

MINUTES

MAY 4, 2022

6:30PM

IN PERSON, REC CENTER

TYPE OF MEETING	Parks and Recreation Board Monthly Meeting
CHAIR	Will Bertron
SECRETARY	Evan Mintz
ATTENDEES	Members Present: Will Bertron, Sami Morrison, Richard Cunningham, Amar Patel, Evan Mintz, Stephen Damiani, Lulu Lopez, Laura Turley, Arlene Wells Staff: Susan White Council Liaison: Mayor Pro Temp John Montgomery
VISITORS	Additional Attendees:

I. **Call to Order:** Will Bertron called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

II. **Citizen Comments:**

III. **Meeting Minutes:** Minutes for the amended April PRB meeting were approved unanimously.

IV. **Friends update: Sami Morrison, Friends Board Chair**

November 5 will be Fathers and Flashlights, so mark your calendars. Park Lovers' Ball will be at the Four Seasons downtown on February 11. Fridays in June will be Party on the Patio. Questions were asked about how long the waiting list is for Fathers and Flashlights, and whether there should be a cap on the age of kids or priority for younger kids.

The board discussed whether the golf tournament could become a repeat event. Sami noted that golf tournaments do not typically raise a lot of money and merely ended up tapping the same sponsors as the other Friends Board events.

~~V.~~ **Council Update: John Montgomery, Mayor Pro Tem**

The city has instituted a parking ordinance to restrict business parking near Kirby – where employees from one business were parking along a residential street. The city attempted to convince the business to change parking practices but the business did not comply, so an enforceable ordinance was necessary.

The board discussed the proposed Judson Park improvements and approved the \$137,500 plan.

The board received a preliminary engineering report for the west side drainage project.

May 1-7 is public service recognition month (Thank You Susan!)

Centerpoint provided an update on the cost of burying powerlines along the proposed

Edloe Street Path and along the southern part of the Buffalo Speedway Project. It is expensive because it requires not just burying lines, but also establishing new lines – an estimated \$1.5M to bury three crossings along Buffalo, and ~\$7M to bury the lines along Edloe. The cost makes it unlikely we'll bury the lines along Edloe, but CM Montgomery says we're still looking for options. But the city didn't ask about the cost of just moving the lines over to the west side of Edloe. Questions were asked about what the city could do to ensure that Centerpoint did not place any polls in the middle of the Edloe path after construction.

An interlocal agreement was struck regarding West University providing services for Southside Place, but it still hasn't been formalized. This notably includes EMS services.

Questions were asked about whether the Sentinel Club still exists to help support 911 responders.

VI. **Rec Center Tour: This was postponed until June**

~~VII.~~ **Parks & Recreation Update: Susan White**

Edloe Street Pathway: Waiting to hear about the grants for the Edloe Street Pathway. We did get pricing from Centerpoint to add new lighting for the city along the Pathway.

Judson Park: Fence painting is starting Judson Park – new signage has been created that can be used for parks upgrades, which includes a QR code so people can learn about the project. The city found a quiet technology for an updated backboard.

Special events: Crescent circus event was well attended – with about 300 people. The Caribbean Band attracted ~100 people.

The Colonial Park pool is opening this weekend! Saturday is just for members. Sunday is open to everyone. A recent pay increase to \$12.50/hr was necessary to attract more staffers – especially front desk workers in the Rec Center. Note: Please remember to treat West U staffers with respect. We don't want to have a reputation as a rude city.

The city is looking at changing the hours at the Rec Center and is looking at the available data to determine whether hours should be shortened or lengthened.

Pickleball work at Weir is on the way, but there are supply chain issues for the fencing – and the lines will be done at the same time. Banners have been printed to announce the pickleball addition.

For Profit Tennis Trainers: This is an ongoing issue – for-profit trainers use public facilities. The city has created a field use policy that limits field use for for-profit trainers and coaches. The current tennis policies allow for-profit lessons if a resident makes reservations and is present throughout the entire lesson. One trainer seems to monopolize the Weir court, but the rules are being followed as far as we can tell. (There is speculation about whether the trainer is using borrowed residential codes to arrange the whole thing.)

The city attorney says it is illegal to make profit off public property – unless the city

creates a procedure, which we have done. Any system will have people gaming it. Enforcement will always be a challenge.

The City of Sugar Land simply prohibits for-profit trainers and directs people to use city programming instead.

The City has experience with trying to permit swim lessons and learned that the city's revenue increases when switching from permitted trainers to internal contractors. The city ensures that its trainers have background checks and insurance. There are also concerns about wear and tear on city facilities, notably from boot camp-style classes in fields.

How can we implement policies that minimize displacement and wear-and-tear on facilities? Currently all city tennis lessons are at Colonial – should other courts be designated as recreational only while others allow for instructional play? Do we need to cap the super-users who make way more reservations than other people? Do we view instructors as displacing recreational players?

City Council wants feedback on this as soon as possible. We'll have more data at the June meeting.

Amar motioned that we recommend running all paid instructional athletic lessons through the city – modeled upon the City of Sugar Land ordinance. Evan Seconded. It passed unanimously.

VIII. **Fee Committee Update: Laura Turley, Brett Bingham, and Diana Ayers (Senior Services Board)**

The city needs to raise fees to recover the pay increase. For the 2023 budget, the fee committee decided on a \$20 membership that increase will net a 40% recovery. The difference will be made up through increases in charges for programming.

Colonial Park will also have a \$20 fee increase. The family membership for Colonial Park pool is changing, requiring an additional \$25 charge for each member after 4. This will likely recover 100% of the pay increase for Colonial Park.

Sammi made a motion to approve. Stephen seconded. It passed unanimously.

IX. **Weir Park Improvements: Will Bertron**

Will distributed a list of proposed ideas from the previous meeting and will be discussed more in depth at the next meeting

X. **Park Ambassador Reports & Remarks**

- Colonial Park: Amar Patel (east) Caribbean Band had a good attendance; Evan Mintz (west) They closed the gates in prep for pool season; Stephen Damiani (pool)
- Friends Park: Sami Morrison – baseball season has people over there. The arbor is starting to be weathered. That tree is still doing fine.
- Huffington Park: Brett Bingham – He said everything is good. CM Montgomery noted that

the buttons on the water fountain are sticking

- Jennie Hughes Park: Laura Turley – Construction in the area means there is no place to park cars at the park.
- Judson Park: Richard Cunningham – Nothing new
- Recreation Center: Manish Agrawal – The basketball net is coming off on one of the goals, and the gate isn't closing all the way.
- Whitt Johnson Park: Arlene Wells –
- Wier Park: Lulu Lopez – The gates are great! People drive too fast along Belmont and parking on both sides of the street means there is functionally one lane. It doesn't feel safe.

XI. Order of Business

XII. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn – 9:30 pm.