

# *Park and Recreation Commission*

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## **Minutes**

(meeting taped)

Monthly meeting: Monday, January 9, 2012 in the City Hall.

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

By roll call, members present: Andrew Cota, Beverly Moran, James Benanto, Red Clynych and Ronald Sill. David Mikos arrived directly after roll call. Nick Serednitsky was excused.

Parks and Recreation Director Dennis O'Connell was present. Athletic Director Joseph Orazetti was absent.

### **ELECTION OF A CHAIR:**

Motion was made by Ronald Sill and second by Beverly Moran. Move to nominate Andrew Cota as Chairman of the Parks & Recreation Commission. Motion carried with Mr. Cota abstaining.

No other nominations were received. The floor was closed. Members congratulated Mr. Cota and looked forward to his continuing efforts for recreation in the City.

### **ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA:**

Motion made by Ronald Sill and second by Beverly Moran. Move to accept the agenda, as written. Motion carried unanimously.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A motion was made Beverly Moran by and second by Ronald Sill. Move to accept the minutes of November 14, 2011, as written. Motion carried unanimously.

### **PUBLIC PORTION:**

No one from the public was present.

### **CORRESPONDENCES:**

No correspondence was presented.

### **DIRECTOR REPORTS:**

**Parks & Recreation Director's Report:** Mr. O'Connell reported that the Board of Apportionment and Taxation has requested that the 2012-2013 budget proposals be submitted by February 14<sup>th</sup>. He will be meeting with the budget committee to draft the budget for the next meeting. He noted for clarification, that the City's line item defined as Equipment Maintenance includes the purchase of new equipment as well as maintaining the equipment on hand. The Board of Apportionment and Taxation has questioned in the past why there was such a great amount of maintenance and the clarification was explained. The Board of Apportionment and Taxation did reduce the amount last year which does place a greater stress on prioritizing what can or can not be accomplished within the confines of the budget. They had indicated that the line item name is to be changed. Looking at the budget, Mr. O'Connell noted that the employees did not receive a raise last year. The budget was reduced last year as compared to prior years. The budget committee will assess the funding needs and look at necessary maintenance and capital projects.

The irrigation systems at Ryan and Witek have been drained for the season. He noted that expense was approximately \$1,000. Reviewing the current budget, the spending is already at 50% for maintenance with the spring season yet to come. Spring is generally the time when the most maintenance is done. Witek Park is maintained by a private contractor as per stipulations and has its own line item. That line item is already over the 50% expended amount and will have to be watched. This line item was reduced by \$1,000 in the current budget as compared to the last budget.

The Ryan Field Capital account line item is funded each year at \$10,000 as per charter. Mr. O'Connell intends to use a portion of the funding for the emergency lights on the bleachers as required by code.

Mr. Benanto questioned if the overall cost of maintaining Ryan Field complex could be calculated. Mr. O'Connell indicated it would be time consuming to do so. Portions of the expenses fall under the Public Works account for the staffing. In-kind services are applied to the Board of Education budget. Electricity has its own account within the City's general budget. He would be able to detail the cost for water, for grooming, for lining etc. from expenditures within his budget. Mr. Benanto indicated that maintaining the sod turf has been proven very costly and he sought to correlate the costs as compared to an artificial turf surface. He felt a strong position could be made for artificial turf if these numbers could be compared. Grooming would be greatly reduced, there is no need for watering and the surface can withstand greater use without deteriorating the conditions. Mr. Cota noted that the Board of Education has started conversations on possible regionalization and this could effect the future use. Mr. Benanto indicated that the field discussions over the years have been stymied by perpetual planning. He felt that the discussion of artificial turf should be moved forward. Other towns are receiving grant funding for improving their fields and Derby sits in limbo. Members decided to move forward with this matter in sub-committee.

Youth Basketball is going well. They are playing at Irving School as well as the Derby Veteran's Community Center and Bradley School. He was unable to develop a 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls' team due to a lack of player turnout.

Mr. O'Connell will be meeting with Little League directors and he encouraged the Parks and Recreation Commission members to come with him to their meetings. Mr. O'Connell stressed again this month that he is seeing a great decline in parents volunteering to coach and assist in the programs. He indicated that the recreation programs are successful due to the volunteers that come forward and he was hopeful that the trend will change. If not, the budget will have to reflect the Recreation Departments increased costs associated with the work previously done by volunteers.

Mr. O'Connell has been conversing with Home Depot for possible support in performing major repairs to the press box at Ryan Field Complex. They often adopt a project in the city and provide staff and materials to accomplish the project.

Mr. O'Connell will be consulting with the City Engineer regarding the ceiling cracks at the field house at Ryan Field.

**High School Athletic Director's Report:** Mr. Orazetti was absent.

**NEW or OTHER BUSINESS:**

Mr. Cota indicated that he will be bringing the field use recommendations regarding weather conditions, specifically wind (as discussed in October) to the full Board of Alderman for their consideration.

**Parks and Recreation Commission Calendar:**

Motion made by Beverly Moran and second by James Benanto. Move to adopt the Park and Recreation Commission meeting schedule for the 2012 calendar year to be the second Monday of each month with the exception of October (Columbus Day) :

January 09, 2012	August 13, 2012
February 13, 2012	September 10, 2012
March 12, 2012	October 09, 2012 (Tuesday)
April 09, 2012	November 12, 2012
May 14, 2012	December 10, 2012
June 11, 2012	
July 09, 2012	January 14, 2013

The meetings will be held at 7:00 P.M. at the City Hall.  
Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Beverly Moran and second by Ronald Sill. Move to adjourn the meeting at 8:03p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully prepared,

Karen Kemmesies, secretary

*These minutes are subject to the Commission's approval at their next scheduled meeting.*