Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission
Held at the Elk River City Hall
Wednesday, October 9, 2024

Members Present:	Commissioner Dave Anderson, Commissioner Jill Varty, Commissioner Joy Goodwin, Commissioner Greg Loidolt, Commissioner Hal Stewart, Commissioner Melissa Fermoyle
Members Absent:	
Staff Present:	Assistant City Administrator/Business Services Director Joe Stremcha, Farmer's Market/Special Events Coordinator Karen Wingard, Recreation Assistant Ali Wallace, Senior Administrative Assistant Dawn Larson

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the meeting was called to order at 06:30 PM.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. CONSIDER AGENDA
Moved by Commissioner Fermoyle and seconded by Commissioner Loidolt to approve the October 9, 2024, Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Agenda. Motion carried 6-0.

4. CONSIDER MINUTES

4.1 09-11-2024 Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes

Moved by Commissioner Fermoyle and seconded by Commissioner Varty to approve the September 11, 2024, Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes. Motion carried 6-0.

5. OPEN FORUM

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

6.1 PT Complex Welcome Plaza

Mr. Shelby presented the report. He explained that the commission declined to recommend the existing proposal at the previous commission meeting. Mr. Hickman, owner of Furniture and Things was in attendance to explain his expectations.

Mr. Hickman shared that he was satisfied with the current signage at the PT complex and what already had been done. As far as the welcome plaza, he and his brother thought it would be a good opportunity to be added to the project, but he does not have the expectation of that being part of the existing sponsorship agreement requirements. He shared that the existing welcome plaza proposal appears to be a fancy driveway. He would be fine if it were scaled back to save money.

Chair Anderson said that the welcome plaza should be what the community wants and needs. Mr. Hickman said that more shade would be great, but he does not know that everyone has time to lounge on a welcome plaza.

Chair Anderson asked if Mr. Hickman would like to see more signage. Mr. Hickman said he is not sure where any other signage would go or make a difference and that it isn't necessary. Chair Anderson asked if doing other improvements to the fields would be okay like black top etc. Mr. Hickman agreed that the paving of the parking lot etc. would be a nice way to use the money. Chair Anderson confirmed that it is $35,000 coming in each year from the sponsorship agreement.

Chair Anderson said he thinks they should stay with a normal budgeting plan/cycle to bank the money as it comes in and then discuss how to spend it. Commissioner Loidolt asked for clarification on what the money can be used for. Mr. Shelby said the money goes into the park improvement fund and can be used towards whatever we want. Commissioner Loidolt suggested meeting with the user groups to see what they would like to use the money for and keep the money in the area that it is being used for. Commissioner Loidolt said that one thing he would like to see is seating on the hill like limestone block-potentially the ones from downtown that could be recycled.

Commissioner Varty suggested asking the user groups, such as Elk River Youth Baseball, what their thoughts are and start making a list of amenities. Chair Anderson suggested that user groups and parents provide the information and then it can be added to the regular budget line-item process. The projects may not be done in year one but as the money comes in plans can be made for it to be allocated for those wish list items.

Chair Anderson said that Mr. Hickman's needs should be considered too. Mr. Hickman suggested a Welcome to Elk River sign with some trees over the main walkway entrance, so people know where they are. He also suggested having their name on the concession stand. He also said that the associations want storage so that could also be a consideration, such as an eight by ten garage. He feels this is a potential need because they get approached a lot by the user groups for this type of thing. Commissioner Goodwin asked the other commissioners if they feel this is a need as well. Chair Anderson said he feels there is a need for storage and space for it. He asked for thoughts from staff.

Mr. Stremcha asked for clarification from Mr. Hickman if he felt a show floor space for furniture, etc. is needed? Mr Hickman said they do not need something permanent because furniture might start disappearing. He thinks it is easier to drop off furniture during major tournaments for use and display and then pick it back up after. Mr. Hickman also said that $240,000 seemed like a lot of money for a welcome plaza.

Chair Anderson asked the commission if they should invite the user groups in for a workshop. Commissioner Loidolt said yes, he thinks that would be a good idea.

Mr. Stremcha asked the Commission if staff should have user groups submit a wish list by December to be incorporated into the capital outlay plan beginning in 2026. The Commissioner's agreed. Councilmember Beyer thanked Mr. Hickman for all he has done for the community. He also clarified that the reason the welcome plaza project was stopped was because the council was concerned that with only $35,000 sponsorship dollars having come in so far, they did not want to spend $240,000. He pointed out that they have never historically spent more than 50% of the sponsorship money until at least that much had been paid. He thinks a wish list is great, but it must have dollars attached to it as well.

Mr. Hickman said to get black top down and another field is more important to him than a welcome plaza. Commissioner Fermoyle asked what the goal is. Chair Anderson said the current project designs do not seem to meet the needs of its benefactor, the user groups, or the council. The proposal needs to go through a normal work session and budget cycle. Councilmember Beyer agreed. Mr. Hickman said even if the original sponsorship contract needs to be amended, he would rather forgo the welcome plaza to do black top. Council member Beyer said that the goal of the money has always been to put the money towards capital improvements.

7. PARKS AND RECREATION MANAGER UPDATE

7.1 Parks and Recreation Manager Update

Mr. Shelby presented his report.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

9. MOTION TO ADJOURN

Moved by Commissioner Loidolt and seconded by Commissioner Goodwin to adjourn the special meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission at 6:57pm. Motion carried 6-0.

Dave Anderson, Chair

Tina Allard, City Clerk