



Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

May 2, 2024, 7:00pm

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

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve April 4, 2024 minutes: Parrish; Second: Greene. Approved via unanimous consent.

3. Board Openings: Three positions are opening on the Board: Chen, Johnson, Chai terms expire. Applications are due May 23.

3. Reports

Parks Report—Tim Hamer

- Routine maintenance is ongoing. Staff has begun mowing and trimming work. Season employees to begin soon.
- Roundabouts prepared for summer.
- NLCBS has begun at city baseball fields with tournaments each weekend.
- Youth soccer has also begun on fields which have been striped.
- Community garden plots have been tilled and all spaces have been rented for the season.
- Muddy Creek cleanup was April 8. Thank you to The Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Greencastle 4H, Tree & Stormwater Board, City Council, residents, and city staff for gathering three truckloads of trash for disposal.
- Guy Goldsmith was involved with City Hall, Next Stage and Fox Run project meetings.
- Fox Run project to begin on June 17 with trail work. Signage will be posted once work has begun.
- Staff assisted moving city staff to new City Hall.
- Community Center tuckpointing bid process is complete. T&T Tuckpointing was awarded the contract. Work is planned to begin in September and complete in October. Bid came in approximately \$10,000 lower.
- Cedar Springs garbage collection was conducted.
- City wide cleanup was completed last week.
- Assisted in gathering concrete bases for 10 Herky on Parade statues in town.
- Department has filled all seasonal employee positions for the summer.
- Johnson inquired about the Dog Park opening. Hamer stated grass is growing and hope is to open the park soon in May. Johnson asked about rotating parts of the park, leaving some closed to help ground recover. Hamer stated that would be ideal but space is limited.
- Parrish asked about new landscaping at City Hall. Hamer stated staff will care for that space, too.

Recreation/Pool Report—Shelly Simpson

- Applications are coming in early for summer pool staff which has helped staffing.
- Summer registration revenue has been positive.
- Staff participated in several trainings this month.
- Community Relations has moved to new City Hall. Rec staff will be occupying that space with some small renovations.
- Upcoming events include the parks crawl and remarkable rigs on May 11 and May 18.
- Outdoor pool is being filled for the summer.
- Membership continues to be about 60% residents, 40% non-residents.

- Arnold inquired whether there is a way for staff to determine whether pool rental costs are covering staff costs for private rentals. Simpson stated the indoor pool breaks even on rental but that the outdoor pool does not.

4. NLCC Fees Proposal

- Simpson presented the revised proposal for the NLCC.
- Chai stated the membership labels – Gold/Silver/Black & Gold are confusing and should be examined and renamed.
- Chai also stated she had received feedback to keep resident & non-resident rates different for daily fees. Motley stated the purpose behind the change is to make it easier for staff to get people into the facility, especially without ID. Arnold stated it's also a lever to encourage people to purchase memberships for cost savings.
- Chai also stated concerns with an increase from \$4 to \$6 have been received. She also asked about how the membership pricing works and why the fees are what they are. She wondered if it makes sense to make them easier to understand – e.g. \$29/\$39/\$49 etc. Simpson stated the pricing is based on how frequently someone is anticipated to use the membership. Motley stated these membership fees will be examined in the near future and noted it's hard to track what type of pass each member uses when they check in vs. where they visit in the facility.
- Johnson provided anecdotal information from residents asking whether there would be an option for a daily family rate. Simpson and Motley stated the family would be better served to buy a membership and get more value. Members also get one hour to the pool daily to themselves.
- Chai asked how long the \$6 daily rate would be in place. Arnold noted that it's been six years since there has been any increase and that the increase is explainable given increased operating costs for the NLCC. Parrish noted that this isn't an annual increase and community members should know that they shouldn't expect to see prices increase every year. Grugin suggested there be information clearly detailing how memberships are the best value for residents who use the facility semi-frequently.
- Johnson reiterated framing memberships as a subscription which you enroll in and then are charged monthly with some form of cancellation process in place. Chai reinforced that point saying it's easier for families. The board unanimously suggested an education campaign for any changes made.
- Grugin reiterated that the topic under consideration is the daily fee currently with other changes to membership coming at a later date.
- Parrish pointed out the pools are very expensive to operate and that North Liberty has a very nice pool. City budget subsidizes a large part of the cost.
- Simpson stated there isn't a formal vote required for the Board but a recommendation to the Council. The board provided unanimous recommendation.

5. Questions, Concerns, Updates

- Last Tuesday the first phase of Next Stage Project was approved and presented to the Council. Project will break ground this summer and open in fall of 2025.
- City Hall opening soon. Next Board meeting will be held there.
- Arnold pointed out the current FY26 city budget calls for the bathroom remodel at the pool and the new parking lot. Simpson stated that those are earmarked funds and will be taken in order of necessity.

5. Community Input / Ideas to Share

6. Upcoming Events

- May 11 – Park Crawl
- May 18 – Remarkable Rigs

7. New Business

8. Old Business

9. Next Meeting

- Thursday, June 6, at 7:00 p.m.

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