



Gates Recreation and Parks Commission Meeting February 14, 2017



Those in attendance:

Commissioners:	Rhoda Ride	Steve Murphy
	Eileen Andrews	John Unson
	Rob Keister	Greg Westbrook
Director:	Linda Fowler	
Liaison:	Chris DiPonzio	
Absent:	Brom Bianchi	

The meeting was called to order promptly at 6:27 PM by Rhoda Ride.

Rhoda Ride gave a brief update on the status of the health of Gates Police Officer Lance Duffy and passed a get-well card around for all at the table to sign. Rhoda will send it to Officer Duffy from the Commission.

The minutes from the January meeting were reviewed. Linda Fowler asked that the following changes be made to the minutes:

- Under Old Business - Remove the first part of the sentence, "the asphalt pads have been removed." Nothing to replace it.
- Under Old Business - Change the second part of the aforementioned sentence to read, "A commitment for the sealing and striping of the asphalt pad has been signed."

After a brief discussion concerning these changes, a motion was made by Steve Murphy and seconded by Eileen Andrews the minutes of the January meeting be accepted with these amended statements. The vote was unanimous to accept the minutes with these changes.

Financial Report:

The financial reports from the months of December and January were reviewed. The following are highlights of that discussion:

- Rhoda Ride asked for an explanation of the monies listed under Budget Code A7020.100 - Adult Service Coordinator. Linda Fowler explained that represented severance pay for a former employee.
- Rhoda Ride asked for a breakdown of the costs related to the STAR Camp program. In this discussion, Rhoda shared that based on the numbers listed for costs/expenses/and number of participants, the breakdown would be as follows: \$440.58 based on 40 students; \$391.63 based on 45 students and \$352.47 based on 50 students. . This is an extremely costly program based on these numbers. Since an enrollment fee of \$175 is charged, how is the balance of these monies being covered? Linda Fowler will get a complete breakdown of the income/costs of this program and get it to the Commission before the next meeting.
- John Unson asked for an explanation concerning the fees that are charged for the GAP program as they appear to be quite a bit higher than the costs of running the program appear to be. Linda Fowler explained that any profits made from the GAP program automatically roll over to cover recess camp expenses. The break even point for the program is 20 participants, and this year there were 30 participants. Also, monies are scheduled to cover the scholarships that are awarded to the families who can't afford the fees.
- Rob Keister mentioned that in the financial printouts, under the column of "% expended," many of the numbers listed exceed 100% and this would indicate that we are overspending for many of the programs. Linda Fowler agreed this could be confusing when looking at individual lines, but the true percentage is reached by totaling all the lines, which then indicates that the total of all the programs is well under 100%.
- Rhoda Ride asked for an explanation of the 50% increase in the allowances slated for the 2017 Seniors Club budget line? Linda Fowler explained this was now retitled as "miscellaneous."
- Rhoda Ride mentioned that monies appeared to be scheduled for "Earth Day" (code 7620) which now is sponsored by the Gates Police, so monies should be coming out of the police budget. Linda Fowler explained that the department is currently working with Home Depot on a possible "Earth Day" project which is why monies are scheduled out of the departments' budget.
- John Unson asked for an explanation of the \$93,000 listed under equipment expenses. Linda Fowler explained this scheduled money would be used to replace the transport van and also the equipment needed for the new pickle ball courts.
- Chris DiPonzio asked for an explanation of how scholarships awarded to STAR participants were decided upon, and if this would be considered a payment, which later on might affect an amateur status. Linda Fowler explained the scholarships were based on whether the child qualified for free lunch status through the school district, and if they do, they then qualify for scholarship consideration.

After the above discussion was done, a motion was made by Greg Westbrook and seconded by John Unson to accept the financial reports. The vote was unanimous to accept these reports.

Correspondence:

There was not correspondence to share at this time.

Park Reports:

There were no park reports at this time.

Evaluation of Past Programs:

Rhoda Ride reviewed the listing of classes and asked why so many had been cancelled? Linda Fowler explained that she thought it was partly the timing of winter classes.

Programs in Progress/Future Programs:

Linda Fowler reported the tax preparation program was completely filled and that any new registrants were being referred to other programs in the area. Linda also shared the Valentine's Dance was a huge success and the Euchre tournament was well attended too. Rhoda Ride asked about the movie nights and suggested that these continue with a wider variety of titles to be considered.

Old Business:

Linda Fowler shared that she had recently met with the engineer about breaking the band shell project down into smaller sections and prioritizing each section. She has not heard back from the engineer since this meeting.

Linda then shared a sheet of information updating everyone on the status of the 60th anniversary celebration. This sheet was a synopsis of the discussion that occurred at the first meeting of this group. Highlights of this discussion include:

- Linda contacted the Legends radio station about attending this event. They will get back in touch with her.
- Linda checked into the possibility of doing a laser light show, but was unable to find anyone local who does this. She will report back if she is successful finding someone, or consider another option such as fireworks.
- Cindy Briggs is working on getting information about food trucks to come to this event.
- Discussion of possible music choices: DJ, bands, etc.
- Rhoda Ride has taken care of arranging for the Gates Fire Department to have their antique truck on display.

