include elements that are.
- b. Leave No Trace Presentation – Susan Bennett**
 - i. Activity about what bothers you the most, all examples of things that leave traces and how the connect to the 7 principles of Leave No Trace. Walked through the 7 Principles of Leave No Trace, this included hand gestures to help you remember the principles.
 - ii. Benny Paiz asked if Leave No Trace is applied just to Native areas and not the Parks? Yes but no, there are principles that can be applied to park areas, for example leaving your trash, but many principles are more for backcountry.
 - iii. Passed out Leave No Trace & Principles cards that remind you what the principles are.
 - iv. There are 2 different kinds of classes. The presentation during commission meeting is more of a Leave No Trace Awareness meetings that's purpose is to get people thinking about the program and its principles. The other option is a Trainer Class, that is taught over 2 days that basically trains you to teach the awareness classes. Goes more in depth about the principles and covers more of the back country aspects. A trainer class is being taught June 2nd and 3rd at Prospect Park and can be found in the activity guide. There will not be the camping aspect as it'll be focusing on front country but will touch base about back country.

- v. Leave No Trace Spotlight – The city of Wheat Ridge was chosen as one of twenty to host a Spotlight event on the Greenbelt. Would like to invite the entire Commission to participate in the entire event, June 15th to 17th. There will be tabling, a social hour at New Image Brewery with trivia, an informal pickleball tournament, and a stewardship event. The Leave No Trace team will be in attendance for the event. The stewardship event will be a habitat restoration for pollinators on the Green Belt. Currently growing the plants to be planted and if more than the minimum number of people show up and the planting goes quickly, have an alternative of trash pick-up along the trail. There will be free snow cones at the end. Mayor Starker will be in attendance.
- vi. Stakeholder Input - Wrap-up and site assessment meeting where the Leave No Trace team will talk to the Wheat Ridge team about where we are in the process, the ideas they have for our team like where we can make good changes. That will be hosted at the Recreation Center on June 16th from 1:30 to 3:30. Karen O'Donnell will email this information out to the Commissioners.
- vii. There will be a Wellness Walk, also on June 16th that starts at 8:30 – 8:30 AM at Prospect Park. There are 2 walks, one is a half mile and the other will be a mile and a half.
- viii. One of the goals that the WR staff members are aiming for, is to be a Gold Standard Leave No Trace site. Colorado Springs just achieved this standard. This means that we are doing the most we possibly can within the community to educate. This includes trainings, educational opportunities for the public, signage, and many other aspects.
- ix. The volunteer event does have a capacity limit of 45 people. You can scan the QR code, and it will take you to the sign-up form.
- x. Questions
 - 1. Commissioner Stanley asked if there have been any presentations done with the local schools. Susan explained that she has already been working through different grades at different schools and the different activities that the children have been learning from. The Leave No Trace traveling team will be doing a presentation with Sun Camp on the 15th.
 - 2. Commissioner Rollo asked if there are still people that monitoring on the trails, rangers, or CSO's? Susan has a meeting with the CSO's to discuss the Leave No Trace program so they can help promote the program as they see things on the trail. The goal is to have volunteers that help with this educational process as well as staff.
 - 3. Commissioner Rasmussen commented that concerned citizens of Wheat Ridge like the dirt trails and would like to see a balance between recreational use and conservation.
- c. Vacancy on Parks & Recreation Commission
 - i. Patrick Quinn is leaving due to interest in the Planning Commission where a spot opened. He was representing District 3.
- d. Letter of Support – Federal Grant
 - i. Brandon has been working with the City's Forestry Team on this grant. If awarded, it will result in an additional entry level Forestry position within the city, 10 weeks of urban use forestry work, increase contracted Forestry work, and other aspects that will assist in expanding the Forestry program within the City.
 - ii. Commissioner Rasmussen – comment about moving the last paragraph before the fourth paragraph. The paragraph addressing the Cultural Commission seems out of place, Karen will fix that.

- iii. Motion to approve the letter with the edit of Commission name being corrected made by Commissioner Rasmussen. Seconded by Commissioner Samaniuk. No objections.

6. Upcoming City Council Meeting - Parks & Recreation Items

a. May 22nd

- i. Amendment to City Code regarding the ADA access on the conservation trail. Although this has been done already, it is mentioned in multiple places in the city code, and it was only changed in one place. This is to approve changing it in all locations in the municipal code.
- ii. Adoption of the Open Space Management Plan – Taylor will be presenting the final draft
- iii. Public Art Donation Agreement – There is an origami horse sculpture being donated. Requested that the city will pay for transportation, installation, and a plaque. Will be installing it at Prospect Park closer to the trail or pavilion if it is approved by council.

b. June 12th – Leave No Trace Proclamation & Stadium Redistribution Funds proposal presentation.

c. June 26th – Parks & Recreation Month Proclamation for the month of July

7. Staff Updates

- a. Lifeguard Shortage** – currently short 26 lifeguards to have the indoor and outdoor pool open in the mornings at the same time. Have already advertised that the indoor pool will be closed while the outdoor pool is open.

8. Future Agenda Items

- a.** Future use of the Recreation Center Barn

9. Commissioner Comments

- a.** Commissioner Cervera – Jim Roemmelt mentioned to Pat at an event at Happiness Gardens that after removing a tree, there was a stump left over that would be great for a carving. Benny explained that he gave permission to Jim to do the leg work to get pricing and ideas.

10. Adjournment

- a.** Meeting was adjourned at 8:16 PM