

**Minutes of the Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting
Held in the Caucus Room of the Municipal Building, 36080 Chester Road,
at 7:00 P.M. on Thursday, October 13, 2016**

Chairman Tom Mitchell called the meeting to order

ROLL CALL:

Other members in attendance were: Jim Schmitz, Mary Berges - Council Representative and Lee Belardo

ABSENT:

John Weigman – School Board Representative and Cady Cianciolo
Diane Corrao, Parks & Recreation Director – City Liaison

September 8, 2016 MINUTES:

A motion was made by Mr. Schmitz and seconded by Ms. Berges to approve the minutes as submitted of the September 8, 2016 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission and the vote was unanimous in favor and Mr. Mitchell declared the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

FEEDBACK ON SURVEY TEST:

Mr. Mitchell confirmed that only one response per household will be accepted even if you use a different email address. He advised it is tracked by IP address meaning if more than one person under that same IP address tries to take the survey it will only allow one. Mr. Mitchell indicated they have received 8 responses on the test survey.

Mr. Belardo inquired if they would only receive percentages back or would they receive actual numbers. Mr. Mitchell said they would receive actually numbers.

Mr. Mitchell said he tested if you answer the question for the number of children in the household as zero then it skips the other questions related to that question. He stated the survey results also will tell you if people skip a question.

Mr. Mitchell inquired if they saw anything while taking the survey that was unclear or leading in any way. Mr. Belardo said he did not have any issues and the questions are similar to the last survey and we can compare the previous results to this one. Mr. Mitchell agreed and said they are almost identical by design with a couple additions and deletions. Mr. Mitchell felt for the most part they should be able to do a survey to survey comparison from the different years. It was mentioned that a closing date to fill out the survey has not yet been determined.

Mr. Schmitz said he would pass out surveys at the Senior Center the next time he attends as the seniors are an important group in Avon.

It was noted the survey takes between 4-8 minutes to complete.

Ms. Berges said she did not notice any issues when taking the survey, as she felt it seemed to flow pretty well.

Mr. Belardo inquired as to whether or not they could see the results to the open questions. Mr. Mitchell said yes and brought them up on the screen for the board to review. He said the last time there was a fair number of feedback items that had to do with mulch and maintenance and

you can do a search on mulch and it would sift through the hundreds of comments and pull up the ones related only to your search and that was very useful. Mr. Mitchell said the comments can also be exported into Excel. Mr. Mitchell indicated the last time they divided up the comments amongst the Board for review.

Mr. Mitchell said when the survey becomes available the plan is to have them at City Hall, at the Parks and Rec Director's office, at the Senior Center, the library. Mr. Schmitz inquired if a newspaper article should be placed encouraging people to participate. Mr. Belardo stated he would be contacting Nicole from The Avon/Avon Lake Press. Mr. Mitchell said as far as marketing they intend to contact The Press as well as put something on the water bills. Ms. Berges reiterated that January was the earliest a reminder could be put on the water bills. Mr. Belardo inquired if the timing should coincide with the article and the mailing in the utility bill. Mr. Mitchell stated what typically happens when something is first sent out then the majority of the responses come in that day. Mr. Mitchell felt it might be worth their while to spread those release dates out slightly. Mr. Mitchell said they do not have to decide yet as to how long they should leave the survey open. It was noted the water bills were sent out in a staggered mailing. Mr. Belardo inquired if everyone still receives a paper water bill. Ms. Berges was not 100% certain, but believes that everyone still receives a paper bill. Mr. Mitchell felt the general idea of sending out the survey information with the water bills is one more way, in addition to the website or the newspaper or a school handout, of getting the word out to people so they are aware of the survey and hopefully participate in completing it. It was noted people can take the survey directly on the computer to which Mr. Mitchell stated 98% of the responders take the survey online and the last time approximately 10-15 paper surveys were completed. Mr. Mitchell believed Ms. Corrao had the ability to place a message on the sign at the gazebo. Mr. Belardo noted there would be a specific link to the survey. Mr. Mitchell said for less than \$20 they could have their own domain and he could point it to the survey link. Mr. Schmitz felt the simpler the better because if it is too complicated people will just skip it. Mr. Mitchell believed the last time there was a straight link, but he has the ability to get our own domain and point it to the survey, if that is what the board would like.

Motion

Mr. Schmitz moved, seconded by Ms. Berges to invest in a custom domain name for Avon Parks Survey and the vote was unanimous in favor and Mr. Mitchell declared the motion passed.

Mr. Mitchell indicated he would research what domain names were available and they could decide year to year if they wanted to keep it or not. Mr. Belardo reminded the members that the City has a website and parks and recs have a submenu off of that website and he indicated they could link the survey to those sites. Mr. Belardo wondered if it was necessary to build a website just for a survey. Mr. Mitchell clarified that creating a domain was not building a website. Mr. Mitchell said it would not show in an Internet search either. Mr. Belardo said he did not see the benefit unless you knew the website was avonparkssurvey.com and the reason you would want to promote that is because it would be easier than promoting surveymonkey/r/avonparks2016 for example. Mr. Mitchell stated that was correct. Mr. Mitchell related a scenario of someone reading about the survey in the newspaper and it says www.avonparkssurvey.com as that was easier to remember and less likely to be forgotten or dismissed; whereas, the survey monkey link would most likely have to be written down. Mr. Belardo stated then he too was in favor of creating the domain name for the survey. Mr. Mitchell said alternatively they could send people

to the Avon website and have the link available from the City website homepage. Mr. Mitchell indicated they could include both kinds of links in the marketing communication. Mr. Belardo felt some in Avon Lake read The Press also and he inquired as to what would stop them from taking the survey. Mr. Mitchell said nothing and he felt the only way around that is to not make the survey anonymous. Mr. Mitchell added that someone in Avon Lake does not have much to gain by taking a survey about parks and recs in Avon and he did not feel it would skew their results.

