

## PARKS & RECREATION BOARD MEETING

September 14, 2004

The Parks and Recreation Board held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 14, 2004, at 8:30 a.m. in the Community Services conference room. Board members present were Amber Cree, Gail Russey, Dave Merrill, Susan Arrington, Toney Gutierrez and John Goode. Board members absent were Randal Crosswhite. Community Services staff present were Mike Hall, Director; Tony Neitzler, Assistant Director; Carl Scott, Senior Citizens/Recreation Administrator, Susan Gerred, Recreation Supervisor; Bob Cheatham, Parks Superintendent; Mike Elrod, Parks Operations Supervisor; Jeff Bullock, Zoo Superintendent; and Sondra Cox, Executive Secretary.

Chair, Amber Cree called the meeting to order.

Invocation was given by Dave Merrill.

Gail Russey moved that the minutes of the July 13, 2004, meeting be approved. Dave Merrill seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried.

Service Award Presentation: Tony Neitzler presented five-year service awards to Steve Miller from the Recreation Division, Ricardo Rangel from the Parks Division, Corin Dobbs from the Zoo, and Al Flores from the Recreation Division.

**Review Outdoor Sculpture Request:** Bob Cheatham informed the Board that it was time once again to approve the placement of the Outdoor Sculpture Exhibit. Lynn Barnet with the Outdoor Sculpture Committee informed the Board that the four recommended exhibits had been to the Visual Arts Jury for approval. As the pieces are small in scale, it was the recommendation of the Visual Arts Jury that the exhibit be placed along the right-of-way from Vleta's Candies to The Arrangement, utilizing Everman Park. Gail Russey recommended that the Parks and Recreation Board approve the Outdoor Sculpture Exhibit and the placement along the right-of-way at Everman Park. Susan Arrington seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried.

**Presentation of Fall Program:** Carl Scott reported that the Division is continuing to educate the public on the availability of the brochure on the City's Internet. The Division is working on expanding the Digital Divide program that is currently at the Daniels Recreation Center to the other centers. Ballroom dancing and toddler Tuesday classes are a couple of new classes that are being offered. Our country and western dance, sign language, and dog obedience classes continue to do well. Special events that the division will be hosting this quarter are the Punt, Pass, & Kick competition and the Boo at the Zoo.

**Budget Update:** Tony Neitzler informed the Board that Community Services Department's budget was approved as submitted, with only minor adjustments and with out loss of staff.

**Local Park Fund Update:** Tony Neitzler reported that the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department held a public meeting regarding the outdoor recreation grant process. One of the proposals that the State is considering changing would be revising the requirement of cities to update their parks master plans from every five years to every ten years. The other proposal would be to give preference to cities that lie in a triangle from Dallas to Houston to Austin. The City of Abilene did express our happiness with the change in the master plan requirement and our discontent with the other proposal. Amber Cree recommended that

members of the Parks and Recreation Board also write to the Texas and Parks and Wildlife regarding the grant process.

**Operational Report:** (Recreation/Senior Citizens) Carl Scott reported that on September 11 a group of 22 senior citizens took a trip to the Fort Worth Zoo and the Grapevine Mills Mall. On October 14 a trip is being planned to attend the State Fair of Texas. Wednesday, September 15 will be senior citizens day at the West Texas Fair. On September 17 the division will be hosting a breakfast for the volunteers that help at the senior centers. The Recreation Division is in full swing with the After-school Program. We are taking registration for adult flag football. Plans are being made for the Boo at the Zoo that will be held on Saturday, October 23. The Punt, Pass, and Kick competition will be held on Saturday, October 9 at Rose Park.

**Operational Report:** (Parks) Bob Cheatham reported that it had been a busy summer with all the rain. Major projects that are planned for the 2004-05 year include:

Nelson Park Softball Complex, Restrooms - A restroom building is being added in the complex to better accommodate the crowds during tournaments. The architectural drawings and specifications should be approved and ready for the bid process in September '04. Hopefully the building will be in service for the start of the spring 2005 season.

Remodeling of the Stevenson Park restroom building - The existing building included recreational rooms that haven't been in use since the 60's. The restrooms are very small and will be expanded into the other vacant rooms to provide more restroom utilities for neighborhood events. Funding will be available to begin the design process in November.

Bowie Park Playground - The existing playground was built in 1988. It will be replaced to meet current safety and accessibility standards. The Bowie Elementary PTA is assisting with funding to add an area for the kindergarten-first grade ages. Bidding for the equipment is pending accumulation of adequate funds in the Parks Bucks Program. The goal is to be complete in March '05. Park crews will perform the construction.

Wylie Senior League Baseball Field - The Wylie Baseball League has constructed a senior league field at Lake Kirby Park. Sports lighting will be added by the City this winter. Park crews with assistance from City electricians will do the installation.

Redbud Park Trail - The exercise trail has exercise stations spaced along it that were installed 20 years ago. Thanks to a local benefactor, we will replace those with new stations this fall.

Will Hair Park Softball - Park crews will construct a second story storage/score keeper room over the existing concession building. It will be ready for the spring 2005 season.

Redbud Baseball Parking Lot Lights - WTU will install 4 lights in the parking lots this winter to be ready for the spring baseball season.

**Operational Report:** (Zoo) Jeff Bullock reported that the Zoo would be hosting the children during the construction of the Fort Imagination playground. Boo at the Zoo will be held on October 23. We are expecting to have 25 to 30 treat stops. The Recreation Division will be entertaining the crowd waiting in line. In an effort to ease the crowding that occurs in spring, the Zoo will be hosting more school tours in the fall. We have several after-hour rental events coming up at the Zoo. Zoofest will be October 9, which is a members only event.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:15 a.m.