

Park Board Minutes
July 21, 2009

Members Present: Candy Sullinger, Kenny Garrison, Julie Wolfe, Stan Barker, Jeff Justus, and Kent Vanderpool

Present: Mayor Presley

Members Absent: Don Hoeck, Joe McDowell, Mark Sill

Staff Present: Cindy Shook, Preston Peper and Shari Risley

Stan Barker made a motion to approve the Park Board minutes from May 19, 2009. Kenny Garrison seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Business:

1. The financial report dated May 31, 2009 was briefly discussed by Cindy Shook. Cindy reminded everyone to keep in mind that the allocation from Administration has been removed from the other cost centers so expenditures will appear lower than last year. She stated that she was pleased to see that the campground revenue has now pulled ahead of last year at the same time and expects it to continue to increase. Overall, revenues appear to be on track and expenditures are lower than last year.

2. Candy Sullinger asked Cindy to discuss the next item on the agenda, resident usage of facilities. Cindy stated that everyone using the facilities or programs are entered into the computer system as a household and she is looking at how many of the people are residents. She explained that the staff had designated all Branson addresses as residents and will begin to identify Branson addresses that are actually in the county and designate them as non-resident. Stan Barker suggested that Curtis Copeland with the city's Engineering Dept. might be able to breakdown the addresses and Cindy said she would contact him. Preston Peper said they would still need to be entered into the RecTrac database "by hand" to adjust the status. Cindy said the purpose is to get a better profile of who our clientele is. The Mayor asked Cindy if she knew how many are outside the county? Cindy stated that we could further break down the non-resident addresses to answer that question, but due to some of our leagues signing up as teams and not individuals, the resident and non-resident numbers are not totally accurate. The Mayor commented that if non-resident fees were ever charged, would you possibly have people signing up under someone who lived inside the county? Preston said he had experienced those issues when he was in Colorado. Kenny Garrison added that, in regards to the youth baseball league, the teams from other towns add competition and help to elevate the level of play. Candy asked Cindy to keep the board posted on her findings.

3. The next item on the agenda was the World Series tournaments and Candy asked Cindy to update everyone on those events. Cindy said the boy's USSSA ended Saturday and the Branson Bobcats won second place. She said the girl's USSSA fast-pitch World Series started Monday, and their director put on a big production with opening ceremonies held in the Echo Hollow Amphitheatre at Silver Dollar City. Mayor Presley asked what effect the rain was having on the series and Preston said an extra day had been planned in to allow for rain, meanwhile, they are all doing things in Branson.

4. The possible land expansion was the next agenda item. Cindy informed the board she and David Miller had met with Rick Huffman about an offer to purchase six acres next to the RecPlex to build additional softball fields for a price of \$800,000. Rick Huffman said that he would be willing to take payment for the land over a two year period. Stan Barker asked if Cindy recalled the original appraisal figure and Cindy said she had the information on file and could look it up. Cindy added that this offer is less per acre than the previous offer of 11 acres and that six acres would be enough for two more ball fields, and most important, we would not have to rely on the flood prone ball fields at Stockstill Park. We could change the usage of Stockstill Park and lower the cost to maintain it. Several board members expressed a strong desire for the City to purchase the property for additional fields. Regarding the budget, Cindy informed the board that the budget year will be changing to a calendar year rather than beginning in October. Due to this change, the capital improvement projects will not be approved until January. Cindy stated that she will update the Park Board as it gets closer on whether the cost of the land will be included as part of the capital improvement budget. Kent Vanderpool commented that we have built such a great reputation with all of the teams coming in for tournaments, he would hate to see us have to depend on Stockstill due to flooding. Mayor Presley said that, philosophically, the board was not opposed, but added that Police and Fire had their needs too. Stan Barker said he would hate to see the land get away and that it would be a no brainer if only the economy had been better and the Mayor agreed. Kenny Garrison brought the discussion back to the fields by asking if it was possible to use the Branson or Hollister High School fields? Cindy stated that they had both offered up their fields last year during the World Series as Stockstill was flooded, but that was a one time thing and she was careful not to over-use those favors.

5. Cindy discussed some FYI items and reminded the members she would like to do a Parks Tour in August and look at the Parnell tennis courts which are in bad shape and she is thinking of taking them out. Preston said resurfacing the courts yet again is probably not the best option due to the trees nearby. Cindy added that the courts are not used much anymore. She would like to see green space with a gazebo and landscaping. She asked the board to think about it and talk to the neighborhood.

Members Report

1. Candy commented that the Parks and Recreation update was very impressive as there is so many programs and special events being offered.
2. Kenny Garrison said the youth softball season had gone well and he felt that Kelli had done a great job even though there were a few difficult parents. He added that the Bobcat team that finished second in the World Series and beat his team 22 to 0. Kenny asked about the possibility of batting cages and Cindy said that Kelli had an idea about a more affordable option regarding batting cages that they had just been talking about today.
3. Julie Wolfe said she ran into a friend as she came into the meeting that told her that she really enjoys the walking path and the RecPlex staff. Cindy told everyone that Julie is filling in for Lannie Evans teaching swim lessons this week.
4. Kent Vanderpool asked if we had thought anymore about adding a “half-pipe” at the skate park? Cindy said that Paula had determined the cost at about \$5,000, which would not include pouring additional concrete and extending our fence. Kent asked if it might be possible to find a

used one? Cindy stated that she would check into that. The Mayor added that she had attended a skate board event at Stockstill Park sponsored by Church Army that was really well attended.

5. Stan Barker stated that he had received a complaint from a citizen about not being able to access the playground from the ball park complex. Cindy explained that the playground is up by the soccer field and pool and that if people are attending ball games and wish to go to the playground, they exit at the main entrance to walk to the playground. Stan stated the person didn't want to walk around, but rather go out a side gate that is kept locked. Cindy explained that they this is not an exit and that patrons enter the ball park through the main entrance as there is an admission fee. Another reason for one main entrance is security. Cindy stated that many parents let there children run around the complex as they know it is a safe and secure environment. Stan stated that he understood the reasoning and suggested that a sign be placed on the gate. Cindy responded that there is a sign and will check for the exact wording.

6. The Mayor said she had gotten an email about a "Shakespeare in the Park" event that made it sound like it was a fund raiser for the park's department. Cindy said that event is being held at Stockstill Park, but that it is not a fund raiser for our department and that she would look into it. In addition, Mayor Presley passed out copies of an article to share with the Park Board entitled "The Benefits of Being a Playful City USA" where the goal is to have play space within walking distance of every child. The Mayor explained that the City is starting on a new comprehensive plan and this might be something to consider. She added that the City is working with the Cliff Drive neighborhood to develop a neighborhood action plan that could possibly include a park and the Park Board will want to be involved in that discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15pm