Motion

Mr. Mitchell moved, seconded by Mr. Schmitz to reconsider the custom domain and think about it and discuss it again at the November meeting, and the vote was unanimous in favor and Mr. Mitchell declared the motion passed.

Mr. Mitchell advised there were several different options to think about.

- Send out Survey Monkey direct link
- Direct People to the City of Avon website where the link can be accessed
- Create a custom domain www.avonparkssurvey.com for under \$20/yr
- Or a combination of those options

Mr. Mitchell added there were pros and cons to each option and he recommended they think about it and bring back for discussion next month.

Mr. Belardo inquired if the APRC would meet in the month of December and he was advised yes.

Mr. Schmitz inquired if it was good to do this survey immediately after the holidays when all the Christmas and New Year's excitement is going on. He thought it might be better to wait until the end of January or the beginning of February. Mr. Mitchell said that could be true and he definitely thought it was a bad idea to release it in the month of December. Ms. Berges agreed as there is a lot of activities during that time. Mr. Mitchell said the survey could be left open for 2 months if desired. The Board did not recall the months the survey was released and open the last time. Mr. Mitchell felt 2 months of surveying was a good amount of time and to spread the marketing out throughout the course of those 2 months. Mr. Mitchell said they could also advertise the new survey on the community voice link as people subscribe and receive emails when something is posted. Ms. Berges suggested finding out when the City newsletter is sent out as that goes to every household in Avon. Ms. Berges said she could check on the timing of the City newsletter as another means of communicating the new survey.

Mr. Mitchell felt next month the whole meeting should be around the marketing process.

Timing of...

- website updates
- newspaper article
- newsletter
- water bills
- info on signs
- handout to students

- email send out to parents of school children

Mr. Belardo volunteered to create a Press Release to send out to the news media as that was probably the best way to send something to the newspaper.

BIKE PATH

Mr. Schmitz felt we should get more focused on this topic around the first of the year to get a section of the path installed and getting the word out. He said that people do not know there is already a bike bath as there is one over by Camelot. Mr. Belardo agreed there are existing trails, but there is a question as to whether those are actually publicly dedicated to the City like sidewalks and roads are or if they are private trails for the development by the Homeowners Associations. Mr. Belardo said there are several neighborhoods that have similar paths. Mr. Schmitz said his thinking is to connect these trails in some way if at all possible even if only a small section to start and then let people know it is there and it might start a movement of sorts. Mr. Schmitz also suggested that maybe any time the City is installing sidewalks they could possibly make a section at a time into a Bike Path as a follow-up agenda item.

COMMUNITY VOICE:

None

REPORTS:

- COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE– Ms. Berges had nothing to report.
- PARK DIRECTOR/RECREATION COORDINATOR– Ms. Corrao was not present.
- SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE – Mr. Weigman was not present.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS:

Ms. Cianciolo was absent.

Mr. Belardo had nothing to report.

Mr. Schmitz inquired regarding the park on SR 611 where the baseball stadium is located if the City leased it for the planting of sunflowers.

Ms. Berges said they City is in the process of working that arrangement out, but has not finalized it yet.

Mr. Schmitz suggested setting an acre or two aside for a dog park and maybe even a portion of that could be set aside for the biking and walking path.

Ms. Berges stated she did not know the amount of land planned for the sunflowers but she knew it was going to border along I-90 near the Crusher's stadium so it is visible in the same way it is at its current location from I-90 near Cabela's. She felt there would still be a lot of land available to do some other things.

Mr. Schmitz felt that would be the best location for a dog park and possibly another basketball spot and maybe another ice skating rink. He said what he did not get across the last

time it was discussed is that an outdoor ice skating rink attracts people that an indoor one does not, as it is nice in the wintertime to ice skate outside. Mr. Schmitz said people cannot do that in Avon. Mr. Mitchell stated there is an outdoor ice rink at Northgate. Mr. Schmitz felt that was so small that adults cannot get around on it comfortably. Mr. Schmitz said the one that used to be at the Swartz Road Park was much larger and the current one is nice, but he felt confined and restrictive. Mr. Schmitz said the Swartz Road Park was actually the first adult facility in Avon that was in the parks. Ms. Berges said an ice skating rink is one of the items on the survey and the results of the survey will help to prioritize and find out if there is interest in an ice skating rink. Mr. Schmitz agreed we could wait to see the results of the survey.

Mr. Mitchell had nothing additional to report.

ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Mr. Schmitz and seconded by Mr. Belardo to adjourn the October 13, 2016 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the vote was unanimous in favor and Mr. Mitchell declared the motion passed.

Transcribed by Barbara Brooks, Clerk of Council
City of Avon