

## PARKS & RECREATION BOARD MEETING

August 17, 2021

**The Parks and Recreation Board held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, July 20, 2021 at 8:30 a.m. in the Council Chambers. Board members present were David Pittman, Jeff Goodin, Gary Grubbs, Robyn Wertheim, Michael Homer and Leigh Black. Community Services staff present were Lesli Andrews, Director, Chris Gibson, Assistant Director, Richard Rodgers, Assistant Director, Ann Hall, Recreation Division Manager, Bobby Brown, Senior Services Division Manager, Jesus Coronado, Parks Division Manager, Jesse Pottebaum, Zoo Division Manager, Kelly Messer, Legal and Janina Aguero, Secretary.**

David Pittman called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

**Invocation** Gary Grubbs gave the invocation.

**Open forum for public comment:** Bill Enriquez spoke about Sears Park rename and history of knowing the Sears family.

**Acceptance of Minutes from July 20, 2021:** Jeff Goodin moved the minutes be approved. Robyn Wertheim seconded. With all in favor, the motion carried.

**Letter of Support for Texas Parks & Wildlife Grant:** Richard Rodgers spoke about grant and using this for a new fishing dock at Lake Fort Phantom that is also ADA acceptable. Richard spoke about how fishing has become more popular the last 18 months. With this new fishing dock it helps create a better habitat. Michael Homer gave more information about the dock and the use of the fishing location with ample parking and can be maintained by the City. This is 100% refundable grant and will be beneficial and more accessible to deeper water. The floating dock can be adjusted and most likely require less maintenance. Jeff Goodin moved to approve letter. Leigh Black seconded. With all in favor, the motion carried.

**Abilene Zoological Society Agreement:** Lesli Andrews stated that this would be an agreement between the City of Abilene and the Abilene Zoological Society. Abilene Zoological Society to be fundraising and development 501c3 for the Abilene Zoo. The term of agreement is 5 years with the option for 5 additional years. Robyn Wertheim moved to approve agreement. Gary Grubbs seconded. With all in favor, the motion carried.

**Sale of Alcohol at Rose Park Baseball Field to Support Prospective Professional Minor League Baseball Program:** Lesli Andrews introduced Scott Kirk to show presentation of bringing Minor League Baseball to the Rose Park Baseball field with the sale of Alcohol. Scott showed visuals of field reconstruction and future visualizations for Big League Field. Scott spoke about the design of the field and the field being constructed for entertainment purposes, and the need for the sales of alcohol to make this successful. Scott discussed the funding for this upgrade will be provided by private donations and corporate partnerships. Gary Grubbs made a motion to recommend the sales of alcohol at Big League Field and Rose Park. Leigh Black seconded. With all in favor the motion carried.

**Request to Charge Fees at Festival Gardens:** Lesli Andrews discussed LULAC's tournament and the request to charge a \$10 entrance fee at Festival Gardens. LULAC will be hosting a weekend event including a concert. Robyn Wertheim moved to approve LULAC charging a \$10 fee. Jeff Gooding seconded. With all in favor, the motion carried.

**Request to Rename Arthur Sears Park to Cesar Chavez Park:** Lesli Andrews discussed receiving two letters requesting the name change of Arthur Sears Park to Cesar Chavez Park since the demolition of the Cesar Chavez building. Bill Enriquez spoke about living in Abilene his whole life and knowing the Sears family. Bill discussed not trying to diminish the name of Sears Park and this is a difficult decision to make, but with the area being predominantly Hispanic he feels like this name change would reunite and bring pride to the community. Samuel Garcia spoke next. Samuel said the name change would represent the essence of the neighborhood and is a name that kids can relate to. Gary Grubbs asked if anyone had reached out to family to make them aware of the request for the name change. Gary asked that the staff work on contacting the Sears family to discuss the request. No motion passed.

**Aquatics Report:** Bobby Brown discussed Adventure Cove moving to being open only on weekends. Adventure Cove has a dive in movie coming up on August 20<sup>th</sup>. Bobby discussed the Doggie Splash Day on September 11<sup>th</sup> and also being the last day open for the season.

**Seniors Report:** Bobby Brown discussed the pool tournament and bingo events being successful. Bobby discussed the upcoming talent show on Saturday, August 21<sup>st</sup>. Bobby discussed the center having 24 acts, and expecting a good turnout.

**Parks Report:** Jesus Coronado gave the Parks report. Jesus discussed the parks team working on the Minter Fountain and replacing a lot of nozzles to get it back to working conditions. Parks department assisted with moving monuments on South 1<sup>st</sup> street in conjunction with the Visual Arts board. Jesus discussed working on the Sears Park ramp way and the process of repairing accessible pathways at the parks.

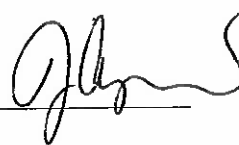
**Recreation Report:** Ann Hall discussed the completion of Summer Camp programs at all centers. Ann discussed the After School program already full and almost at capacity. The Haunted Half Marathon is coming up on October 9<sup>th</sup> and registration is now open.

**Zoo:** Jesse Pottebaum discussed the start of Philharmonic Concert Series September 18 and October 2 along the lake wall of the zoo. Jesse discussed the recent acquired Macaw and will be on display in a couple of weeks. Jesse discussed the attendance level to be a record season with at least 250,000. These numbers have been record breaking and surpassing past guest total.

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:42am.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David Pittman, Parks Board Chairman

9/21/21   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary