

Minutes of the Recreation Advisory Commission
Tuesday, May 10, 2022 6:30 P.M.
Zoom Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT Nick Crowe, Stacy Ebron, Hadil Ghoneim, Glenn Nelson, Larry O'Connell, Hannah Smith, Patti Smith, Zachary Weiner

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT Jenna Bacolor, Josh Landefeld

GUESTS PRESENT Adam Fercho and Hilary Hanzel, City of Ann Arbor

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

- A. Larry O'Connell called the meeting to order at 6:31 P.M
- B. Larry O'Connell led round robin introductions of the members for the guests from the Parks Department.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES of the March 8, 2022 meeting. A motion was made by Glenn Nelson and seconded by Nicholas Crowe that the meeting minutes of March 8, 2022 be approved. On a unanimous vote, Larry O'Connell declared the motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Presentation: [PROS Plan](#), Parks and Recreation and Open Spaces Plan. Presented by Hilary Hanzel and Adam Fercho; landscape architects with the Ann Arbor Parks Department.
 - a. Hilary shared a powerpoint presentation on PROS
 - i. The parks department is required to update their plan every five years in accordance with the grant money they receive
 - ii. The plan reflects the direction of the department, updates goals and objectives and identifies major needs
 - 1. Task force includes parks department employees, city council members, PAC members, the city planner, the community engagement specialist and an equitable engagement steering committee member
 - iii. Equitable community engagement is a focus of the task force
 - 1. Survey, focus groups, public meetings

2. Striving to reach populations that may not have participated in planning in the past
- iv. Timeline
 1. The PROS plan takes a year to complete
 - a. February 2022 kick-off
 - b. March 2022 - June 4, 2022 - [survey](#) available to the public
 - c. March - October 2022 - community engagement
 - d. October 2022 - Review PROS Plan
 - e. November 2022 - Public Hearing
 - f. January 2023 - City Council approval meeting
 - g. February 2023 - submit PROS plan to Michigan DNR
- b. Questions
 - i. What should the City's Parks & Rec department focus on achieving over the next five years?
 1. Glenn Nelson commented that he'd like to see a safe, comfortable place where people of all races, gender orientations and behaviors are encouraged to interact with each other
 2. Jenna Bacolor inquired how PROs planning will contribute to the city climate goals
 3. Hadil Ghoneim asked how the commission measured how well the parks were doing
 - a. Josh Landefeld answered: Ann Arbor has 17 staffed facilities, 65 natural areas and the remaining parks are unstaffed and unsupervised. They rely on neighborhood stewards and residents who adopt a park. They keep a running list of areas that need attention. It takes two weeks to mow all the areas.
 - ii. What programs should we add?
 1. Stacey Ebron: the parks department should make sure all parks are accessible to all people
 - a. The parks department has hired a consultant to evaluate this
 2. Hannah Smith: More Pickleball courts
 3. Hadil Ghoneim: More indoor facilities because of the long winters, more free play activities, unstructured
 - a. Larry O'connell followed up with how popular the sledding hills are in the winter as an example of large, free, open play
 4. Stacy Ebron: An indoor playground and indoor open space

5. Glenn Nelson: Asked if the parks had a scholarship system
 - a. Josh Landefeld answered, yes, but it's not robust and needs to be better
- iii. What is the parks & rec dept's greatest strength and how can we build on that?
 1. Zachary Weiner: Informing residents of accessibility
 2. Jenna Bacolor: The 100 year partnership with the schools. There is a rich history and good working relationship between the schools and the parks.
- c. RAC focused Questions
 - i. What is the greatest challenge for Rec & Ed in utilizing the park facilities?
 1. Jenna Bacolor: Issues surrounding scheduling. The age of the CAB building
 - a. Josh Landefeld agreed and responded that the spaces are recreational spaces, not tournament spaces
 2. Stacy Ebron commented that the biggest challenge she sees is the drainage issues with the fields.
 - a. Josh Landefeld agreed and said the increased rain with climate change has affected the fields
 - b. Adam Fercho asked Jenna Bacolor if these issues impacted Rec & Ed
 - i. Jenna Bacolor answered yes.
 - ii. What trends do you see in the parks department?
 1. Josh Landefeld mentioned bike polo
 2. Larry O'connell said the river usage is a recent trend
 3. Hadil Ghoneim said group yoga and incorporating the arts and music into the parks is a trend
 - iii. How has the pandemic affected the physical needs of the parks?
 1. Jenna Bacolor commented that it would be great if there was an equity lens in the nature areas
 - a. Josh Landefeld responded that he agreed and would like to do a better job of being inclusive. He believes the parks are welcoming but not always inclusive and intentional about getting everyone into the spaces
 - i. Hadil Ghoneim asked who was absent?
 1. Stacy Ebron answered that it might not be a cultural priority for people of color to visit the

nature areas and she personally would love a guided tour

- iv. How can the parks be more equitable/accessible/inclusive?
 - 1. Glenn Nelson asked if the parks had reached out to the Community Action Network
 - a. Yes
 - 2. Zachary Weiner commented that the parks needs to do more than say they're inclusive, they should be vocal about it
 - 3. Stacy Ebron commented that part of being inclusive is to do proactive community outreach and be intentional. Recognize what groups are missing from the parks.

B. Thank you to Glenn Nelson as his term with RAC ends!

- a. Larry O'Connell asked Jenna Bacolor for comments
 - i. Jenna Bacolor expressed her deep gratitude for all his years of service, extra work and thoughtful questions. His effort is double, just like the two "n's" in his name.
 - ii. Glenn Nelson thanked everyone for the kind words

BRIEFING AGENDA

- A. Report from Parks Advisory Committee (PAC) - Josh Landefeld
 - a. PAC budget is going to the city council on Monday for approval
- B. Report from Parks and Recreation - Josh Landefeld
 - a. Josh Landefeld announced he will be the new parks manager
 - b. There is a group putting up artwork in the parks for groups, tours. 39 banners May - September
- C. Report from Community Education & Recreation - Jenna Bacolor
 - a. 3000 summer registrations
 - b. 2500 spring sport registrations and positive responses to the changes
 - c. Rec & Ed is in the process of recruiting and hiring childcare workers to reopen more programs in the fall

TRANSMITTALS - None

ADJOURNMENT - Glenn Nelson moved to adjourn the meeting and Larry O'Connell adjourned the meeting at 7:49 P.M.

The next RAC meeting is scheduled for October 2022

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Hepp
Recording Secretary