



## Memorandum

Department of Public Services

DATE: February 6, 2013

TO: Michael G. Herring, City Administrator

FROM: Mike Geisel, Director of Public Services

SUBJECT: Meeting Minutes – 1/31/2013 Parks and Recreation Committee

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A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Committee took place on Thursday, January 31, 2013. Those in attendance included Chairperson Bob Nation, Ward 4, Councilmember Barry Flachsbart, Ward 1, Councilmember Derek Grier, Ward 2 and Councilmember Randy Logan, Ward 3. Also in attendance were Councilmember Connie Fults, Ward 4, City Administrator Mike Herring, Director of Public Services Mike Geisel, Director of Parks and Recreation Tom McCarthy and Executive Secretary Kathy Lantz.

**Chairperson Nation called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.**

**Agenda Item #1: Approval of Minutes –**

**Councilmember Flachsbart motioned to approve the September 27, 2012 Minutes of the Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Logan and passed by a voice vote of 4-0.**

**Agenda Item #2: Approval of Proposed 2013 Meeting Dates**

Mr. Geisel stated that Parks and Recreation Committee meetings are typically held on the Thursday, the week following the last Planning and Public Works Committee meeting of the month. In the past, the Committee has not found it necessary to meet every month, basis which is why tentative dates are listed on the Proposed 2013 Meeting Date Calendar. Mr. Geisel suggested that the Committee members put

the dates on their calendars and that the Committee would be consulted prior to cancelling any meeting.

Mr. Herring stated that following the April City election and the Council committees are determined, the proposed committee meeting dates could be changed at the direction of the new committee members.

**Councilmember Flachsbart motioned to approve the Proposed 2013 Meeting Dates Calendar for the Parks and Recreation Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Grier and passed by a voice vote of 4-0.**

### **Agenda Item #3: Chesterfield Amphitheater**

Mr. Tom McCarthy stated that the Chesterfield Amphitheater is in its third season of operation. Staff has successfully rented the amphitheater on multiple occasions for both private and commercial events.

Mr. Geisel stated that, consistent with the original intent and direction of amphitheater operation to offset operating costs to provide free community events, staff recommends and proposes that the City plan, promote and fund a ticketed concert in 2013. Such an event would require that the City fully fund the event costs, but also means that the City has the potential for significant financial gains that could then be used to fund other acts. It is critically important that any ticketed event at the amphitheater be clearly and assertively differentiated from the City's concert series. A ticketed event will be commercially priced and revenue will also be derived from concessions and merchandising. Pricing will not be the same as the parks' subsidized concert series, but more consistent with other commercial venues. It will also be important that such events be identified distinctly different than our parks offerings so that residents and concert goers will not expect a subsidized offering. The marketing would not identify the event as a City-sponsored concert.

Mr. McCarthy stated that expenses for a concert would include: Artist Fee (\$20,000.00), Production Fee (\$8,000.00), Security (\$2,000.00) and Marketing (\$7,000.00) for a total of \$35,000.00. Mr. McCarthy stated that staff thinks that the following gross revenues could be generated from ticket sales if the venue was sold out: 96 VIP Seats for \$65.00 each (\$6,240), 304 Reserved Seats for \$50.00 each (\$15,200.00) and 2,500 Lawn Seats for \$30.00 each (\$75,000) totaling \$96,440.00. Subtracting the \$35,000.00 in expenses, the Net Total = \$61,440.00. This amount does not include sales of concessions or merchandising.

Mr. Geisel stated that the role and revenue in renting the facility is passive and fairly limited. Typically, an event promoter leases the facility for a specific date and

they then seek to match a performer with the available date. They sell tickets for the event, produce the show, provide security and assume the financial risks associated with weather and attendance. Mr. Geisel stated that he believes that the potential of the amphitheater will not be fully utilized until the entertainment community develops a more robust history of ticketed events at the venue. Mr. Geisel stated that he believes the next logical step in maximizing the utility of the Chesterfield Amphitheater is for the City to host a ticketed event with the intent of generating revenue to offset facility operational costs in providing the free events. It is important, in his mind, that any revenue generated through such an event, be retained and returned to the Parks Fund such that additional entertainment offerings can be made available.

