Call Meeting to Order: Jessica MacMillan call the meeting to order 5:35pm.

Agenda Review & Items of Note: None

Citizen Participation: None

Approval of Minutes: Discussion: None
Bruce Henderson made the motion to approve the Parks & Recreation Board minutes of March 25, 2015, seconded by Ragan Adams – Minutes approved 9:0.

Meeting Summary

- People experiencing homelessness is a concern across the Country and in Fort Collins. Because parks are public spaces, they are one of the only places someone who is experiencing homelessness can go where they’re not charged with trespassing. The Park Rangers work on educating the homeless individuals on where they can seek help; and intervene if there are concerns from citizens with regards to safety. The City is formalizing a partnership with Homeward 2020 and the Social Sustainability Department to work together to help create solutions for homelessness and a funding mechanism for housing. Studies have shown that providing someone with place to live eases their burden and allows them the stability to seek help and find a way out of homelessness.

- Recreation’s 2014 Annual Report Highlights
  - Total participation for 2014 was 1,578,430
  - Health & Wellness Partnership – the partnership with Columbine Health System increased the Health and Wellness programs by over 230%
  - Senior Center completed the $6.8 million dollar expansion
  - ARO received USOC Paralympics Integrated Adaptive Sports Program grant which provided $15,000 toward veteran specific programing.
  - The 24,000 sq. ft. Foothills Activity Center will be incorporated in the new Foothills Mall.
  - Recreation initiated its first Operational Planning Process to ensure operational improvements and effectiveness.

- The P&R Board wrote articles for the Coloradoan highlighting Parks and Recreation venues and amenities which was part of the Boards outreach process. Unfortunately, the Coloradoan is changing focus, and no longer accepting articles of this nature. So, the Board will be focusing efforts, with the help of John Litel, on new communication strategies.
AGENDA ITEMS:

Board Member Commitment – Jessica MacMillan

Jessica discussed with the Board their commitment to the P&R Board and the importance of attending the monthly meetings. With having to cancel the April meeting due to five members cancelling, Jessica reiterated what an honor it is to be chosen as a Board member through the Council selection process; and that members should be attending as many meetings as possible and work schedules around these meetings. If there are topics that are being discussed that are asking for Board recommendations we need to be sure that majority of the Board is engaged.

At the Annual Boards & Commissions Breakfasts they discussed Council’s review of the Boards to see if they are all still necessary, and some of the Boards voiced concerns of not being heard. I think the P&R Board has developed a good rapport with Council and one that Council does listen to; and have an engaged Council Liaison in Gino.

Discussion

Board – I believe the Board Members are committed to this Board and it was just a coincidence that several of the members were out in April; but you threw everyone into a lump. I wouldn’t have applied if I was not committed. I believe there is a process you can take as the Chair if you have an issue with an individual and you should address your concerns to that person and let them decide if they want to remain on the Board.

Jessica – I was just bringing this up to remind people to attend, but wasn’t directing this at any one person.

Board – Were there any Council members present at the B&C Breakfast?

Jessica – No

Homelessness Issues – Beth Sowder, Director of Social Sustainability & Vanessa Finley, Director Homeward 2020

People experiencing homelessness is a concern across the Country and in Fort Collins. Because parks are public spaces, they are one of the only places someone who is experiencing homelessness can go where they’re not charged with trespassing. The Park Rangers work on educating the homeless individuals on where they can seek help; and intervene if there are concerns from citizens with regards to safety.

Homeward 2020 was started in 2010. There are many people, through unforeseen circumstances, that have experienced being homeless, but this is a short-lived and non-reoccurring condition. However, we also have the “chronic” homeless that have issues with mental health and/or drug and alcohol abuse that keep them in a homeless state and we also have what are referred to as “travelers”. The City is formalizing a partnership with Homeward 2020 and the Social Sustainability Department to work together to help create a solution for homelessness and a funding mechanism for housing. Studies have shown that providing someone with a place to live eases their burden and allows them the stability to seek help and find a way out of homelessness. “Red Tail Ponds” is an example of this affordable housing solution; and was developed after reviewing many housing projects throughout the Country using a best practice approach.

Discussion

Board - What is the average rent in Fort Collins?
Staff - $1,200.00 monthly

Board – What other actions are being taken?

Staff – Definitions and language. We want to the public to trend to using respectful language recognizing the person first.

Board – Do Windsor and Loveland have the same issues?

Staff – They do, but a bit different and we’re working together with maximum efforts as a Northern Colorado issue.

Board – I heard that there were changes to the Murphy Center making them not as friendly to the homeless?

Staff – A new management group did take over the Murphy Center, and the City did hear about some issues and we’re working with them on recommendations to ensure needs and services are being met.

Board – Is there simultaneous efforts in other areas like employment, poverty, etc.

Staff – Yes, we work with several services to connect the pieces that affect homelessness.

Board – Are we making a difference?

Staff – Yes, with small steps.

Board – Does the Red Tail Ponds have day time activities to help keep people busy?

Staff – They are doing more and more to help keep people active.

