

Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

Date: August 20th, 2020

In attendance: Mark Ferguson, Alan Swank, Terri Moore, Travis Gatling, Shauna Switzer, Daniel Brown, Brandon Thompson, Mayor Steve Patterson, Beth Clodfelter

Minutes from June motioned for approval by Mark Ferguson, seconded by Alan Swank. Minutes were approved.

Board Member Check-In

Old Business

- Terri Moore: COVID 19 Closure/reopenings
 - o Fitness center/track reopened to public
 - o Tennis courts open
 - o Indoor courts open – reservation only for basketball and pickleball
 - o Outdoor courts and shelters not yet opened as recommended by Health Dept.
 - Unable to enforce/regulate use, lack of staffing to do so

Friends of APR

- Presented by Shauna Switzer
- On hiatus, still want to pursue but now may not be the time

Update: Board Responsibilities

- Presented by Mark Ferguson
- Resending board responsibilities guidelines and working to review and update board responsibilities document with the goal of having it finalized by end of calendar year

New Business:

Friends of Sells Park

- Presented by Alan Swank
- FENA meeting brought up topic of creating a friends of sells park association
- Discussed potential for Sell's Pond upgrading/clean up
- Discussion of potential for grant funding based on park category
- FENA will meet in two weeks to discuss feasibility/possibility of creating a friends group for Sells Park

- Beth Clodfelter expressed approval and interest in Friends-of group

Sells Park Category

- Terri Moore: will send definitions of park categories to the board
- Pocket parks and parklets – typically urban areas, one or two lot size
- Neighborhood parks – typically less than 2 acres
- Community parks – an example of this is Athens Community Center campus where there is playgrounds, swimming pools, skateparks, etc.
- Regional parks – typically with local county and state jurisdiction

Taskforce and Project PLAY

- Presented by Terri Moore
- How does APR identify and fill gaps needed in community for youth programming that can be filled with the resources available to use currently.
- Taskforce combined of volunteers, Shauna Switzer, and APR staff member Erin Helms.
- Emphasized need for shift in program model and minimizing financial loss
- Taskforce intended to identify services we can provide to community
- First meeting next week
- Tentative taskforce name: **Program Learning for Athens Youth (PLAY)**

Board Retreat

- Present by Mark Ferguson
- Last year was first board retreat and took place last November
- Proposed time: either October or November
- Alan proposes middle of November; mayor Patterson proposes before thanksgiving possibly 20th
- Possible agenda topics:
 - o Plan to revisit mission/vision statement?
 - o Review of current years progress
 - o Update on mayors current vision/city priorities
 - o Budget
 - o Revisit council's goals

Other Items & Dept. Staff Report

- Question from chat – Can friends of Arts West group be reactivated and used to help fund Arts West?
 - o August 8th, two program specialists were temporarily laid off due to work reduction through January 4th

- Will look at how friends of arts west group was set up/structured and will then be able to give a more informed response
- Staff Report:
 - Personnel – still have vacant positions (assistant director/facilities op position, full time landscaper, and one part-time position)
 - Outside maintenance as mowing slows, will be shifting to fall projects
 - Story book trail at Sells Park – project in partnership with Athens County Public Library
 - We are responsible for installing kiosks, library will provide and update book pages
 - Ideally completed on Sept. 15th.
 - 17 kiosks, aluminum frame, roughly 15”x20”, insert, drain for water/climate sealed
 - Alan requested to see pictures
 - Playground installation at West State – fall project
 - Swing set
 - Painting Shelters, restroom doors, and relining courts – fall project
 - Programs
 - Start Smart Soccer and Football getting ready to start; using area behind community center
 - Skate board lessons will be offered by an individual in the skate community. Tradeoff is that one Saturday a month, he will be providing free instruction to those unable to afford lessons.
 - They will also be working to clean up the skate park and graffiti
 - Hoping to start mid-September
 - Keeping virtual programs at Arts West going
 - Spoken and Heard events with Kari Gunter-Seymour Ohio Poet Laureate
 - Silver Linings with Wendy McVicker
 - Tess Evanosky – musical lending library reestablishment: string instruments only, no mouth piece instruments
 - Discussion regarding bringing PRISM back to arts west
 - Other ideas: Family Drop in Wiffleball, Kickball

Misc.

- Alan: shares tax revenue loss this year thus far
 - Need to think about priorities and what can be provided with less revenue
 - Mayor Patterson confirms and furthers this discussion adding in additional revenue losses to the city as a whole such as parking and water/sewer
- Brandon Thompson brings up how will arts be incorporated

- Expressed his concern with the arts piece and lack of program specialist, budget, programs and so forth
 - And concern about 2021 arts budget
- Alan Swank suggestion to look at Arts West as a facility and start putting more emphasis on original programming in addition to rentals such as is produced at ACC
 - Brandon – expresses agreement but brings up concern of who will do this programming with a reduction in staff
 - Alan – brings up difficulty in having events/programs at Arts West with current COVID guidelines
 - How can we open and utilize Arts West space even for things other than events/programs such as offering internet access, etc. (with appropriate upgrades to wifi needing completed to do so)
 - Travis – need to think creatively, maybe cannot bring people to space but may be able to virtually reach people; may need to revisit and change vision/mission
 - Terri – expresses commitment to arts piece and making sure that this piece does not fall off
 - References discussions with Mayor regarding connectivity upgrades to Arts West, Habitat House, and Armory park; possibility of using Cares Act money for this
 - Alan – possibility of bringing Arts West things such as lending library and virtual performance and transferring these to Community Center Rooms A,B, C
 - Terri – concern with instruments being moved due to climate control needs but possible to bring other virtual programs over
 - Mark – Were we already heading toward a virtual direction or are we just now generating these new ideas?
 - Terri – Main challenges for streaming at Arts West due to connectivity issue so this was not in place
 - Mark – must continue to be mindful of our spending, what are we investing and what are we getting as a return
- 2021 budget likely to be stark but no formal discussion; 2020 budget is still looking at further expense cuts

Mark Ferguson motions to adjourn. Brandon Thompson seconds. Meeting adjourned.