



## Advisory Board Minutes February 10, 2009

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Kevin Loos, Vice Chair Jana Dobbs, Kelly Barth, Joe Caldwell and Andy Clayton

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**STAFF PRESENT:** Ernie Shaw, Mark Hecker, Roger Steinbrock

**GUESTS:** Marty Birrell, Dave Corliss, Cynthia Boecker, Brett Leonard and Bret Mott

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- I. New board members, Andy Clayton and Joe Caldwell, were introduced.
  - II. Bret Mott and Brett Leonard, student interns, were introduced.
  - III. Kevin Loos elected as Chair; Jana Dobbs elected as Vice Chair for the 2009 Advisory Board. Motion made by Barth; second by Clayton.
  - IV. Meeting called to order by Chair Kevin Loos.
  - V. Approval of December 9, 2008 minutes – first by Barth, second by Dobbs.
  - VI. Concerns of the Board – Dobbs said she has been approached about closing Eagle Bend Golf Course during this budget crisis and wondered if anyone else has been hearing the same thing. Explained that the golf course budget is monitored monthly and designed for expenses not to exceed revenue. Construction bond and interest are paid from the Sales Tax and is not part of the operations fund.
  - VII. State Liquor Tax elimination proposal and Parks and Recreation service cuts – Approximately \$590,000 a year is what the City receives from the Liquor by the Drink tax. Since the State runs on a fiscal year and if the elimination proposal goes through, we are looking at a loss of almost \$293,000 starting July 1, 2009. When we start developing the 2010 budget, we would lose closer to the \$600,000 mark just for our department alone. When you count that much in the general fund and to various agencies in town, it amounts to \$1.7 million to the City of Lawrence (complete City yearly budget). That money is divided by State law, in to three different funds – one third general fund; one third special alcohol fund and one third to the special recreation fund. If the proposed budget goes through on July 1<sup>st</sup>, we lose all of that money.

We need to encourage everyone to contact their legislators telling them the liquor excise tax needs to stay the way it is. Good opportunity for advisory boards to step up, help work with people here – need to preserve what we have here. Staff has had one meeting discussing reorganization, savings, cutting back, fees, etc. Another meeting has been set up to continue discussing these options. Loos asked Roger to put a letter together, from the board, to send to our legislators. Roger will coordinate with the board about what our next steps will be.

- VIII. Marty Birrell – Prairie Park Nature Center Supervisor – Marty gave a short presentation about the Prairie Park Nature Center. The Nature Center opened on September 18, 1999 and there will be a 10-year anniversary celebration of the Nature Center on September 18, 2009. The general purpose of the nature center is to conserve and protect urban nature. The nature center area consists of an 80-acre nature preserve, Mary's Lake, walking trails, shelter house and fishing docks. They offer fee-based and non-fee based programs, such as educational programs, reptile displays, bald eagle, owls, etc. A new class that is being offered this year is archery. They offer close to 400 programs for the year, reaching over 20,000 people, plus folks visiting the center. They utilize a staff of volunteers to help out with the animals at the center. Current budget is \$223,791.00 a year. Would like to increase volunteer corps, adjust fee's upward for summer camp and increase recreational fees. Loos suggested maybe getting a corporate sponsor to help out with the PPNC.
- IX. KCMPRD – Kansas City Metro Parks and Recreation Directors Association – Banquet for board members on Thursday, March 26, 2009, at the Starlight Theatre. The fee is \$20.00 each or \$225.00 for a table of ten, everything included. Guest Speaker is Larry Moore. Anyone interested in attending needs to contact Ernie by early March.
- X. Burroughs Creek Trail – In the process of engineering, flagging trail and to go out for a public meeting. Hope to start construction late summer. Development of the trail will be in phases and will not be done for a few years.
- XI. USD497 Facility Usage Agreement – We have a bunch of little agreements that we are trying to tie things together along with everything happening at LHS in regards to the Neighborhood agreement. Tennis courts are the only outdoor facility we are negotiating to use at this time on the LHS campus. The City and USD497 needs for facilities are much the same and should be able to negotiate usage since tax payers money are being used for construction.
- XII. Policy governing naming of City facilities – Shaw reported that Chuck Woodling has requested to rename some of the fields at the Holcom complex after Ralph Houk. Originally Chuck wanted to rename North Park Street, but has changed his mind. Ernie passed out a copy of the City Ordinance for renaming facilities. A copy of a letter that Chuck sent to Jonathan Douglass was also provided to the Board. Ernie mentioned that we will probably need Chuck to attend another board meeting for more information.
- XIII. Staff Reports
- a. Shaw reported that registration continues to rise for recreational classes. EBGC has already sold two or three new yearly passes. Staff is also looking at reducing Monday through Friday fees to get more golfers in – turning people away on Saturday / Sunday. Hecker passed out a report that is done monthly tracking the golf course revenue and that the operating revenue is completely weather dependant.  
  
Loos inquired about any new programs for Eagle Bend, new initiatives – Steinbrock reported implementing on-line tee times, new junior programs, NRPA – Sticks for Kids – we are supplied with golf clubs for kids. There are more kids 12 and under golfing. Kids 12 and under can play for free with a paid parent.
  - b. Hecker explained the process of how the project list works, how it allows him to prioritize the work.
  - c. Steinbrock reported that the summer/fall activity guide will come out April 12. Friends of the Park Reception will be held on March 24. On-line practice field reservations will start up this spring and staff will start working on the Bill Self golf tournament which is held in June.

Meeting adjourned. Next Advisory Board meeting to be held on Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at Noon.