The next agenda item to be address was an update on the status of the Summer Celebration. Highlights of this discussion are as follows:

- Chris DiPonzio shared that John Unson has arranged for the dunking booth to be available for this event.
- The suggestion of having more kid-oriented activities during the first 2-hours of this event should be considered as this would involve more families to come at an earlier hour, and might be more convenient to them if they have young children.
- The suggestion of possible sporting demonstrations being held was made. An example of this might include: Erica Ellis to pole vault. Discussion followed on what other demonstrations could occur (e.g. - musical, craft, basketball toss etc.)
- Linda Fowler shared that Stacie Paris would like to hold a 5K run this day. Possibly the awards ceremony could be held during the hours of the Summer Celebration.
- Other suggestions of activities to be held might include: pie/hot dog eating contest; variety of races for young kids - egg/spoon, Frisbee; water balloon toss; baseball cage.
- Community groups will be invited to participate as they have in the past.

Further discussion took place on the variety of activities brought to the table. Many ideas were shared. This will continue to be an action item to be discussed at upcoming meetings.

Rhoda Ride and Linda Fowler shared a request from Stacie Paris related to the Halloween party event she coordinates. This request was to increase the monies scheduled for this event so this program can be expanded. Extensive discussion followed on the pros/cons of this. Following this discussion, Rhoda Ride made a two part motion. The first portion of the motion was to increase the scheduled budgeted monies for the Halloween party held at the Community Center (supported by monies currently scheduled to buy prizes for the fall event held at the Garden Factory.) The second portion of the motion included that a polite letter will be drafted to the Garden Factory declining their invitation for the department to participate in this years activity. Rob Keister seconded this motion. After a brief discussion, the vote was unanimous to accept this motion. This expanded Halloween program will be re-evaluated by the Commission when it is complete.

New Business:

The Annual Report was reviewed by the Commission with very positive comments made. Rob Keister suggested that consideration be made to include the number of volunteer hours that are donated annually be included in upcoming reports. Linda Fowler made note of this suggestion. Overall, the quality of this report was very good and everyone was pleased with its contents.

Linda Fowler shared the Park Safety Report with the Commission. The following are highlights of the discussion that took place:

- The total number of written reports was 59. Linda shared the camp numbers were almost at capacity, more kids/more potential problems.
- Rhoda Ride asked what is considered a “preventable accident?” A brief explanation was given.
- Chris DiPonzio asked what consequences occurred with repeat offenders. Linda explained there is a series of warnings (verbal, written, signed sheets with parents) and if those don’t work, eventual expulsion from the program.
- Rob Keister asked if a partnership with local first responders might decrease the cost of first aide costs? Linda explained that most of the costs of the medical needs were for ice packs, bandaids, etc. which can be expensive. She also mentioned that counselors are trained in basic first aid.

A brief discussion took place about the rest of the report. It was noted that the overall written reports decreased 19% this year compared to last year, and that only three reports of vandalism were noted.

The Park Facility Evaluation report was discussed next. Highlights of that discussion included the following:

- Comments were noted on the cleanliness of the facilities, particularly related to the note that vermin feces had been noted in kitchen facilities of some of the shelters. Questions were raised about pest control and basic maintenance. Extensive discussion followed.
- Linda Fowler explained that in the past, the facilities had been maintained by an outside concern, but in the past several years, the town’s buildings and grounds department is responsible for the cleanliness and maintenance of these facilities.
- Questions were raised about who checks the facilities after a renter leaves for items like garbage disposal, cleanliness, etc. Concerns were raised about food items being left that might attract vermin. Linda explained that follow up is done, but that if a rental occurs over a weekend, the follow-up might not occur for several days, due to time constraints of other responsibilities of the building and grounds department.

Several other concerns were raised and discussed about this ongoing concern. Linda also mentioned that evaluation forms are not received from every renter, so the report does not reflect everyone who uses the facilities. Chris DiPonzio asked that copies of the evaluations be sent to him in the future so he can do follow-up with them. Linda will do this.

The next item to be discussed was brought up by Rhoda Ride. She suggested that a volunteer recognition evening be re-instated in the calendar to acknowledge the number of hours donated to the department annually. All thought this was a good idea.

Rhoda Ride suggested, that due to the lateness of the hour, the discussion of the Policy Manual be tabled until the March meeting. All agreed this would be a good idea. Linda Fowler will send out additional information for the Commissioners to review prior to that meeting.

The Master Plan packet was brought to the table. Linda Fowler shared this report needed to be updated in several areas in order to be made current (e.g. - removed items that have been completed; update the status of items left to be completed; remove the items needed for accreditation; update park acreage; etc.) It was decided this item would too be tabled for discussion at a later date.

The last item to be addressed was the job description application for Vehicle Driver/Supply Coordinator. Linda Fowler explained that the former driver is currently filling in, but hopefully they would be able to hire someone soon. Several questions were raised by the Commission about what the job responsibilities encompass and Linda answered them. Chris DiPonzio questioned why weekly bank deposits would fall under this job description as compared to a full time staff member? Discussion followed with no specific conclusion reached. Linda will keep the Commission updated on the status of this hiring.

Good of the Order:

Eileen Andrews: Wished everyone a Happy Valentine’s Day.

Greg Westbrook: Nothing at this time.

John Unson: Nothing at this time.

Valerie Young: Nothing at this time.

Linda Fowler: Linda will be taking vacation in March and will get the Commission packets out early that month. No additional help will be in the office while she’s gone.

Rob Keister: Nothing at this time.

Chris DiPonzio: Nothing at this time.

Rhoda Ride: Wished Linda a good vacation.

A motion was made by Steve Murphy and seconded by Eileen Andrews the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25PM. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 14 at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Valerie Young
Recording Secretary