Mr. McCarthy stated that last year's first main event with singer Kenny Loggins was proceeding well, but major thunderstorms impeded the level of attendance. The concert did go on a little late but attendance was down since 50% of concert-goers usually buy their tickets on the day of the event. Mr. McCarthy also stated that the promoter did not allow sufficient time to promote the concert.

Mr. Geisel stated that he recommends that \$35,000.00 be transferred from Parks Fund - Fund Reserves to fund a ticketed concert event in 2013 with all net proceeds returning to the Parks Fund - Fund Reserves. In doing so, staff will initiate efforts to secure a marketable date and performer with the intent of generating additional positive revenue from the amphitheater. It should be clear, that in undertaking such an event, the City does accept the financial risks associated with any ticketed outdoor event. Staff would seek to minimize the risk through insurance, but the risk nonetheless exists.

Mr. Herring stated that Council had provided direction during conception through construction that staff was to maximize commercial utilization of the amphitheater such that the City could provide a robust series of free concerts and related facility events. Mr. Herring stated that he considers this to be a reasonable, rational and conservative first step but that there is risk involved. There is no guarantee that there will not be a rainout or other unforeseen circumstance occurring. But on the other hand, it could be extremely more successful than staff imagines. Mr. Herring stated that in discussing this with Mr. Geisel and Mr. McCarthy, they think that it can be done successfully.

Councilmember Flachsbart stated that he is philosophically opposed to having the City in the business of running events but that he is in agreement with having the City allow a promoter to run the event.

Councilmember Logan stated that it is a great idea if done right including inviting local promoters to come see a show and the amphitheater. Councilmember Logan questioned who would do ticketing. Mr. McCarthy stated that the City has

considered using Metro-Tix for the events. Councilmember Logan stated that, in full disclosure, the General Sales Manager for Metro-Tix is a close friend and college roommate. Councilmember Logan also suggested staff consider who else would be performing in the area at the time of a ticketed event in order to avoid competition.

Mr. Geisel stated that he wants to be very clear that there must be full separation between the City-sponsored free concerts and revenue-generating ticketed events as there will be price differences in concession prices for City concerts and concession prices for the other concerts which would be typically high-end. This event cannot be confused with the City's free concert series.

Mr. Geisel stated that the entertainment community needs to get used to seeing ticketed events at the amphitheater. The City has no long term interests in operating as a promoter\producer for such an event. It is important, however, to demonstrate the efficacy of the venue for private commercial promoters. In time, as demand grows, the City would hope that such private promoters would fully book the facility on those dates and times not scheduled for community events.

Councilmember Logan stated that he considers the risk on the City's side to be very small and that the residents would enjoy coming to the amphitheater for an event instead of going downtown to other venues.

**Councilmember Logan motioned that the Committee approve and forward to City Council the recommendation to approve the transfer of \$35,000.00 from the Parks Fund – Fund Reserves to fund a ticketed concert event in 2013 with all net proceeds returning to the Parks Fund – Fund Reserves.**

Councilmember Grier stated that he was not around for the early City Council discussions on the intended use for the amphitheater and asked if the original intent of the amphitheater was to provide a public venue for primarily free events for community use or was the intent originally to provide a venue that could be used by commercial entities to come in and hold events or both.

Mr. Geisel stated the Council wanted an asset for the community but also to be able to offset the operating cost to the greatest extent possible by commercial use, thereby making additional City sponsored events possible. Mr. Geisel stated that this is a way to generate more revenue to allow for more community events while at the same time marketing the venue to commercial entertainers.

Mr. Herring stated that former City Councilmember Lee Erickson had proposed maximizing opportunities and even suggested selling naming rights to the amphitheater.

Mr. Herring stated that the money generated would be returned to the Parks Fund – Fund Reserves, not the General Fund, and could be specifically designated for additional events.

