

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Minutes of Meeting Held Wednesday, April 20, 2016 – 6:00pm.
CenterPoint Energy Community Center
7001 Fifth Street, Bellaire, TX 77401

1. Call To Order: by Neil Verma at 6:14pm

Attendance: *Board:* Neil Verma, Susan Hawes, Kevin Sisk, Denise Leisten,
Todd Blitzer, Travis Crabtree

Parks & Rec Department: Karl Miller, Cheryl Bright, Heysel Zepeda

Visitor: Robert Riquelmy

2. Announcement of a Quorum by Neil Verma at 6:14pm

3. Approval of Minutes from March 16, 2016 Meeting

- Todd Blitzer moved and Denise Leisten seconded, minutes approved.

4. Visitor Comments

- Mr. Robert Riquelmy expressed his concern about Houston Hills Park, which he had not heard of prior to the meeting. He feels the City of Bellaire cannot afford to maintain this park in addition to the many parks the City already owns and suggests that the City sell Houston Hills Park. Mr. Riquelmy thanked the board for their attention.

5. Reports

a.) Staff Comments

- Karl Miller provided an overview of upcoming events and the department's monthly report highlighting the following: Nature Discovery Center's Spring Fling is April 23; Wine and Tapas is April 30; Movie in the Park is May 14. Trolley Run on April 9 was a big success with Sean Wade setting a National Record on the course for the Men's Age group of 50-54 with a time of 15:01:3; Preparation for Family Safety Day on April 23 are in progress; The first Movie in the Park will be Saturday, May 14; The department is now taking applications for the Aquatic Aide position and the interview process will begin in the next few weeks and look to hire 8-10 Aquatic Aides for the summer to work at the front desk of the pools; Summer Camp Counselor position interviews have also begun; The Evergreen pool office and shade structure poles are scheduled to be painted; Pool plaster repairs for the Bellaire Town Square Family Aquatic Center leisure pool have been completed; Thirty three seniors attended the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo trip; Twenty seven seniors attended the San Antonio, Wildlife Adventure Ranch trip; The Bellaire Recreation Center paver & landscape project was completed on March 25, which included new plantings and paver work alongside the front of the Recreation Center; The PVB enclosure project is currently underway and will be complete by Friday, April 1; Jane Dembski's dedication tree was planted with the dedication marker installed last week; The renovations at the Waste Water Plant are still ongoing and should be completed next week.
- Cheryl Bright shared details about Family Safety Day and mentioned the Memorial Hermann Life Flight helicopter landing and other activities taking place at the event.

- Karl Miller mentioned that Monday's high waters, from a Parks and Recreation perspective, were not highly affected besides Public Works building receiving 3 inches of water which did not affect the building and that the endcap at Bellaire Blvd outside the loop was underwater and flowers will need to be replanted.
- Karl Miller mentioned that he and Neil Verma were scheduled to present Evergreen Park's Master Plan at Monday night's Council Meeting but the meeting was cancelled and rescheduled for the following Monday. Karl and Neil plan to present Evergreen's Master Plan and will recommend the purchase of a new playground at Mulberry Park.
- Neil Verma recommended that Karl Miller add the Jane Demski's tree dedication to May's Agenda to allow time to attend the dedication ceremony.

b.) Council Liaison Comments as related to Parks and Recreation

Tabled.

c.) Liaisons to other Bellaire Boards, Commissions or Park Patrons Comments as related to Parks and Recreation

- Todd Blitzer, who is part of the Ad Hoc Committee, provided the board with an update highlighting the following: Mr. Blitzer is pleased that decisions and recommendations are being made to PGALL and they are making good progress; the Bellaire High School Public Advisory Team was presented with three options to build a new building for the students which Mr. Blitzer did not agree with and recommended that they seriously consider renovating the building they are currently in instead.
- Kevin Sisk provided the board with Park Patrons comments of their upcoming fundraiser, Wine & Tapas, and how to help and get involved and he is very excited about the coordination and increasing the dialogue and communication between the vision and the funds to accomplish it.
- Kevin Sisk and Cheryl Bright encouraged the board to attend the fundraiser as it is a great event.

6. Presentation regarding Citizen Participatory Budgeting by Mr. Jeff Reichman, Principal, January Advisors and Founder of Sketch City, followed by discussion with members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

- Travis Crabtree stepped in for Mr. Jeff Reichman and provided the following overview of what Mr. Jeff Reichman wanted to share with the board: Travis Crabtree explained that Mr. Reichman's idea is that if they are going to continue to receive discretionary funds from City Council he wants to propose that the citizens participate more in what happens to these funds. Mr. Reichman will build a platform/pilot program, at no cost to the City of Bellaire, to reach out to the community and receive input on how these funds should be spent. Mr. Reichman, although they would not have a vote, would like to get youth/high school students' involved with the decision. Mr. Reichman has also spoken to the City Manager and Mayor about doing something with the beautification projects that he has been hearing about.
- Travis Crabtree will work with Mr. Jeff Reichman to reschedule a presentation.

- Travis Crabtree explained to the board that the grant would be used specifically for the platform and marketing.
- Neil Verma is intrigued with Mr. Reichman's idea; however, he has some reservations on allowing the masses to make decisions on how these funds should be spent. He suggested that if the opportunity arises, they should pick five of the highest needs and present them to the community.
- Kevin Sisk is cautious about taking a grant and opening it up to Bellaire residents and would like to know if there are any strings attached that the board would need to consider if they accept Mr. Reichman's services.

7. Discussion and possible action regarding status of Houston Hills Park

- Karl Miller updated the board with the following: Mr. Hofmann, City Manager, has had some conversations with the City of West University and has met with engineers and a solar power company. An engineering firm has been hired that specializes in solar power to do a feasibility study.
- Susan Hawes: Would the land be leased from the City and would it be a source of income?
- Karl Miller: The land would be some form of a lease agreement with the City of Bellaire and the City of West University Place if project moves forward.

8. Board Comments and New Business

- Denise Leisten: no comments
- Susan Hawes: no comments
- Kevin Sisk: no comments
- Travis Crabtree: Has the board taken any action regarding Evergreen's Master Plan?
- Neil Verma: The board has approved Evergreen Master Plan with a list of recommendations that need to be examined deeper and it was given to City Council to provide them with general elements of what a park should be.
- Todd Blitzer: no comments
- Karl Miller: Mary Cohrs' would like to talk to the board about Little Free Library, has a longtime volunteer who would like to build it and take care of it.
- Cheryl Bright: no comments

9. Adjournment 7:20pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heysel Renee Zepeda

May 18, 2016: Next Meeting