



Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes
March 7, 2024, 7:00pm

Present: Shelly Simpson, Brian Motley, Tim Hamer, Richard Grugin, Shannon Greene, Amy Chen, Nicholas Arnold, Donglin Chai, Gwen Johnson, Jeremy Parrish

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve February 1, 2024 minutes: Chen; Second: Johnson. Approved via unanimous consent.

3. Reports

Parks Report—Tim Hamer

- Parks staff continued standard maintenance activities and is finishing up work on the out building at the Community Center.
- A new portable water tank has been completed for landscaping this summer.
- Turf seeding is underway in parks and some landscaping has begun due to warmer weather. Staff cleaned up several broken tree limbs
- The ice rink has been disassembled at Penn Meadows and two new pickle ball nets have been installed. There are now six permanent courts and two movable nets for a total of eight courts.
- Guy Goldsmith met with NLCBS regarding upcoming baseball and softball season.
- Goldsmith also met with teams regarding the new City Hall and Centennial Stage construction projects.
- Full time staff attended a two day conference in Ames on landscape and tree maintenance.
- Parks Department is still seeking seasonal employees. Employees must be 18 years old. Simpson mentioned they are hiring at the Recreation Center as well – seeking approximately 50-100 seasonal employees.
- Hamer stated the City applied for the Tree City USA grant and is fairly sure we received the grant which will buy 10-12 trees for City parks.
- Johnson inquired about work at the Dog Park. City staff is backfilling dirt into the area for possible expansion of the park in the future.
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Recreation/Pool Report—Shelly Simpson

- Simpson stated staff is looking toward summer programming after winter events wrapped up.
- Swim lessons will be starting soon at the pool.
- Easter events are fast approaching. Center will be closed on Sunday, March 31.
- Programming at the Center continues to be strong and referred Commission to her report for full details.
- Motley updated the Commission on progress of winter leagues which are wrapping up in March.
- Johnson inquired whether there were any senior age-group leagues. Motley said there just hasn't been the interest to hold a league in the past. Simpson noted there will be a pickle ball league and tournament as part of the summer program.
- Motley said the baseball field rental lottery was held and teams have been assigned practice slots for the spring/summer.
- Grugin asked whether more parking will be available at Penn Meadows following the recent construction. Motley stated yes but that there will still be overflow into surrounding areas during tournaments.

4. Questions, Concerns, Updates

- Arnold asked whether Parks and Recreation will gain any space at the Community Center once the new City Administration building is complete. Simpson stated that they will gain the space currently used by the City Communications team for office space for staff.
- Grugin asked if there is a projected date for the outdoor pool to open. Simpson stated that there isn't a firm date but it could be Memorial Day weekend or later depending on staffing levels and weather.
- Arnold asked how budget conversations have been progressing for FY25. Simpson stated that those conversations are ongoing. Some projected cuts to the budget have been added back in. Simpson will continue to push the capital projects forward, including parking lot renovations, pool air duct replacement, aquatic bathroom updates.
- Johnson asked about a long-term strategic plan concerning the Recreation Center and future needs. Simpson stated they have been working off a plan with Shive Hattery that outlines what needs to be prioritized. The City completed a comprehensive plan which is available on the City website. Department heads meet with an advisory group every two years to conduct goal setting. That meeting was just completed in February.
- Arnold asked whether any future expansion projects would involve potential public/private partnership opportunities to fund community "wants" that aren't funded. Simpson stated they would be open to that option.
- Parrish asked whether the ongoing pool projects are complete. Staff stated that those are mostly complete but there are items that arise and need to be addressed.
- Chai asked about the process for renting space in the Community Center for ongoing programming. Simpson stated that City programs take priority for any scheduling. Second option is given to contracted vendors who work with the city on programs. Third, non-contracted programming is available to those who want to rent space to hold their own programs.
- Chai asked about the process for adding and removing community event flyers to the bulletin. Staff stated that community members can bring a flyer to be approved by staff and then posted to the board. Staff clears outdated events about once per month.
- Arnold asked how summer programming registration was going. Registration opens to the full community on April 1. Currently only open to returning registrants. Motely stated that first day of registration they took in over \$100,000. Summer programs are open from 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. and for K-6 students with 50 slots each week with a field trip held once per week.

5. Community Input / Ideas to Share - none

6. Upcoming Events

- a. Community Center Open House, April 3

7. New Business

8. Old Business

9. Next Meeting

- a. Thursday, April 4, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

10. Adjourn Motion: Parrish; Second: Chen None opposed.