

**UNITED CITY OF YORKVILLE
PARK BOARD MEETING
Thursday, July 18, 2024 6:00pm
East Conference Room, #337
651 Prairie Pointe, Yorkville, IL**

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Board President Dan Lane. Roll call was taken and a quorum was established.

Roll Call:

Tiffany Forristall-yes, Gene Wilberg-yes, Jorge Ayala-yes, Kelly Diederich-yes, Sash Dumanovic-yes, Dan Lane-yes

Absent: Rusty Hyett

Introduction of Guests, City Officials and Staff:

The following staff and guests were recognized: Director of Parks & Recreation Tim Evans, Superintendent of Parks Scott Sleezer, Superintendent of Recreation Shay Remus, City Council Liaison Ken Koch

Public Comment: None

Presentations: None

Approval of Minutes: April 2, 2024

Ms. Forristall moved and Mr. Ayala seconded to approve the minutes as presented.

Bills Review:

Bill List – April – July 2024

Mr. Evans noted that the bills are mostly athletics, special events and park maintenance. The City Council recently approved \$400,000 for capital purchases and he listed some of those. Mr. Ayala asked about the variations in salaries from month to month. Mr. Sleezer replied it is due to seasonal staff with varying hours, special events and variations in staff numbers. The number of part-time employees was also discussed.

Budget Report – March - June 2024

A review of the budget was given by Mr. Evans and he said the city budgeted Parks & Rec with a deficit this year since they have been having surpluses. In order to get a true picture, he said one would have to compare the line items. He said athletics have grown greatly and sponsorships and donations have grown by over \$27,000 this year due to efforts by the Marketing Person Katelyn Gregory. Sponsorships are solicited from corporate sponsors as well as others and the recent participation on a WGN promotion was positive. Mr. Evans said he would like to have Ms. Gregory attend conferences to be able to network with sponsors, etc. He said expenses are stable and added that Hometown Days is unique since bands must be paid even if the weather is inclement. There are 5-year capital and replacement plans in place for the budgeting process as well.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Beecher Park Lightning Detector Proposal

There are 3 zones in the city, north (Bridge Park/Bristol Bay) central (Riverfront & Circle Center) and south. The Beecher detector controls Riverfront and Circle Center. Beecher is an old system and not working properly, so options are being explored. Mr. Evans gave an overview of the systems they are considering and said the systems would also give staff access at home. They also looked at an app system, however, it is not practical at this time. The cost for the 3 detectors is \$31,000 with options available at additional cost. Mr. Dumanovic suggested reaching out to other towns to see how the system works and get their opinion. There would be a 5-year contract with software that can be upgraded. It is possible to lease, however, the cost is about the same. Mr. Evans said they will gather more info and then forward the proposal to City Council. It is expected it will be installed for the spring and the initial purchase would be for the central zone.

Ms. Forristall moved and Mr. Dumanovic seconded the motion to approve the purchase. Roll call: Wilberg-yes, Ayala-yes, Diederich-yes, Dumanovic-yes, Lane-yes, Forristall-yes. Carried 6-0.

Park Benches and Tree Donations

Mr. Lane commented that the trees, benches and improved trails by the Riverfront look very nice and Mr. Wilberg noted some of the credit should be given to the Girl Scout Anita Werderich for her project there. He also thanked Scott Sleezer for his help in selecting the trees. The area was unusable before, and now is improved for festivals, etc.

Director Evans said with rising costs, the fees for benches and trees need to be adjusted. Benches are now \$2,000 with proposed increase to \$2,750, trees are \$600 with proposed increase to \$800. Mr. Evans also noted that the space in Town Square and Riverfront Park is now maxed out for any new benches or trees. Future requests will be directed to other parks. Mr. Dumanovic asked if all benches are the same color and style. There are some that are different colors. Mr. Sleezer noted recycled benches were once used, however, they are not durable and are prone to graffiti.

Mr. Wilberg asked about the possibility of a walkway under the bridge. Mr. Evans noted it is very expensive and not really possible since the storm drains empty out under the bridge, making it dangerous for pedestrians. Alderman Koch noted the Public Works committee had looked at costs for a walkway which were estimated to be \$8 million to go over the road. The Mayor and City Council asked the Parks & Rec to look for possible downtown crossings.

