

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Minutes of Meeting Held Wednesday, June 15, 2016 – 6:00pm.
CenterPoint Energy Community Center
7001 Fifth Street, Bellaire, TX 77401

1. Call To Order: by Neil Verma at 6:06pm

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

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

Guests: Jeff Reichmann (Sketch City Principal and Founder);
John Monday (Chair of Citizens for a Beautiful Bellaire)

Visitors: Robert Riquelmy, Jim Burrough

2. Announcement of a Quorum by Neil Verma at 6:06pm

3. Approval of Minutes from June 15, 2016 Meeting

- Travis Crabtree moved and Denise Leisten seconded, minutes approved.

4. Visitor Comments

- Robert Riquelmy, Bellaire Resident, encouraged the board not to undertake any new programs until the maintenance of the park is upgraded. He pointed out the mud hole in Loftin Park and the use of storage space.
- Jim Burrough, an avid swimmer at Evergreen Therapy Pool, informed the board that he likes to attend these meetings to ensure issues are kept in view.

5. Reports

a.) Staff Comments

- Cheryl Bright provided an overview of upcoming events and the department's monthly report highlighting the following: July is National Parks and Recreation month; July 4th Parade and Festival preparation is in process and the theme this year is Go for Gold; July 11, tentative date, of the unveiling of Free Little Library in Loftin Park; No Park and Recreation Advisory Board meeting in July; Dive in Movie, *Finding Nemo*, on August 18 at Bellaire Family Aquatic Center; Labor Day, September 5, City Building Closed; September 23 is National Night Out Kick Off Party & Movie, featuring *The Force Awakens*; Special camps began on June 6 and continue throughout the summer; Bellaire Little League will host the 11 & under Little League District 16 Tournament this year. The tournament will run from June 18 to June 25; Jennifer Bunch, long time part-time employee in the aquatics division was offered and accepted the Aquatics Supervisor position after the resignation of Mark Carter in May; Swim team began May 2 and the first meet of the season was scheduled on June 6; Red Cross swim lessons began June 6; GuardStart began June 6 with a new instructor, Madi Townsend; With the assistance of the Public Works Department the demolition of the playground units in Mulberry park are scheduled for mid-June; New Evergreen Pool planting was installed; New replacement Library planting was installed; The new *Elizabeth Furler Memorial Field* sign was erected at Mulberry Park baseball field; The Rotary clock on Bellaire Blvd. was repaired; the landscape maintenance contract calls for three change outs annually, one of these change outs was completed in May throughout the City; Limestone base was delivered on May 31 to the

unpaved lot at Mulberry Park. Public Works will work with the parks crew to spread and level this area; Demolition of Public Works Service Center is complete; The new modular building for Public Works will be located at the Public Works Pipe Yard with an installation date of June 20.

- Travis Crabtree: Kudos to the aquatics staff for running a well-coordinated swim meet.

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

- Tabled.

6. Presentation regarding Citizen Participatory Budgeting by Mr. Jeff Reichman, Principal, January Advisors and Founder of Sketch City, followed by possible board discussion.

- Mr. Reichman addressed Parks Board regarding their non-profit organization, Sketch City. Mr. Reichman stated that he has a consulting firm, January Advisors, which works with the City of Houston and open government transparency issues around publishing data and technology, and a series of research projects they embark on every year. One project in particular is the Citizen Participatory Budgeting experiment, which takes a small discretionary fund and opens it up to the public for crowd sourcing ideas on how to spend it. Mr. Reichman noted that his group would curate the public discussion and put it up for a vote and schedule the voting process should the City decide to do this. Mr. Reichman will provide several methods of voting, which would depend on what type of accessibility the City wants. Mr. Reichman's goal is to get a pilot off the ground, and do an analysis to see if it is successful. This would be at no cost to the City and the City can draw any parameters it requires.

In closing, Mr. Reichman thanked Parks Board for their attention and requested they contact him should they have any further inquiries regarding his organization.

7. Presentation from John Monday, Chair of Citizens for a Beautiful Bellaire (CBB), followed by possible board discussion.

- Mr. John Monday gave an overview of the CBB's purpose and goals and to hopefully find ways to collaborate with Parks Board. CBB consists of three groups; Landscaping, Roadway and Image, which organize and develop strategies on ways to approach City Council for funding. Their mission is to make Bellaire more beautiful.
- Kevin Sisk expressed concern as to how CBB would decide on where/what side of the city the funding will be used.
- Neil Verma encouraged Mr. Monday to review Parks Master Plan to get a sense of Parks Board's priorities.
- Neil Verma encouraged board members to reach out to Mr. Monday if they are interested in volunteering.
- Kevin Sisk, Denise Leisten, and Travis Crabtree indicated that they are interested in getting involved with CBB as volunteers.

In closing, Mr. Monday thanked the board for their attention and looks forward to collaborating with Parks Board to improve CBB's vision.

8. Board Comments and New Business

- Neil Verma: Thanked everyone for coming.
- Denise Leisten: no comments
- Julie McNee: no comments
- Susan Hawes: no comments
- Karl Miller: no comments
- Cheryl Bright: no comments

9. Adjournment 7:43pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heysel Renee Zepeda

August 17, 2016: Next Meeting