

AUSTIN PARKS, RECREATION, AND FORESTRY BOARD MEETING
APRIL 6, 2022
J.C. HORMEL NATURE CENTER
5:15 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Nik Johnsen – Vice Chair, Chris Grev, Justin Hanson, CeCe Kroc, DeeDee Marx, and Rebecca Waller

MEMBERS ABSENT: Helen Jahr – Chairperson,

OTHERS PRESENT: Randy Hofner, Luke Reese, Riley Donovan, Patti Hamilton, Tricia Branden, Craig Clark, Trish Wiechmann and Jeff Austin

Moved by Mr. Hanson, seconded by Ms. Marx to approve the April agenda with additions. Carried.

Moved by Ms. Waller, seconded by Ms. Grev to approve the March minutes. Carried.

Moved by Ms. Waller, seconded by Mr. Johnsen to approve the special March 11th meeting minutes. Carried.

Moved by Ms. Kroc, seconded by Mr. Hanson to approve the March bills. Carried.

Claire Michelson and Chris Janson from MSA joined remotely to discuss and showed us the projects progress so far and shared the website is starting to take shape and the survey is getting finished as well.

Nancy and Sarah from Discover Austin showed the video of Todd Park's Disc Golf Course and explained a bit about what they are doing and how they are working to promote more events and facility usage in Austin.

Moved by Ms. Grev, seconded by Mr. Hanson to move forward with the possibilities of changing the liquor ordinance language to include both arenas and getting more flexibility for serving options. Carried.

Moved by Ms. Marx, seconded by Ms. Waller to allow River Rats Car Club to use Lafayette Park for the annual car show Friday, August 19 – 21st at no charge. Carried.

Moved by Ms. Grev, seconded by Ms. Waller to move forward with the 2022 Deer Hunt in Austin and for Mr. Reese to proceed and get the applications ready to submit to the State of Minnesota. Carried

Moved by Ms. Waller, seconded by Ms. Kroc to approve the Mower County CEO program to use Packer Arena, curtains, rods, tables and chairs for the annual "trade show" for \$262.50. Carried.

Moved by Ms. Kroc, seconded by Ms. Grev to allow the Human Rights Commission to use the Showmobile on June 12th for Pride Month at no charge for their event with the understanding we should avoid OT as much as possible. Carried.

Moved by Ms. Grev, seconded by Ms. Waller to approve the complete bid for the pools sound system of \$17,821.28 provided by Mr. Mark Bliese. Carried.

Moved by Mr. Hanson, seconded by Mr. Johnsen to approve the bid of \$69,162.00 for the roof replacement at the Veterans Pavilion using raised seam steel. Carried.

Moved by Ms. Waller, seconded by Ms. Grev to make changes to the subcommittees and get to 3 members with the Chairperson always a part of each committee. ** Indicates the chair:

Budget – Finance – Claims:	**Waller, Grev, Jahr
Acquisition – Development – Planning:	**Kroc, Johnsen, Jahr
Policy – Permits – Personnel:	**Waller, Marx, Jahr
Parks – Forestry:	**Hanson, Kroc, Jahr
Recreation:	**Marx, Johnsen, Jahr
Nature Center:	**Grev, Hanson, Jahr

Discussions were held regarding the following:

Holiday Pay for the JCHNC position and Ms. Wiechmann, Mr. Clark and Mr. Reese will continue talking about this and bring it back to the next meeting.

Tree Crew Positions and Mr. Hofner shared the guys are trying to catch back up and already had done 325 trims, removals and prunings. Ms. Waller would like previous year's numbers when we had a contracted service and monthly updates moving forward.

New Parks, Recreation and Forestry Director position had 14 applicants, 5 interviewed, 3 candidates for a second interview and it was stated there is good potential but the board encouraged staff to send comments of what staff was looking for in a new Director.

Board Reports:

Ms. Kroc shared the bus schedule is moving forward and they are working on a strategic plan for the district.

Mr. Hansen shared there is a plan in place for the new Community Park "pond" so will watch what happens with that, he also shared he accepted a new position and is leaving Mower County Water and Soil but happy to say he is able to stay living in Austin.

Ms. Marx is excited for recreation and adult programming coming back around.

Mr. Johnsen shared disc hole #14 at Todd Park was done on Saturday and they are happy with it.

Staff:

Mr. Donovan shared online registration stated on Monday and appeared to be going well. The upcoming MSF Volleyball Tourney has 70 teams participating, summer help is getting hired and the Arena is still busy.

Mr. Reese stated the City's rules for food trucks does not include the Nature Center in its language so the Farmers Market should not have had one for their event, which is unfortunate since food can only be served at the NC, not prepared there, so it's convenient for renters, (this same thing would be true at the Izaak Walton Cabin rentals as well) and suggested language on those trucks/locations should be changed as well. He also shared we are working on a gravel bed with Mower County, The Hormel Institute 80th Anniversary project and Blandin Broadband Community sustainability project (\$3500 grant funds) to be placed at the Fairgrounds, and he discussed the opportunity with AmeriCorps Climate Impact Course and their ability to have helpers with tree works that could start in September and the only cost is tools, transportation and training.

Moved by Ms. Grev, seconded by Mr. Hansen to move forward and get their assistance. Carried.

Mr. Hofner said we are in pretty good shape with winter projects however the frost is still in the ground so not able to really move on spring projects yet. He shared one vandal was caught at the soccer fields causing damage, (there is more) and the outdoor ice rinks are planned to come down in May.

Moved by Ms. Grev, seconded by Mr. Johnsen to adjourn the meeting until May 4th, 2022 at 5:15 PM at the Nature Center. Carried.

Adjourned: 7:38 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Hamilton