

**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 6:32pm

Attendance: *Board:* Neil Verma, Susan Hawes, Julie McNee, Denise Leisten,  
*Parks & Rec Department:* Karl Miller, Cheryl Bright, Heysel Zepeda  
*Guests:* Brant Gary (Public Works Director); Mary Cohrs (Library Director)

**2. Announcement of a Quorum** by Neil Verma at 6:32pm

**3. Approval of Minutes from March 16, 2016 Meeting**

- Denise Leisten moved and Susan Hawes seconded, minutes approved.

**4. Visitor Comments**

- No comments.

**5. Reports**

**a.) Staff Comments**

- Karl Miller: July is National Parks and Recreation month; July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade and Festival is a great event to attend; July 28<sup>th</sup> is Boards and Commission Training; The department is currently in the process of hiring and training summer staff to work the pools and at Camp Paseo; Camp orientation for camp counselors begins May 23<sup>rd</sup>; Camp sessions are almost filled up; The Aquatic Center opened on the weekends on May 14; The Aquatics Supervisor resigned and Jennifer Bunch is currently the Interim Aquatics Supervisor; Lifeguard training took place May 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>. B.L.I.F.E is busy as usual and had a couple of trips in April; Older American Week took place during the first week in May; Bellaire Little League continues to work at Mulberry Field; Parking lots at Mulberry Park and Evergreen Park were stripped by the Public Works street crew; The Public Works service center demolition took place on May 16<sup>th</sup>; Power washing around all buildings was completed, including both pool deck; The planter removal project on the southwest corner of the Recreation Center should be completed by the end of the month; New safety rails and handrails have been ordered and should be installed before the end of the month.
- Cheryl Bright: Great turnout at Family Safety Day which included the Memorial Hermann Life Flight helicopter landing and other activities were a great success.

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

- No Updates.

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

- No Updates.

**6. Presentation and possible action regarding a pilot street light program along Newcastle presentation from Brant Gary, Public Works Director**

- Brant Gary presented to the board an overview of a pilot street light program along Newcastle and mentioned the following: The pilot street light program is a proposed project for the next budget year and stretched over two budget years based on the current plan. The Parks Master plan includes a recommendation to add lighting for the Newcastle Trail. The existing streetlights are often blocked by trees on Newcastle and Public Works wants a solution that will light both the street/curb and Newcastle Trail. CenterPoint owns and maintains all of the City's street lights and the City pays a monthly tariff/maintenance fee and flat rate for electricity and maintenance. CenterPoint will give the City an allowance of up to \$1,300 per new lighting fixture. The project will be phased over two years, \$75,000 per year. Work on the Newcastle Trail has been completed which provides a uniform 9 foot wide concrete trail along Newcastle within the City. Public Works is looking into LED lighting because they are more cost efficient and low maintenance.
- Susan Hawes: To clarify is this a pilot project that would need to be approved by City Council and then brought to CenterPoint?
- Brant Gary: Already discussed the project with CenterPoint and he will need a budget allocation approved by City Council. He also stated that there are many things that need to get down prior to spending any money.
- Neil Verma: Motion for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to support the goal of the Public Works Department to implement a pilot street light program along Newcastle; seconded by Denise Leisten; approved unanimously.

**7. Presentation and possible action regarding the installation of a Little Free Library in Evergreen Park, presentation from Mary Cohrs, Library Director**

- Mary Cohrs shared with the board about the possibility of installing a Litter Free Library in Evergreen Park and mentioned the following: She was approached by Jane McNeil, Environmental Sustainability Board member and Bellaire resident, who wanted to collaborate with the library in building a Little Free Library in the Evergreen Park area. The purpose of the Little Free Library is to promote literacy and the love of reading by building free book exchanges worldwide and build a sense of community. Mary stated that Jane McNeil has reconsidered and would like the board to consider placing the Little Free Library in Loftin Park, which the library would maintain.
- Julie McNee: This could, perhaps in the future, be a Boy/Girl Scout project.
- Cheryl Bright: Recommended the possibility of getting the Cultural Arts Board involved in the project for design/art work ideas.
- Susan Hawes: Would love to see 2 to 3 Little Free Libraries in the area.
- Denise Leisten: Would like the Little Free Library to be near a bench.
- Karl Miller: Will work with Mary to coordinate placement of the Little Free Library.
- Neil Verma: Motion for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to support the goal of the pilot program to install a Little Free Library at a location near a playground at one of Bellaire parks near seating but not near a bus stop with further details to be coordinated between the Parks Department and City Library; seconded by Denise Leisten; approved unanimously.

## **8. Board Comments**

- Neil Verma: Thanked everyone for attending the meeting.
- Denise Leisten: No comment.
- Julie McNee: No comment.
- Susan Hawes: No comment.
- Karl Miller: Thanked everyone for attending the meeting.
- Cheryl Bright: No comment.

## **9. Adjournment 7:32pm.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Heysel Renee Zepeda**

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**June 15, 2016: Next Meeting**