

**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, February 9, 2017**

Chairman Tom Mitchell called the meeting to order

ROLL CALL:

Other members in attendance were: John Weigman – School Board Representative; Mary Berges – Council Representative; Cady Cianciolo – Mayoral Appointee; Mary Brady – Mayoral Appointee

ABSENT:

Jim Schmitz and Lee Belardo

GUESTS:

Diane Corrao – Parks & Recreation Director

January 12, 2017 MINUTES:

A motion was made by Mr. Weigman and seconded by Ms. Berges to approve the minutes as submitted of the January 12, 2017 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission. The vote was unanimous in favor and Mr. Mitchell declared the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. BIKE PATH

Mr. Mitchell stated they would update the Commission in June. He inquired of Ms. Corrao if she contacted Mr. Cummins regarding attending a future Parks and Recreation Meeting.

Ms. Corrao stated she spoke with Mr. Cummins and the grant this Board discussed previously is something that would be applied over the next few years. She said the City recently applied for another grant for \$500,000 with the trail costing approximately \$1.2 million. Ms. Corrao advised it is a very competitive grant, but they were hopeful and they acquired a couple signed letters from property owners who had to be included as part of the grant process, but the letters are not legally binding. She said the City would continue to seek out grants and other financial possibilities to fund this proposed improvement. Ms. Corrao added a lot of the grants want to see you are committed to a project and that may mean having to put some money for design into it prior to seeking a grant. She advised she is hoping that in 2018 the City would specifically budget some money for design work to show good faith in moving forward with a project. Ms. Corrao indicated possibly there would be an update for the June meeting, but she did not feel there would be much to report before that time. This grant would encompass the area under the power lines from Detroit Road to SR 611 just south of I-90 and there is a sidewalk to cross I-90 to access the stadium.

Ms. Corrao said she is still in contact with the two gentlemen who were guests at the last meeting. She was given a list of possible grants and she is looking into those possibilities. Ms. Corrao said she may make contact with Dan Martin, the former director of the Lorain County Metro Parks, to ask where their starting point should be based on their experience.

Mr. Mitchell inquired as to who leads the effort when the City requests grant funding. Ms. Corrao said CVE (Cuyahoga Valley Engineering), which is the engineering company contracted by the City.

2. SURVEY REVIEW

Mr. Mitchell advised one of the main objectives tonight is to try to establish a method of how they would complete the analysis so they can each take a portion and come back to a future meeting with some degree of consistent analysis to use in the final report to City Council. He noted they were up to 1241 responses and 300 of those responses came in after the school communication blast.

Ms. Berges stated there was a small article in the Plain Dealer at the end of 2016 and the Avon Press has it listed every week under the Avon listing. Mr. Weigman noted it was on the Gazebo sign board. And the survey would be going out in the February water bill, which should be any day. It was noted, the survey would be closed out March 1st. Mr. Weigman felt they were getting a good response as this was as many responses as they received at the last survey. Ms. Berges inquired if they have received any hard copies of the survey back. Ms. Corrao said she received one back. Mr. Weigman indicated he would check the other locations to see if they have received any completed forms back. Ms. Brady said an announcement was made at Garden Club to go online and fill out the survey. Mr. Weigman stated with the information going out in the water bills it should capture any remaining group of people that has not heard of it to this point so they could expect one more spike of people taking the survey.

The Commission looked at the numerical results of the survey up to this point. It was noted, the results were somewhat different than the last survey. It was noted that swim lessons were offered at the Avon Aquatic Facility through the City's partnership with the YMCA, but you did not have to be a member of the Y to participate. Mr. Weigman inquired if there was a way to get a rough estimate of how many children are in hockey or ice skating. Ms. Corrao felt it was right around the 200 mark. Mr. Weigman asked if it was possible for her to get the rough soccer participant numbers as well as those for baseball. Ms. Corrao stated the soccer participants were approximately 1200. Ms. Corrao felt soccer and Little League were close in participant numbers, but they have added lacrosse now and as more programs become available some could migrate to another sport. Mr. Weigman stated he was trying to validate some of the numbers in the survey versus how many children are participating already or could be in the near future. Ms. Corrao added she felt hockey would increase with how well the team is doing at the High School level.

Mr. Weigman said they have received approximately 2275 comments through the 11 categories. He mentioned that the last time they categorized every single one of them. He felt the better way to do it this time was to read through them and get 3 to 5 themes and anything that is actionable or potentially actionable and for Ms. Corrao's department they should list out for her department to handle. Mr. Weigman said a lot of the comments were nice job for the Recreation Director and her team. He also said sidewalks and their connectivity were mentioned quite a bit. Mr. Weigman stated there were a lot of comments from the ice hockey participants who mentioned skating with only 2 sheets of ice, which seemed to be a consistent phrase. He said ultimately they wanted to provide the entire file of comments to Ms. Corrao, but he felt they could get it organized by themes and singling out the actionable items, which might require a more immediate response. Mr. Weigman noted this process would be for each of the specific parks as

previously assigned to the Commission members. He indicated they could compare comments and themes together once they had the initial breakdown. Mr. Mitchell stated at the last survey one of the biggest issues without reading all of the comments was to know the category and some did not fit into a category and then you have too many categories. Ms. Cianciolo agreed this way should help narrow the margin in a more time efficient way. Mr. Weigman demonstrated how to streamline going through the comments per park. Mr. Weigman noted there were a lot of positive comments and feedback about the parks and the Recreation Department. Ms. Corrao said that was really nice to hear.

