

MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Parks Administration Office
1101 W. 4th St.
April 19, 2021
5:30 PM

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair JaneAnn Oldrup called the April 19, 2021 meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

The following Members were present: JaneAnn Oldrup, Barry Mathison, James Edwards, Becky Joyce, and Megan Patterson. The following Members were absent at the time of roll call: Maegan Sanders and Kim Elliott. Member Sanders later joined the meeting at 5:48 p.m.

Staff present: Jim Burress, Special Services Director; Stephanie Mervine, Recreation Director; Juanita Jennings, Public Affairs Director, and Sharene Brooks, Parks Administrative Assistant, Sr.

Guests present: Councilor Judy Stubbs, Ivan Hall, Bob Edwards, Vicki Burress, and Rita Kane-Doerhoefer.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Member Mathison motioned to approve the agenda, Member Joyce seconded; a voice vote was unanimous. Motion passed, with Members Sanders and Elliott being absent.

***Connection with the GoToMeeting participants was delayed due to technical difficulties; the meeting recessed at 5:39 p.m. to correct the issue and reconvened at 5:40 p.m.*

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Member Joyce motioned to approve the minutes of the March 15, 2021 meeting, Member Mathison seconded; a voice vote was unanimous. Motion passed, with Members Sanders and Elliott being absent.

E. REGULAR ITEMS (ACTION ITEMS)

2. (none)

F. NON-ACTION ITEMS

3. **Discussion on Connecting Spring River and Cielo Grande Paths.** (A map of City trails was used for referral during this discussion.) Chair Oldrup introduced Guests Ivan Hall and Bob Edwards. Member Sanders joined the meeting at this time. Guest Hall gave a summary of projects the Spring River Corridor Foundation would like to pursue with the City. The Spring River trail is in need of maintenance and repair, and will be getting around \$160,000 in attention. They would like to work with the Park & Rec Commission and staff on a historic beautification of the old pool area, bringing back "Hayes Dream". He will be bringing sketches of ideas for consideration to Director Burress. They would like to work with the Chaves County Healthy Kids Program and get the trail connection project on the City's major project list. A grant needs to be found that a 50% match can be split between the foundation and the City. Guest Edwards pointed out options on the City trail map for the joining of trails. The foundation has worked on trying to get this done for years. They have ideas for inserting statues and art along the trails. The possibility of using 8th Street, golf course land, or land owned by a church was also discussed. They would like to join with a couple of groups to work on this project. Guest Hall indicated that the foundation's 25% pledge would have a timeframe attached to it so they would not be put on hold for additional years. Member Sanders brought up the Viva Connects Program that is all about connecting trails and grants.

4. **Report on Aquatic Center/Recreation Center.** Recreation Director, Stephanie Mervine, gave the aquatic and recreation report. Right now, they are transitioning the center into a higher occupancy. They are at 75%, which is about 60 swimmers per session. They are working on launching four summer camps. An aquatics manager has been hired and will start May 1st. Lifeguard certifications, un-winterizing the outdoor pool, and equipment maintenance are being worked on. Memorial Day is the target for the outdoor pool. The quilters group will be starting back up at the Adult Center next week. Member Edwards inquired about the summer camps. Chair Oldrup asked about the Boys and Girls Club leaving the center. Members Joyce and Mathison asked about the swimming hours being set earlier. The recreation store will be opening by May and will have rentable bikes in the lobby. They are working on the marketing side with Public Affairs.

5. **Report on Zoo.** Public Affairs Director, Juanita Jennings, gave zoo highlights. March was the first month of admissions for the zoo. They saw more visitors from outside of Roswell. They took over zoo memberships from the Friends of Spring River Zoo. Sixty-five percent of zoo revenue is coming from admissions. An annual plan for the zoo has been put together outlining expectations. Safety of staff, animals, and guests is top priority. They want to make this property a destination; rethinking/realigning the culture of the zoo. They have had great candidates for the Director position. Four major goals for the zoo were presented: a strategic business plan, working the 2016 Master Plan, ensuring highest quality of life for the animals, and a world-class guest experience. They have had staff training, safety inspections, and role-playing with guest services. They are looking for 12 people to join their team of guest services. There will be a summer camp program launching April 26th. Vet checks were done on some of the animals the past month. They are using Dr. Walker and Dr. Wenner. Safety inspections were done on the shed and heavy equipment. Goals for hiring a new director were discussed. Member

Edwards asked about the ground crew. Evaluations were done regarding work hours and staff, which indicated understaffing. Member Edwards also inquired about the upcoming job fair. There will be interviews and onsite offers made the day of the fair. Member Mathison asked about the animal name plaques being put back up. Member Joyce inquired about the carousel status.

6. **Report on Parks Department**. Jim Burress, Director of Special Services, gave the report on the Parks Department. Plans for the new all-inclusive playground are still moving forward. Engineering should have a survey done soon. He has received some suggestions on what to do with the old pool area such as mazes – not just more grass to mow. A volunteer clean-up weekend is coming up May 2nd and 3rd for the Cahoon area and riverbed. Depending on funding, they may be able to put a trailer together with everything on it that anyone would need when volunteering for clean-up days. This year's Arbor Day event went well. There were long lines of vehicles before the event even started. The City tries to plan for the future with tree planting/removal being tracked by the departments. Roswell is the oldest Tree City in the state. The City is trying to hire a full-time Vet for the zoo, animal control, and police. He would like to expedite this, but it takes awhile to fill positions with the City – it is a process. The trail master plan got approved; he thought it had already been done. They are wanting to hook the aquatic center to the zoo. The all-inclusive playground will have a trail that will tie into the system as well; it will all be tied together. He would like to see a train system one day that goes along the trails. The Game and Fish Department will help with the removal and relocation of the ducks, and adding catfish to the zoo pond. He gave an update on the pond regarding electricity, water, irrigation, and grass seed.

G. OTHER BUSINESS

7. **Public Comments**. Councilor Stubbs appreciated this meeting and getting to see what all the departments are doing. A set of Nancy Lopez golf clubs that will be donated and ideas on displaying them were discussed.

H. ADJOURN

Member Edwards motioned to adjourn the meeting, Member Mathison seconded; a voice vote was unanimous. Motion passed, with Member Elliott absent.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Next Commission meeting: May 17, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.