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CITY OF FITCHBURG

Board of Park Commissioners

718 Main Street
Fitchburg, Massachusetts 01420

James McGrath (*Chairman*)
Mary Whitney (*Vice-Chair*)
Dave Brooks
Mary Cringan
Colby O'Brien

James Bunnell
Recreation Director

FITCHBURG CITY CLERK

May 17 2023 3:42 pm

Board of Park Commissioners Meeting

Date: Tuesday, April 4th, 2023

Location: Morth Conference Room, Fitchburg City Hall, 718 Main Street

Call to Order:

The Tuesday, April 4th, 2023, the meeting was called to order by Commissioner McGrath at 5:38 pm.

Commissioner Members Present: Jim McGrath, Colby O'Brien, Mary Whitney, Mary Cringan, Dave Brooks

Also Present: Nick Erickson, James Bunnell, Mayor Stephen L. DiNatalie, Councilor Sam Squailia, Amy LeBlanc, City Solicitor Vincent Pusateri, Jacqueline Wehtje, Amber Haney

Public Comment: *Jacqueline Wehtje-expressed displeasure regarding the Massachusetts state flag, and also expressed her thoughts on the Rotary Flag flying alongside the American Flag at Riverfront Park.*

Prior Meeting Minutes: *A motion was made by Dave Brooks and seconded by Mary Whitney to approve the minutes from the April 4th meeting. Approved 4-0 (Mary Cringan obtained)*

Department Reports:

Friends of Coggshall Report:

James McGrath Reported: Angelo Bisol from Monty Tech will be removing and refurbishing the signs at the Stone House, (James Bunnell will inform the Parks Crew regarding the work) the bench and park chain need to be repaired near the baby flag (James Bunnell will inform Gary W. and the Parks Crew)

Motion to accept Mary Whitney 2nd by Colby O'Brien Approved 5-0

Riverfront Parks and Trails Report:

A motion was made by Mary Whitney and seconded by Colby O'Brien to table the report. Approved 5-0

Community Development Report:

Amy LeBlanc Reported

- *Steamline Trail DEP work w/ the soil contamination testing, will be replaced with clean fill. The process should take 2 weeks, work is scheduled to be done in July.*
- *Discussed the Playground Projects at Parkhill and at Mama Fitzplayground*

Mary Whitney motioned to accept the report Colby O'Brien 2nd the motion was Approved 5-0

*Mary Whitney motioned to move up the Brews for Good presentation Colby O'Brien 2nd Approved 5-0
Amy LeBlanc presented the Brews for Good event to the commission,*

- *discussed about paying to turn the irrigation system on at Riverfront Park as they have in the past.*

- Seeking approval to hold the annual event which entails closing the park to the public for the event and the event will also be serving alcohol.

Mary Whitney motioned to approve the event Dave Brooks 2nd the motion Approved 5-0

Colby O'Brien motioned to waive the park fee Mary Whitney 2nd the motion was approved 5-0

Parks Maintenance Report:

Nick Erickson reported:

- Trees snow and ice cleanup from the last storm
- Park Cleanup Upper Common, Coolidge, and Parkhill have been done and the department is working its way through their checklist

A motion was made by Mary Whitney and seconded by Dave Brooks to accept the report. Approved 5-0

Mary Whitney motioned to move the flag policy up in the agenda seconded by Dave Brooks Approved 5-0

- City Solicitor Vincent Pusateri spoke regarding the Mayor's executive order, provided a summary of the policy, and provided information on the ordinance.
- Discussion was held about the firefighters association and management regarding that flag pole
- Nick Erickson asked if the city council vetos the policy what will happen, and if the veto doesn't pass then the city will adopt the mayor's policy.
- James McGrath pointed out that at the next meeting, the Commission could be looking at two different policies regarding flags

Mary Whitney motioned to table the Commission voting on the policy till the next meeting, Mary Cringan seconded the motion. Approved 5-0

Colby O'Brien motioned to move the presentation by Amber Haney up in the Agenda seconded by Mary Whitney.

Amber Haney presented to the commission seeking approval to create a painted rock garden at the Gateway Community Park. She submitted a grant request to the Creative Cities Grant to finance the project. The commission discussed what it would look like, ideas of what could be used (possibly old street cobblestones) provided a drawing of the location (attached)

Mary Whitney motioned to approve the project seconded by Colby O'Brien approved 5-0

Recreation Director's Report

James Bunnell reported

- Fitchburg State University update-service learning class and honors program
- Civic Rec software Launch May 9th
- The Photo Contest was pushed out from the winter kickoff to Spring Kickoff on April 14th
- Trees and DCR update- revamp in the proposal, Coolidge and Parkhill Tree Planting Project
- The Easter Egg Hunt event has been posted Date is April 8th at Parkhill Park 10 am-11:30 am
- Concerts in the Common series are almost filled
- Jr Park Rangers Program Update April 13th and April 27th

- *Summer Jobs update*

A motion was made by Mary Whitney and seconded by Mary Cringnan to accept the report. Approved 5-0

New Business:

- *Brews for good- Amy LeBlanc (Moved up in the meeting agenda) *See Above*
- *Amber Haney- Grant/Project Approval Painted Rock Garden at Gateway Park (moved up in the meeting agenda) *See Above*
- *Youth Sports update*
 - *Provided status reports on what the department has been doing with the youth sports groups. Provided updates on parks and youth sports lease agreements, Soccer- completed, baseball softball, and football will be done by June, Street Hockey- have not met nor discussed with them.*
- *Swimming pool and summer playground fee policy (vote needed)*
 - *A discussion was held regarding fees and charging for usage, it was suggested to come up with a multi-child discount structure and pay in full discount, and James Bunnell was asked to discuss the rates with the Mayor and seek his thoughts and feedback.*

Colby O'Brien Motioned to table the vote Dave Brooks seconded the motion. Approved 4-0
- *Rental/user fee for all the parks (discussion)*
 - *James Bunnell and Nick Erikson discussed the need for structure and a more streamlined setup of policies and usage rates for all of the Parks throughout the city. Presented materials as to how other cities in the state have their structure in place. Discussion is ongoing and will continue this was just the start of the discussion.*

Old Business:

- *City Flag Policy-(Status Update) Moved up in the meeting agenda *See Above*

*Motion to adjourn the meeting Colby O'Brien seconded by Dave Brooks Approved 4-0
Meeting adjourned at 7:47pm*