Mr. Dumanovic made a motion to approve as recommended, the increase for tree and bench donation fees and to no longer accept new ones in Riverfront and Town Square Parks. Ms. Forristall seconded. Roll call: Ayala-yes, Diederich-yes, Dumanovic-yes, Lane-yes, Forristall-yes, Wilberg-yes. Carried 6-0.

FS Downtown Grant Update

Mr. Evans said the City Council had approved a concept drawing for the former FS property and if the grant is approved, the plan will be implemented as presented with some flexibility. It would be located in the gravel area at the FS site. There is a huge water main project in this area that will be done first. The businesses in the area are aware and supportive. The area will gain outdoor patio space and parking space. Results of the grant application will be known in November or December and there is a matching component.

Other discussion included the following: Ms. Diederich asked if there would be any community participation such as buying bricks. Mr. Koch noted that if the old bank building were sold, the parking would be retained. It was suggested that Hydraulic may be closed down during events. Mr. Wilberg suggested contacting Oswego to get feedback on their new performance venue. If this is developed there will be additional trash and a need for more employees. How can we use the river with this? Mr. Evans asked the Board members to send him any additional feedback.

Community Nutrition Network Shed Request

Director Evans said the Beecher Center is city-owned and Senior Services oversees the building. Community Nutrition Network (CNN) is there also and Meals on Wheels is part of this Network. Senior Services has a large shed near there and CNN reached out to Parks about also putting up a 10x10 shed nearby because they have some funds available to be spent by the end of September. The shed would be for storage of supplies and equipment. His concern is requests for more sheds from other groups. Ms. Diederich asked if an addition could be built to the existing shed. Director Evans recommends sending this to the Council with a recommendation that the Parks is not in favor of this, however, he said the Parks would work them and then no more requests for sheds would be honored on park property. CNN has requested a slab and power as well. Time will not allow this matter to come back to Parks after it goes to Council.

Ms. Diederich made a motion to work with the Community Nutrition Network, however, with the caveat that Parks & Rec would not be in favor of any future requests. Ms. Forristall seconded the motion. President Lane commented that this is a humanitarian effort and was in favor of this request. This will need City Council approval. It was noted that the food is for seniors or non-mobile persons and CNN works with local restaurants or volunteers prepare food.

Roll call: Diederich-yes, Dumanovic-yes, Lane-yes, Forristall-yes, Wilberg-yes, Ayala-yes. Carried 6-0.

Parks & Recreation Monthly Report:

Mr. Evans said Riverfest is this weekend. They have also hired 3 new Parks employees and another new employee will be coming on board in October. He also said there are new playgrounds. WGN had a great interview/video highlighting the city.

Superintendent Sleezer reports they are just keeping up with park construction and maintenance. He says it is beneficial to have staff in dedicated areas.

Superintendent Remus reported this is one of the busiest times of the year with 1,000 kids in fall sports. She listed the upcoming activities and programs they are preparing for and they are working on the fall catalog coming out on August 12th.

Additional Business:

Mr. Lane requested an extra trash can by the boat launch. He also said people are asking for more pickleball courts. Director Evans said that will be added to the discussion with City Council.

The Bill Powell memorial is being worked on and they are waiting on plaques and then a commemoration date will be coordinated with the Council.

Mr. Lane asked about the park on Van Emmon and how it's being used. It is a practice field and a special needs group also uses it. Funding and a plan will be needed to develop it. It was noted there is no park in the new development across from the park.

Mr. Wilberg inquired if there is any long term thoughts on the property above stream from Hoover—Crawford Park. It is hoped it might be connected to a trail at some point. It was noted that the city does not own any property from Crawford Park into town.

Mr. Ayala said the link to a trading video that was sent, was not working properly. This is a video sent from Mr. Evans about anti-harassment training since Board members sometimes work with the public. Ms. Diederich suggested a special meeting to do the training.

Executive Session : None

Adjournment:

Since there was no further business, it was moved by Mr. Dumanovic and seconded by Mr. Wilberg to adjourn the meeting at 7:32pm. Roll call: Dumanovic-yes, Lane-yes, Forristall-yes, Wilberg-yes, Ayala-yes, Diederich-yes. Carried 6-0.

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Marlys Young, Minute Taker