Board – So there’s nothing to prevent someone from sitting in the park?
Staff – No, but if you see someone you are concerned about, you can contact a Park Ranger or Homeless Gear who will send one of their team members out to speak with them.
Staff – Recreation also works closely with Police Services and the Park Rangers at Northside Aztlán Center as there is a lot of complaints because some of the homeless that “hang out” intimidate the facility users. Now that they’ve been involved and talked with the homeless this seems to be better.

STAFF UPDATES
It was suggested that Staff provide monthly updates to keep the Board informed prior to any public outreach, so the Board can also communicate information.

Parks Updates
- Forestry has been working on a tree risk assessment to show what’s coming with the Emerald Ash Borer.
- Linton Elementary was the Arbor Day School this year.
- Memorial Day celebrations will be held at Edora Park, Spring Canyon Park and the Cemeteries. With all the rain, staff has been fantastic getting the areas ready.
- Golf revenue is down due to the rain.
- JR will give smoking ordinance update in June.
- The Garden’s plant sale was successful.
- Marty & JR will be retiring this year. Marty’s last day is August 1 and JR’s last day is September 18.
- The 4th of July celebration planning is underway. The parade will be a challenge this year with work being done on Mountain Ave, but through our relationships we’re making it work.

Recreation Updates
- Recreation Operational Plan Update – 2014 Annual Report Highlights
  - Total participation for 2014 was 1,578,430
  - Health & Wellness Partnership – the partnership with Columbine Health System increased the Health and Wellness programs by over 230%
  - Senior Center completed the $6.8 million dollar expansion
  - ARO received USOC Paralympics Integrated Adaptive Sports Program grant which provided $15,000 toward veteran specific programing.
  - The 24,000 sq. ft. Foothills Activity Center will be incorporated in the new Foothills Mall.
  - Recreation initiated its first Operational Planning Process to ensure operational improvements and effectiveness.
- Kites in the Park and National Kids in the Park Day were celebrated on May 17. Over 5,000 people attended.
- City Park Pool was closed over the Memorial weekend due to rain.
- Father’s Day 5K on June 21.
- Senior Center is celebrating its 20th Anniversary on June 24.
- Summer registration brought in a record number of participation as well as revenue for the month of May.
- Barbara Schoenberger is retiring July 1.

Park Planning Updates
- Update on the Southeast Community Park plan. We’re at the 30% plan which is not too different from the earlier PowerPoint but we’re concentrating on location of elements in the park and the overall “feel” which will be a contemporary farm theme using metal and wood.
  - Board – Are you still planning to put lights in the silos?
  - Kurt – Not sure where we’re at with the use of the silos, as there has been some pushback from the Historic Preservation group asking that the silos remain where they are. But, if we are able to use a silo, it would be in the playground area as an interactive feature of some type.
  - Board – What about a second restroom facility?
  - Kurt – We’re talking with PSD to see if we can partner with them to help fund another restroom; and three options have been presented to the School Board.
  - Board – Are there any other requirements that need to be followed?
  - Kurt – The maintenance facility will need to meet LEAD requirements.
  - Board – Who designed the BMX Track?
Board – What is changing in City Park?
Kurt – This was part of the BOBI initiative – emphasis on core due to safety concerns and train. At the Council retreat, the question was asked about funding existing parks in need of improvements.
Board – Do you have an inventory of these needs?
Staff – Jill Wuertz, the Life Cycle Project Manager, could come to the July Board meeting to discuss life-cycle of parks with the Board.
Board – Could Marty also attend to talk about funding strategies?
Staff – We’ll see if we can get the meeting on his schedule.

Bicycle Advisory Board Liaison Update
June 7 – Open Streets Event – Elizabeth will be closed from Shields to Overland Trail from 10:00am-3:00pm
June 24 – Bike to Work Day

Board Work Plan Items
No Updates.
Board discussed that a topic for a future meeting might be to explore, once again, alternative funding sources.

Schedule of Articles/Calendar
Rebecca with the Coloradoan said that they will be discontinuing the Board’s articles. The Board could still submit an editorial or soapbox article; but to continue the Board’s outreach objective, alternative methods will need to be explored.
Ideas suggested: Recreations Facebook page, Parks newsletter, or manning a booth at festivals.
Bob Adams thought the Board might want to talk with John Litel for a “bigger picture” of outreach options.

Bullet Points
• The Board heard a presentation on homelessness, and what is being worked on to help with this issue including the partnership with the City’s Social Sustainability Department and Homeward 2020.

• The Board was updated on Recreation’s 2014 Annual Report.

• The Board will be working on communication strategies to continue their efforts with outreach to the community about Parks & Recreation.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned 8:16pm

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Rankin
Administrative Supervisor Parks

Board Approved Minutes 6/24/15 - 5:0.

Board Attendance
Board Members: Ragan Adams, Mary Carlson, Brian Carroll, Bruce Henderson, Kenneth Layton, Jessica MacMillan, Scott Sinn, Kelly Smith, Dawn Theis
Staff: Bob Adams, Kurt Friesen, JR Schnelzer, Carol Rankin, Mike Calhoon, Bud Bredehoft, Beth Sowder, Susan Beck-Ferkiss
Guest: Vanessa Fenley, Homeward 2020