

## **PARKS & RECREATION BOARD MEETING**

8-14-2007

The Parks and Recreation Board held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, August 14, 2007, at 8:30 a.m. in the Education Building at the Zoo. Board members present were Amber Cree, Gail Russey, Toney Gutierrez, Susan Arrington and Leroy King. Board members absent were Moses Hall and Mike Schweikhard. Community Services staff present were Mike Hall, Director; Tony Neitzler, Assistant Director; Carl Scott, Senior Citizens/Recreation Administrator; Bob Cheatham, Parks Administrator; and Linda Hansen, Executive Secretary.

Amber Cree called the meeting to order – 8:30 a.m...

Invocation was given by Gail Russey.

Gail Russey moved that the minutes of the July 10, 2007, meeting be approved. Leroy King seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried.

**Parks, Recreation and Senior Citizens Master Plan Update:** Ms. Cree gave the introduction of Jim Carrillo with Halff and Associates to the board. Mr. Carrillo introduced his assistant Kimberly Annice, she helps with producing the maps and charts. Mr. Carrillo stated that it is a wonderful time for the Parks System in Abilene. After meeting with the Board, civic organizations and public meetings, he has determined that, in general, the people are consistently pleased with the Parks Department and that there is a desire to take Parks development to the next level. People realize the importance of the Park Systems to the City with its growth and changes. They have noted that the system has been moving forward, but would like to see a step up in the changes with first class facilities. Mr. Carrillo stated that he will be reviewing the results from the surveys and reviewing a draft of the action plan looking at the big picture. There were 400 surveys completed. (See attached 2007 Parks and Recreation Survey cumulative results and the Draft Action Plan 2007-2017.) Ms. Cree asked if college students were targeted for the survey. Mr. Carrillo stated that they did not target the college students because they wanted a picture of the permanent residents of Abilene.

Mr. Carrillo stated that there are 3 different ways they look at needs assessments; one is pure numbers compared on the level of usage, and one is by demand and correlates back to the facilities that we currently have. The third way is where the opportunity areas are, and what resources the City has that can be used to enhance the Parks. The most important part of the Park Plan is the Action Plan. The Action Plan is like a list of things that can be accomplished in this time period. The overview is a 10 year plan. The staff will, on a periodic basis, look at the plan and analyze what has been accomplished and what might need to change. So, the plan is a living plan as the City evolves and grows. These actions are not necessarily just a “10 year plan.” The Plan also looks into the future and what will continue to be an asset. Mr. Carrillo asked the board to give an

opinion on the importance of specific areas that are potential improvements on the plan. The dollar range is important so that the projects can be completed with the dollars allotted. (See attached Draft Action Plan 2007-2017.) Mr. Carrillo stated that they would like to have the plan approved by the Texas Parks and Wildlife by the end of November. Ms. Cree stated that she would like to see children in the parks again. Mr. Carrillo stated that places like spray grounds and shaded areas and new technology in play areas, like rock climbing will entice the new generation. Also areas like Kirby and Ft. Phantom where families can enjoy the view and have a place where the children can play will be important. Mr. Carrillo stated that there will be a formal document presented for the Board's approval and then given to council for approval. Mr. Carrillo suggested a park survey every 3 to 4 years to see if the citizens are pleased with the changes in the Park System and to review the plan.

Meeting adjourned 9:30 a.m.