

# MINUTES

JANUARY 8, 2019

6:30PM

REC CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM

<b>TYPE OF MEETING</b>	Monthly Meeting
<b>CHAIR</b>	Peter Billipp
<b>SECRETARY</b>	Nina Pilson
<b>ATTENDEES</b>	Members: Maryann Grahmann, Mary McCulloch, Jeffrey Chen, Nina Pilson, Sami Morrison, Spyros Maragos, Brett Bingham Staff: Susan White, Mardi Turner
<b>VISITORS</b>	Alida Drewes, John Barnes

- I. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:34 pm by Peter Billipp.
- II. Approval of November 7, 2018 and December 5, 2018 Meeting Minutes:** Mary made a motion to approve with Peter seconding the motion. The minutes were approved.
- III. Citizen Comments:** John Barnes introduced himself and will be running for the City Council position and is sitting in on the meeting to see what the Board does and how it functions. Alida Drewes objects that 120K would be used to extend the desk in the Recreation Center. It's a waste of money and (this has been said by her 3 times). She stated that the minutes do not include anything that was said in last meeting. The Parks Board was asked to take requests asking for a park on the eastside of the park and she doesn't understand why we can't find a place to put a dog park – there are so many areas to do this. She doesn't understand why we can't find a proper park for dogs. She also feels that the parks are not being utilized as they should be.
- IV. Council Update:** Mayor Pro Tem Mardi Turner present and reported: Still without a replacement for Chris Peifer (his last day is 1/22) but Council is close to finding a replacement. Mayor Pro Tem Turner addressed the 120K amount mentioned by Alida – the future funding request is not for taxpayer funds. The request will be presented to the Friends of West U Parks Fund. In reference to the dog park question, there has been extensive research on this: the minimum requirement is ½ acre and this would cost \$3 million just for the lot which makes this an expensive park that many people would object to living next to. An election is coming up – filing petitions is 1/15 and ends middle of February for anyone who wants to be considered for Council. She also wanted to mention that with the Christmas tree recycling in Colonial Park and children building forts, apparently one group of kids found a ton of lights still on trees. Cub Scouts and some parents were there to help take them off. The trees are being recycled by Living Earth and the lights are recycled by Houston Zoo but next year we will not be picking up trees with lights on them.
- V. Staff Update: Susan White**
  - 1. West U Recreation Center Safety and Customer Service Enhancements: Susan filled us on that they received two additional estimates (114K and 88K). The 88K (Forthright

Construction) did a recent project with the city. Friends requested future redevelopment estimates to have a better indicator of potential funding requests that will be brought forth in the future. The Friends will be voting on the Recreation Center Safety and Customer Service Enhancement funding at their January 9 meeting.

2. Parks Maintenance Manager Brooks Smith is here and will be available for questions during the redevelopment discussion. The Programming subcommittee will be meeting soon and have updates at the next meeting.
3. Near the outdoor restrooms at Colonial Park East, you can now fill up your water bottle now with the new fountain feature. There was talk of installing another fountain by sand volleyball court but since there is discussion about potentially removing the volleyball court in 2020, this is on hold.
4. Hughes Park – a portion of the sidewalk along Pittsburg was high due to tree roots protection. Public Works is moving it further away from the tree and bringing level with the curb line.

**VI. Parks Redevelopment Plan Discussion:** Peter handed out Park Redevelopment Budget estimates staff created which summarize all of the major expenses of redeveloping the first four parks – Whitt, Colonial East, Huffington & Judson. These are all estimates but based on real costs available at the time and potential equipment that may be selected. Mardi asked if we can get timelines on any of these parks. Susan mentioned the possibility of having a Council workshop, Mardi felt that it may be better to get an idea of how long each of these things will take. Susan will prepare preliminary timeline estimates. Spyros asked if any of these projects are happening at the same time? Peter clarified that once we get some feedback from Friends then we can decide what is important and maybe knock out a few of the same things at each park (demolition for example). Peter mentioned that it was something like 2 years for all of this work to be done. Mardi mentioned that originally that this was scheduled for 2 years per park. Sami mentions that cost estimates was a huge sticking point for figuring out what was priority. Everyone thanked Brooks for all the estimates – it is a very comprehensive budget summary. Each park has memorialized donors, so we need to figure out a way to honor them. One of our departmental goals is to understand life expectancy of donated items. In the parks master plan, it specifies that a follow up survey be done in 2020, and senior services questions will be included.

**VII. Friends Update: Chair Sami Morrison:** Friends will be meeting tomorrow (1/9/19) on a vote for the Recreation Center. Everything right now, besides tomorrows vote, is devoted to Park Lovers Ball. February 2<sup>nd</sup>! Sami said that its close to 80-85% sold out and is going to be a fantastic event. They are still bringing in sponsorships and she encouraged all of us to come.

**VIII. Park Ambassador Reports & Advisory Remarks:**

- Colonial Park East (Jeffrey) – squeaky noise on the swing
- Colonial Park West (Maryann) - went to all of the parks and everything was fine
- Colonial Park Pool (Mary)
- Friends Pocket Park (Spyros)
- Huffington Park (Scooter)
- JEH Park (Tracy)
- Judson Park (Nina)
- Recreation Center Playground (Steve)
- Whitt Johnson (Brett)
- Wier Park (Mark)

Jeffrey mentioned that once staff was told to make sure people are signing in instead of just walking by, it has helped a lot with people being aware that needs to be done. He also mentioned that maybe we should be able to view who is coming in from the inside desk/area.

**IX. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.**