

PARKS & RECREATION BOARD MEETING

8-01-06

The Parks and Recreation Board held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, August 1, 2006, at 8:30 a.m. in the Community Services conference room. Board members present were Amber Cree, Gail Russey, Mike Schweikhard, Leroy King and Toney Gutierrez. Board members absent were Moses Hall and Susan Arrington. Community Services staff present were Mike Hall, Director; Tony Neitzler Assistant Director; Carl Scott, Senior Citizens/Recreation Administrator, Bob Cheatham, Parks Superintendent; Jeff Bullock, Zoo Superintendent; Mike Varner, Parks Supervisor; Theresa James, Legal and Linda Hansen, Executive Secretary.

Chair, Amber Cree called the meeting to order.

Invocation was given by Leroy King.

Gail Russey moved that the minutes of the June 6, 2006, meeting be approved. Mike Schweikhard seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried.

Presentation of Service: Mike Hall presented Al Stokes with a 5-year service award. Al is a Crew Chief with the Parks Division.

Participation Report: (Recreation) Carl Scott reported Recreation class hours are up and instructor user hours are down, these hours offset each other, due to the use of the class rooms. We are seeing it harder to get classes for the six-week classes, due to the length of commitment. We did not have an Easter Egg Hunt this year due to the drop in participation. More efforts were given to the Daddy/Daughter Date night and the Mother/Son Movie night. After hour user hours have seen an increase, with all the activities. Facility rentals are up this quarter. Group meeting hours are down due the disbanding of a walking group at Daniels. Mr. Scott reported that the Tennis Center clinic is up with the new instructors that are now working with the Tennis Center. Softball numbers have dropped; youth softball numbers are also down. Youth soccer games are no longer being held at our facilities.

Participation Report: (Senior Citizens) Carl Scott reported that the numbers are down this quarter. The exercise classes continue to grow, the donations made by a citizen has allowed them to expand the exercise program.

Participation Report: (Golf) Mike Hall reported that the grounds are holding similar to last year. Mr. Hall took David Vela on a tour of the Golf Course. The greens are recovering very well with 90% coverage. They are looking at not over seeding this winter, continuing with Bermuda and painting greens this winter.

2007 Budget Schedule: Mike Hall stated that the City Council approved the budget on the first reading per the City Managers recommendations. Mayor Norm Archibald sent a letter that reviews the budget and the plans. There will be public hearings in September. The Parks Master Plan Budget was increased by \$75,000 for the 10-year plan. This will bring us in line to be eligible for additional grant dollars to match the bond election dollars to use at Johnson Park or the ball field lighting projects. The Board will be asked to be involved in the Parks Master Planning. Preliminary Request for Proposal is in process. The propose to be funded is the picnic pavilion at Carver Park, a petition that was submitted by local residents helped with getting approval to have this project in the proposal for this years budget. Approved in the first reading of the budget was a 3 – 5 % pay for performance monies that will allow us to reward the top performers in a pay for performance. There were no cut backs in any of our programs at this time. Community Services was able to fund the total budget for the Zoo education coordinator. A large increase in expenses is due to fuel and utilities. Certificates of Obligations were issued for the remainder of the lighting at Nelson Park Trail and replacing the playground at Lee Park and replacing the Ball Field concessions and scorekeeper stand.

Operations: (Senior Citizens) Carl Scott informed us that the seniors will be taking a bus tour to Granbury for a day of shopping and shows. September 6th will be the Volunteer Luncheon. September 16th will be the Senior Day at the Fair; all seniors will be given free admission and will be responsible for the bingo. December 8th will be the annual fundraiser and bazaar.

Operations: (Recreation) Carl Scott stated that we are in the middle of summer program. Due to the evaluation of the numbers from last year, two sites were closed. Even with the two closing there was still an increase in enrollment of 44 children and a large savings. The third session began today. The movie in the park in June was “March of the Penguins” with an attendance of around 100 people. The next movie in the park will be Friday with the feature being Wallace and Gromit. AEP helps sponsor this event with the adjusting of the lights. Registration was down this year with the track club. A new track club was developed and practices began earlier in the year, there was also another club that was an after school program. This weekend was the regional TRAP’s Track meet with 19 of the 41 kids registered qualifying for State. Carl and Susan Gerred attended and worked the State meet with over 3000 kids attending.

Operations: (Parks) Bob Cheatham informed the board that the lighting project that was approved in the bond election is under way with the proposal being sent and CADCO being selected as the engineering firm. Bids should be sent in for late September or early October for the placement of the lighting before the season begins in March. The crews mowing have slowed due to the lack of rain. Vandalism is high so that keeps the crews busy keeping the areas cleaned that have been vandalized. Maintenance on irrigation is a continuing issue with the problems with dry ground and shifting of the ground. The ballparks water at night, and a problem is not known until a brown spot is noticed. Lake Kirby pump has been down that is used to water. The Zoo sign is up and seems to be very popular to the visitors of the Zoo. There will be more work done on the surrounding of the sign. Mr. Cheatham introduced Mike Varner the new supervisor, will be working

with Tom Jones on supervising the crews, he came from El Paso and has a lot of experience working with turf. Mr. Hall informed the board that they are working with the electrical crew to schedule all wiring for the lighting on the new Zoo sign.

Operations: (Zoo) The work continues on the new entry and learning center complex, the slab is poured for part of the building and should be pouring the gift shop area, they have to pour in the early morning due to the heat. Request for proposals have been sent out for the Elm Creek Back Yard Project to several local and out of town companies, the deadline is August 14, 2006. The 12" of dirt is being removed from the Prong Horned exhibit to make ready for the South American area. July 2 was the Zoo's 40th anniversary at Nelson Grover Park, there was the sign dedication and all citizens were invited with free admission with about 2500 in attendance. The Festival on the 4th was hosted at the Zoo with activities and the serenade at the Zoo the 4th also with about 200 in attendance with a view of the fireworks over Nelson Lake. Staff is short with one employee out with hip surgery and with two giving resignation. July 11th and 12th the Abilene Zoo hosted the Atwater Prairie Chicken Recovery Team meeting. This year around 35 chicks were sent to be released and some will be held to use for further breeding purposes. The US Fish and Wildlife service was very impressed with our track record and has asked us to expand our operation. There are five other Zoos' that are in the breeding program. Attendance for June 11,658 the total for the year was 92,752 at the end of the third quarter. September 21, 2006 Jack Hanna will be here for a benefit dinner, he will be here for the day to have a presentation for the 5th graders.

Meeting was adjourned.