Councilmember Grier stated that he is philosophically opposed to the City getting into the business of being show promoters but could agree on a one-time event to enable the amphitheater to be marketed to commercial production companies to then utilize the amphitheater themselves to have events there in order to show that the amphitheater is capable of generating interest.

Councilmember Logan stated that promoters will need to see the crowds, the sound, the parking situation, the security and how the entrances and exits are controlled in order to bring in more events.

Councilmember Flachsbart stated that the Parks Fund – Fund Reserves are only going to be getting stronger and that using the \$35,000.00 for this event would not be a problem but does not want to see promoting concerts as a way of making money for the Parks Fund – Fund Reserves.

Councilmember Logan amended his motion to read: **Councilmember Logan motioned that the Committee approve and forward to City Council the recommendation to approve the transfer of \$35,000.00 from the Parks Fund – Fund Reserves to fund a ticketed concert event in 2013 with all net proceeds returning to the Parks Fund – Fund Reserves. If any promoter choses the date that the City has for an event then the City event would be cancelled in its entirety and the promoter would have the date.**

Councilmember Nations asked about the concept of using the amphitheater for large commercial uses.

Mr. Geisel stated that the amphitheater is the same size as the Pageant. Differences are that the City's venue is an outdoor/boutique facility which is being under-utilized and prevents the City from providing more events to the public at little or no cost. The amphitheater was equipped with electric, sound system and other accoutrements at a significant cost for the purpose of making the facility viable for commercial entertainers. Mr. Geisel stated that under-utilizing the amphitheater is preventing the City from providing more events to the residents at little or no cost.

Mr. Herring stated that staff is operating consistent with their understanding of Council's previous direction.

Councilmember Fults stated that the intent with building the amphitheater was not to just have eight free concerts but that other venues would offset the expenses of

the free concerts. That commercial uses could assist in perpetuating the free offerings.

Councilmember Grier stated that he does not want to lose sight of the fact that the amphitheater was built with tax money but then the residents must pay to see the good acts. Councilmember Grier stated that if the intent was that the commercial acts would help pay for some of the City's concerts then perhaps for every commercial event the City could turn around and schedule a free event for the residents.

Mr. Herring stated that the motion could include a requirement that staff bring back to Council a full event accounting for review by the committee. Council would then have the ability to decide what to do with the profit, whether to return all of the money to Parks Fund – Fund Reserves or to fund another event.

Chairperson Nation asked, if a national act performs at the amphitheater, what type of profits might be generated.

Mr. Geisel stated that at the present time, as directed by Council, rental fees are nominal. Mr. Geisel stated that as demand increases, the rental rates will increase accordingly.

The amended motion by Councilmember Logan is as follows:

**Councilmember Logan motioned that the Committee approve and forward to City Council the recommendation to approve a ticketed concert event in 2013 with all net proceeds returning to the Parks Fund – Fund Reserves. If any promoter chooses the date that the City has for an event then the City event would be cancelled in its entirety and the promoter would have the date. Staff will bring back to Committee a full event accounting for review by the Parks and Recreation Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Grier and passed by a voice vote of 3-1. (Councilmember Flachsbart voted nay.)**

#### **Agenda Item #4: Park Rule Changes**

Mr. McCarthy stated that the rules for the Chesterfield parks are reviewed on a yearly basis. Minor changes are being recommended to the official park rules. These changes would be:

1. Current rules prohibit patrons from using kites, playing Bocce Ball, playing Dodge Ball or using Flying Discs (frisbies) without the written approval of the Director of Parks. **We desire to eliminate these restrictions.**

2. Current rules preclude users from playing baseball, softball, stickball, whiffle ball and kickball; soccer, lacrosse, field hockey, football and cricket except in designated areas or with the written permission of the Director of Parks and Recreation. **We desire to eliminate these restrictions.**
3. We desire to eliminate the prohibition of any dogs on leash at the Chesterfield Valley Athletic Complex (CVAC). That facility has become much more than simply athletic fields and we find the restriction no longer necessary. **We desire to eliminate this restriction.**

Mr. McCarthy stated that the main change to the park rules would be to allow dogs at the CVAC. With the levee trails, the CVAC is not just a sports complex anymore but more of a park.

