

Recreation Advisory Board

February 21, 2019

Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Mark Ferguson, Brandon Thompson, Nic Palmer, Alan Swank

City Staff: Andrew Chiki, Intern Reece Kotaka

Guests: Rob Delach

Call to order: The February meeting of the Recreation Advisory Board was called to order at 5:34 pm.

Approval of Minutes: Alan made a motion to approve the minutes. Prior to a second, Brandon addressed that he believe that while everything contained in the minutes was correct for January, who said which things was not accurate. Alan amended his motion to table the approval of the January minutes.

Old Business:

National Girls & Women's Sports Event: Andrew shared that the event was well attended and a good start to something that can be expanded upon. This can include multiple days and also have clinics and workshops. Alan stated that he was able to see part of the event and that he believes it could be marketed better. He also requested that the advisory board be involved in the planning and that they want to help. Nic shared that getting things planned earlier and picking a date now would be helpful so that more people can attend.

Sandlot MOU: More discussion occurred related to the sandlot MOU. Andrew introduced the community center's intern this semester, Reece who presented the research that he has done on the topic. An example was shared of the City of Dublin, Ohio's field use policy. The group as a whole agreed that the policy is well put together and discussed items within the policy that could be adopted for Athens. The group asked if Reece could find out more about Dublin Youth Athletics, which seems similar to Athens Sandlot. Alan also said he has a contact in Dublin that he can reach out to as well.

- Alan's comments: Does Sandlot fulfill all five bullet points on page one of Dublin's document? He found out recently that in addition to the regular sandlot activities that the is also a Jr. High league using the fields. He wanted to know if there has been any contact made between Terri and Sandlot – Andrew answered that to his knowledge and the last time he spoke with Terri that there has not. Alan also brought up that he had emailed with a friend who is a lawyer who stated that the league must sign a liability agreement and questioned whether the city is named as insured on their policy. Alan wanted to know where does the administration step in and not allow use until liability issues are resolved.
- Brandon's comments: Could we be sued because someone is injured in their league? How are we identifying what is on or off the table, are we able to talk or negotiate? The response from Andrew was that because we haven't had contact with Sandlot, a discussion about the contents of the MOU and what can be negotiated is not possible until there is communication. Brandon reiterated that we cannot risk the liability of not having an MOU.
- Mark's comments: Mark believes that we should request an official opinion from the Law Director's Office about whether activities should be allowed to continue without an MOU in place. He also agrees that it would be valuable to contact Dublin for more information and to make sure that we are making a good comparison of programs. We also need to first define the relationship with Sandlot and the framework.

Alan made a motion that we request from the law director an opinion whether we can allow the league to operate without an MOU signed. Nic seconded the motion and the motion carried with full voice support from members and no dissent. Andrew said that he would contact the Law Director for the opinion.

Andrew said that he can work on setting up a conference call with Dublin and invite the board to sit in on the call to ask questions.

At the end of the discussion on Sandlot, Alan needed to excuse himself so the meeting lost its quorum. All following items are discussion items and no action could be taken, if there was a need to do so.

New Business

Pool Survey Results: The results of the pool survey were handed out to the group prior to the start of the meeting and members were encouraged to look through them. The first page has a list of recommendations for aquatics improvements and it was requested that if there are additional items that the board sees in the results that may have been missed, to contact Andrew so that they can be considered.

Staff Reports

ACC Operations & Pool Planning: Andrew shared that seasonal hiring is getting ready to ramp up for the summer. Day camp, aquatics, and seasonal maintenance are all either open for hiring or will soon be.

Programs: Youth basketball is ending soon and youth soccer registration is coming up. Discussion has occurred about before and after school programs with Athens City Schools and the upcoming elementary school changes. Details are still being worked out and the department is seeking to start an additional after school program at ARTS/West.

Other Items

Mark brought up the all boards and commission meeting that occurred on February 19. He stated that he had the opportunity to sit with Carol Patterson from the Athens Municipal Arts Commission (AMAC). Mark would like to understand the roles and relationship between the Rec Advisory Board and AMAC. He would like it better defined the role of the advisory board considering the department is Arts, Parks, & Recreation. Are there ways that both group can partner and engage, or should the advisory board step back from the arts component? Brandon stated that he felt that the advisory board could do more with AMAC. Andrew shared that there are opportunities that could be considered such as future art benches being installed in the parks.

Rob Delach brought up that the bike path committee has been discussing with the Hocking Conservancy and Ohio University about an access path to the bike path from the vicinity of Morris Avenue. There is a gravel path in the area and the bike path committee would like to have it paved. They would like to have a conversation with the City ~ Service Safety Director Stone about the possibility of the City paving it and Parks and Recreation maintaining it.

The meeting concluded at 7:06 pm.