

PARKS & RECREATION BOARD MEETING

May 3, 2005

The Parks and Recreation Board held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 3, 2005, at 8:30 a.m. in the Community Services conference room. Board members present were Amber Cree, Gail Russey, Dave Merrill, Randal Crosswhite, Susan Arrington, Toney Gutierrez and John Goode. Community Services staff present were Mike Hall, Director; Tony Neitzler, Assistant Director; Carl Scott, Senior Citizens/Recreation Administrator, Susan Gerred, Recreation Supervisor; Anita Vigil, Special Events Coordinator; Bob Cheatham, Parks Superintendent; Mike Elrod, Parks Supervisor, Jeff Bullock, Zoo Superintendent; Carolyn Foster, Attorney, and Sondra Cox, Executive Secretary.

Chair, Amber Cree called the meeting to order.

Invocation was given by Toney Gutierrez.

Dave Merrill moved that the minutes of the November 2, 2004, meeting be approved. Gail Russey seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried.

Gail Russey moved that the minutes of the February 1, 2005, meeting be approved. Randal Crosswhite seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried.

Service Award: Mike Hall presented Dorothy Dail with a 15-year service award. Ms. Dail is the head cook in the Senior Citizens Division.

Request to Charge Admission: Bob Cheatham reported that the Abilene Slow-pitch Softball Association is making their annual request to charge admission to several tournaments. There are eight tournaments beginning on March 5 and will run through November 6 that the association is requesting to charge. All proceeds will be used in the upgrade and maintenance of the facilities. Gail Russey made a motion to ratify the tournaments that have already taken place and recommend approval to charge for the other tournaments. Toney Gutierrez seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried.

Spring Brochure: Carl Scott reviewed the spring brochure with the Board, noting that sign language and dog obedience classes continue to do well. The Recreation Division is also offering some toddler classes. The brochure is highlighting the division's summer activities. This year the funds are limited on the amount of scholarship that will be available for the Summer Playground Program. Partial scholarships will be available and the participants will be asked to pay 50% of the registration fee for the first child.

Participation Report: (Recreation/Senior Citizens) Carl Scott reported on the participation in the Recreation and Senior Citizens Divisions for the months of December, January, and February. Mr. Scott reported that participation in recreation classes, special events, and unstructured user hours were down slightly. The participation at the Tennis Center continues to increase. Athletics have declined slightly with the decrease in the population. Mr. Scott reported that the participation in the Senior Citizens programs continue to rise. The number of meals served increase 2,000 over last year's numbers. (Golf) Mike Hall reported that the participation at the golf course is up over last year's numbers. The new greens have come in very well and are looking good. Staff is expecting numbers to increase over the summer.

2006 Budget Schedule: Mike Hall reviewed the budget calendar with the Board. Noting that the Revenue Budget was submitted in April and the Expense Budget will be due to Finance on May 11. The City Manager's proposed budget will be submitted to the City Council in mid-June. The City is expecting a slight increase in revenues, however those are being offset by the increase in fuel charges.

Operational Report: (Recreation/Senior Citizens) Carl Scott reported that 356 people attended the Daddy/Daughter Date Night and 120 attended the Mother/Son Dinner and Bingo Night. The Easter Egg Hunt was held on March 19. The Steam N-Wheels Bike Race was also held on March 19 with 207 participants. This year for the first time, the Recreation Division held a Dribble, Pass and Shoot competition. There were 94 individuals that participated in this soccer competition. Cobb Recreation Center held a lock-in and 40 children attended. The annual Senior Volunteer Luncheon was held on April 13. The Senior Games will be held on May 5-7 and the Senior Jamboree will be on May 17. A trip to Santa Fe, New Mexico is being planned on August 15 for the senior citizens. At the recent Texas Recreation and Parks Society conference Anita Vigil was awarded the Jerry D. Garrett Memorial Young Professional Award.

Operational Report: (Parks) Bob Cheatham reported that the Parks Division has been busy fighting weeds. He also reported on vandalism that occurred at Everman Park. About 100 feet of the Boston ivy was ripped off the wall. An Eagle Scout raised the funds to have eight large live oaks planted at the entrance to Lake Kirby Park.

Operational Report: (Zoo) Jeff Bullock reported that the Zoo had their highest attendance ever in April. All three of the colobus monkeys that were recently born at the zoo have died. One from a bacterial infection and the other two were killed by the group. Tanzy the elephant is now coming out of the barn due to receiving anti-anxiety drugs. The Zoo has two additional black bears and two Zebras. The spider monkeys are back on exhibit after the renovation and repair of the exhibit. Zoolute to Dyess is scheduled for Saturday, May 21, Zoo Day on June 4, and Sunset Safari is set to begin on June 2. The Zoo received a grant from the Community Foundation to be used for summer camp for 40 at-risk kids that were identified by AISD. Rep. Randy Neugebauer has agreed to join the Congressional Zoo and Aquarium Caucus that was created in April in order to better inform our legislators on captive and wild animals.

Mike Hall reported that the Community Services Department was awarded funding through the Certificate of Obligation Program for the following projects:

- Replace the walkways at the Zoo
- Re-pave the roads in Rose Park
- Replace the walking trail at Rose Park
- Add 25 parking spaces at the Rose Park Bridge Club
- Finish lighting the trail at Nelson Park
- Add parking at Lake Kirby
- Add a playground at Lake Kirby
- Replace the maintenance building at Rose Park
- Finish paving the trail at Redbud Park
- Add a fishing pier at Johnson Park

A question was asked on the status of the sports authority. Mr. Hall reported that it is currently serving in a support role to the existing leagues by working as an information-clearing house and by hosting tournaments.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:25 a.m.