**Councilmember Flachsbart motioned that the Committee approve and forward to City Council the recommendation to approve the three (3) official park rule changes. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Logan and passed by a voice vote of 4-0.**

Mr. Geisel stated that park rules have become more user-friendly over the last year with Mr. McCarthy as Director of Parks and Recreation. He stated that these rule changes are indicative of the positive personality impacts of Mr. McCarthy on the parks system. Mr. McCarthy realizes the added uses to our parks system with the addition of the trails.

#### **Agenda Item #5: Park Enhancements**

Mr. Herring stated that Councilmember Logan and Mayor Bruce Geiger had expressed concern with the lack of enhancements at the City parks. Councilmember Logan and Mayor Geiger met with staff and toured the parks to discuss potential improvements. Subsequently, staff developed a recommendation to fund an initial set of enhancements which include:

1. Two Entry Signs at the Amphitheater - \$30,000.
2. VIP Patio Deck at the Amphitheater- \$35,000.
3. Lake Trail Pedestrian Bridge at Central Park - \$75,000.
4. Entry Signage at 5 Locations at CVAC - \$13,500.
5. General Soft-scape Enhancements at various CVAC locations - \$54,000.
6. Bleacher Covers for the F Athletic Quad at the CVAC - \$154,000.

Councilmember Flachsbart stated that more entry signage at the amphitheater is necessary. He stated that he is neutral to the idea of a VIP Deck but it may be a good idea, the pedestrian bridge on the lake trail is badly needed, signage at the

CVAC should have been done a long time ago and the bleacher covers at the F Quad are critical to prevent injuries and protect the spectators from the sun.

Mr. Geisel stated that sponsors are actively solicited for the amphitheater and the VIP deck may be a segregated space for event sponsors to watch a concert. It is as much a marketing tool as it is additional capacity.

Mr. Herring stated that much of the work will be done by in-house, thus allowing significant cost savings to complete these projects.

Mr. Geisel stated that the VIP deck will be two-tiered with a 24' x 28' configuration. The deck would be constructed of composite decking.

Councilmember Flachsbart suggested adding an awning or trellis for shade and glare. Mr. Geisel indicated that while it was discussed internally, the current \$35,000 proposal did not include any cover structures. Staff would be happy to investigate the addition of such a cover, but it obviously would require additional funding. Mr. Geisel stated that staff would attempt to provide an estimate for the additional funding to provide for a cover structure in time for the next City Council meeting on February 20, 2013.

Mr. Geisel stated that the concrete pedestrian trail around the Central Park Lake has become a very popular destination for families, athletes and nature lovers. Unfortunately, due to the lake overflow and dam safety concerns, the trail terminates on each side of the spillway, forcing users to simply turn around and retrace their steps. To put footings in the dam for the Lake Trail Pedestrian Bridge would make it too dangerous to cross. City Engineer, Kim Streicher, is working with designers to be able to cross the spillway below the overflow to minimize bridge span. The span will be for pedestrian access and not wide enough for vehicular access. Current plans anticipate a 30' bridge span and a six-foot wide bridge deck. Trail construction would be accomplished by City maintenance staff but the bridge placement would require it to be contracted out. The bridge will match the other bridges around the lake.

Mr. Geisel stated that signage at five entry points at the CVAC will help better identify quads and fields for visitors and ball players. Also landscaping would be added to the quad entrances to make them more attractive. Landscaping would include raised planter beds with annuals, updated walkways with flower beds, improved gates, perennials, sod and irrigation.

Councilmember Logan stated that the Beautification Committee had met with Mr. McCarthy and Mindy Mohrman, City Arborist/Urban Forester, to discuss plantings at the CVAC.

