

City of Lawrence

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board February 14th, 2006



MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair, Bill Penny, Vice Chair, Chris Schumm, Tom Bracciano, Sharon Spratt and Kelly Barth

STAFF PRESENT: Fred DeVictor, Mark Hecker, Ernie Shaw, Roger Steinbrock, Crystal Miles, Jimmy Gibbs and Jo Ellis

GUESTS: Nick Nelson, KU student

Meeting was called to order by Chair, Penny. Minutes of the January 10th meeting were approved on a motion by Bracciano, 2nd by Spratt.

DeVictor introduced staff members who won awards at the recent Kansas Recreation and Park Association conference and asked the Board to recognize them. Mark Hecker received the 2005 KRPA Distinguished Professional Award, Jo Ellis received the KRPA Recreation Branch Service Award, Jimmy Gibbs received the KRPA Aquatics Branch Distinguished Aquatics Professional Award, Roger Steinbrock received the KRPA Outstanding New Professional, Crystal Miles, horticulture division received the KRPA Parks and Natural Resources Branch Special Project /Design Award for the Japanese Friendship Garden.

DeVictor announced recent actions by the City Commission including: 1st reading of Hobbs Park designation as a landmark in the Lawrence Register of Historic Places; heard proposals for Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department and Americana Music Academy for use of the Carnegie Building and set a study session for this on March 9th; will consider funding a portion of the Partners for Lawrence Athletics and Youth (PLAY) study and referred annexation of the 97-acres of additional leased land at Clinton Lake to the Planning Commission for consideration.

The Board discussed the LPRD proposal from the Carnegie Community Center. On a motion by Penny, 2nd by Bracciano, the Board recommended that LPRD be permitted to utilize and operate this facility. LPRD needs more indoor space and after spending lots of tax dollars to update the building the City Commission should keep the building for public use and the accountability would rest with them. Motion carried unanimously.

DeVictor reported he attended a Kansas Legislature finance committee hearing to consider a tax on green fees for municipal golf courses. He said the Planning Commission discussed on Chapter 9 – Parks and Recreation and they want more data on maintenance costs for small and large parks.

DeVictor presented photos and explained a City Commission request to move the "sphere" at City Hall, which was part of the box factory on the original site before City Hall was built. Pulp material was heated with water via this metal ball to make cardboard boxes. It was moved to landscaping in a surface parking lot east of City Hall. When the parking garage was built in 1990 the ball, as an art object, was moved to its present location which was the nearest area to the entrance to the old box factory. A committee reviewed numerous parks near City Hall for a possible relocation. The Board discussed the sites and indicated they thought it would be expensive to move. On a motion by Barth, 2nd by Penny, the Board recommended the ball be kept at its present location and to provide signage to explain its historical significance of this remnant on the site. Motion carried unanimously.

Hecker presented a draft plan for Bartlett & West for improvements to downtown Lawrence, which emphasized additional and large landscaping in the beds and other possible features to downtown. The plan will be presented to the City Commission this month. Hecker reported his crews were getting facilities like ball diamonds and shelters ready for spring use; told about median tree plantings and a new scoreboard for the Ice Field in memory of Gayle Armbrister, which should be installed for an April 11th dedication.

Shaw reported on developing a contract with our concessions operator to supervise the sports complexes this year. Most spectators now go to the concession stand to find assistance. Customer service training would be part of this contract and budget savings would be seen with this move.

Ellis reported the gymnastics program is going well at East Lawrence Recreation Center and science enrichment workshops would be held for the first time this summer.

Steinbrock said he was working on the summer brochure and it would come out April 2nd. We will be celebrating our 60th anniversary of organized recreation this year and a kick off event would be held in South Park April 2nd. He invited the Board to a new "Friends of the Parks" reception to be held March 7th at the Depot.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30P.M. Next meeting March 14th.