Mr. Mitchell inquired if they should try to come to the next meeting with the results. Mr. Weigman felt even if there is one more blast of survey takers, they could still go through it and look for those new comments. Mr. Weigman noted, he dated the file so as new information comes in he can freeze that information in the same manner and they could see the new comments by date. Mr. Weigman added this would allow them to get some of the work done now and not get overloaded in March. Mr. Mitchell stated he would send the saved data information out to the other members so they could access the comments for the park they would be reviewing.

It was noted that while something such as a separate entrance to Veteran's Memorial Park was beyond the scope of the Parks & Recreation Commission it could be passed along to City officials who would feel justified in what they are trying to accomplish or encourages them to continue. Mr. Weigman felt the Parks and Recreation Department has come a long way since the last survey and it was noted many of the wants and needs mentioned years prior have been realized.

FUTURE DISCUSSION TOPICS:

- Survey Comment Results – First Pass Review – Close Survey
- City Engineer to come to future meeting – TBD
- Survey Report to City Council at a future Work Session

COMMUNITY VOICE:

- Posted that the survey was available

REPORTS:

- COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE– Ms. Berges advised City Council approved a Resolution to request grant funds for a trail from Detroit Road to SR611. She felt that was a positive step from the last meeting of the APRC. Ms. Berges stated there was a nice article in the Sun Sentinel that morning mentioning that Avon City was seeking a grant for a multi-purpose trail. She welcomed Mary Brady to the Commission.
- PARK AND RECREATION DIRECTOR– Ms. Corrao stated last month there was discussion regarding the field behind Village School and she reported they took measurements of that field. She said it would be nice to be able to use that field this year whether in the spring or in the fall or possibly both. Ms. Corrao advised she could get two U4 fields out of Northgate, which were on random green space at that location and parking is a real problem especially when the Community Center is rented. She stated she could also

put the two U5 fields at Swartz Road Park at the school field as well. Ms. Corrao indicated they planned to seek bids for the Swartz Road Park entrance soon, which would ultimately close off the pavilion. She stated she could order port-a-potties's for the field during the interim and it could be discussed whether the City crew would mow during the sport season.

Mr. Weigman said he spoke with a school official regarding this possibility and they were open to doing it. He suggested Ms. Corrao meet with the school official and finalize all the logistics. Mr. Weigman stated the field would need to be rolled. Ms. Corrao agreed and felt it was all very doable. She said the sooner they could be given access the better. Ms. Corrao said she would follow up with the school official.

Mr. Weigman stated basketball courts were mentioned as being needed as well. Ms. Corrao felt it was a matter of taking the old hoops out and installing new ones and they should be ready, as the court looked to be in good condition last year. She indicated she would look at her budget to see what funds were available. Ms. Corrao said she would follow up with Mr. Laub on that possibility as well.

Ms. Corrao advised over the past couple of years she has developed a relationship with Mary Herrick who is big with USTA (tennis) in Lorain County. Ms. Corrao stated Ms. Herrick received a small grant and she offered to use the funds for a tennis program in Avon. Ms. Corrao said she has 30 plus children and it was only \$60 for each child for 6 Saturdays for 1-hour lessons at Avon Oaks. She indicated because of the grant and the group setting the cost was greatly reduced. Ms. Corrao stated there would be a tennis program this summer as well and Ms. Herrick would be helping with that program also.

SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE – In addition to the comments with Ms. Corrao, Mr. Weigman said the school was looking at installing permanent restrooms in the near future at the Village School. Mr. Weigman recommended people go to a school concert from Jr. High age on up if they have the opportunity. He stated the children are amazing especially at the High School level. Ms. Corrao said the school Art Show would be at Avon Isle the week of April 9-14 and it is amazing. Mr. Weigman noted there is a school survey out right now asking for the residents to provide feedback about how the schools are performing and meeting the needs of the community. He indicated the school survey could be found on the school website and took approximately 10 minutes to complete.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS:

Mr. Mitchell welcomed new member Mary Brady and thanked her for her willingness to volunteer and serve as it was appreciated.

Mr. Weigman had no further comments.

Ms. Berges had no further comments.

Ms. Cianciolo had no further comments.

Ms. Corrao had no further comments.

Ms. Brady thanked the Commission for the relaxed atmosphere and making her feel welcome.

Mr. Belardo was absent.

Mr. Schmitz was absent.

ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Ms. Brady and seconded by Ms. Cianciolo to adjourn the February 9, 2017 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission. The vote was unanimous in favor and Mr. Mitchell declared the motion passed.

Transcribed by Barbara Brooks, Clerk of Council
City of Avon