Mr. Geisel stated that bleacher covers for the F Quad were needed for shade and protection from errant throws and foul balls. He reminded the Committee that the City had applied for a grant to the Municipal Parks Commission this last fall, but was unsuccessful. The bleacher covers would be constructed through the standard capital contracting process.

Councilmember Grier questioned if a better use for the \$35,000.00 funds for the VIP deck could be used to bring in a national act for a free concert at the amphitheater for the residents to help bring awareness to the amphitheater venue and then make a decision after the event as to whether to fund a VIP deck.

Councilmember Flachsbart stated that the VIP deck is something that sponsors could use when they sponsor an event and may be more inclined to provide sponsorship. Mr. Geisel stated that a VIP deck may help bring in sponsors for the City's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event on June 1 and for subsequent event sponsors. He believes that the VIP Deck will pay for itself many times over.

**Councilmember Flachsbart motioned that the Committee approve and forward to City Council the recommendation to transfer \$361,500.00 from the Parks Fund – Fund Reserves for the requested park enhancements, and directed staff to provide estimates to City Council for a cover structure for the VIP Deck improvements. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Logan. The motion passed by a voice vote of 4-0.**

Staff will attempt to provide an estimate for the cover structure for the VIP deck in time for the next City Council meeting on February 20, 2013.

#### **Agenda Item #6: Other Business**

Councilmember Grier presented a hand-out on a Levee Trailhead Opportunity. Councilmember Grier expressed concern that there is not a trailhead at the east end of the south levee trail. Users of the trail must turn around and so back to the beginning of the trail. Councilmember Grier suggested that an area between the Hilton Garden Inn and the Brinkmann buildings be used, within the Chesterfield Grove Development. There already are 8-10 parking spaces and the current terminus would need to be extended another 30-50 yards. Councilmember Grier suggested that perhaps an agreement could be worked out with the owners of the Hilton Garden Inn and Brinkmann properties, similar to the current agreement with the owners of the Hardees' Iceplex. Limited infrastructure and structural improvements would be required. Costs would be limited by utilizing the existing parking availability which would accomplish an existing goal the City has had to get a trailhead in this area. It also provides another public/private partnership and allows for the improvement of quality of life for levee trail users. Councilmember

Grier stated that he believes there would be an increase of use on the levee trail if there was a trailhead at this end of the trail. There had been discussion to use the Doorack Property for a trailhead but users of the trail would have to cross Baxter Road to get to the trailhead.

Mr. Herring stated that work has been completed on the next phase of the trail construction which goes under I-64/40 to the Graeler property. Mr. Geisel stated that right now the trail construction ends just north of I-64/40 where the Corps of Engineers is building a storm water pump station, adjacent to the reservoir.

Mr. Geisel stated that this is an excellent location and trailhead concept. Although Staff has previously pursued a trail head at this location unsuccessfully, now would be a good time to revisit and see if the land owners would reconsider. The City has communicated with the land owners in the hopes of creating a small trailhead at this location and were been turned down. Mr. Geisel stated that a trailhead on the north side of I-64/40 is also probable when the Graeler property develops, but not prior.

Mr. Geisel stated that the street access, as well as parking for the Brinkmann building and Hilton Garden Inn area is private. Mr. Geisel stated that the possibility of a trailhead at this location can and should be revisited. Mr. Geisel stated that this was the first development after the Flood of 1993 and originally was known as Chesterfield Grove.

**Councilmember Grier motioned to direct staff to approach the Hilton Garden Inn and Brinkmann building owners with the intent to establish an agreement to utilize 5-7 of their parking spaces and to direct staff to put together a proposal along with a cost estimate as to what it would take to finish the trail and do what is necessary to provide access. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Flachsbart and passed by a voice vote of 4-0.**

Mr. Herring stated that he has received an incredible number of positive comments concerning the direction of the Parks Division under the guidance and leadership of Director Tom McCarthy and Public Services Director Mike Geisel.

**The Committee adjourned their meeting at 6:32 pm.**