

**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, April 13, 2017**

Acting Chairman John Weigman called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL:

Members in attendance were: John Weigman – School Board Representative; Mary Berges – Council Representative; Cady Cianciolo, Lee Belardo

ABSENT:

Tom Mitchell, Jim Schmitz and Mary Brady

City Representative

Diane Corrao – Parks & Recreation Director

March 9, 2017 MINUTES:

A motion was made by Mr. Belardo and seconded by Ms. Cianciolo to approve the minutes as submitted of the March 9, 2017 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission. The vote was unanimous in favor and Mr. Weigman declared the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. SURVEY REVIEW

Mr. Weigman stated they were primarily going to go through the Parks and Rec Community Survey tonight. He indicated the goal would be to collect any remaining information between now and the May meeting. Mr. Weigman said at the May meeting he wants to provide the executive summary for the Commission to collectively wrap it up. Mr. Belardo asked for a final draft prior to the May meeting so they could be more productive in their discussions.

Mr. Weigman stated from December to March there were 1,838 surveys collected. He noted the survey was marketed through water bills, newspapers, social media and school parent contact listing. He pulled all of the surveys and fine-tuned them and all the summary data was compiled and he reviewed a brief number of the questions as follows:

Question #1 – Have you been to a park in the past 12 months

- 88% - Yes
- 4 - skipped question

Question #2 – Participated in a park program in the past 12 months

- 44% - Yes
- 56% - No

Question #3 – Age group

- two-thirds falling between the age of 35-54

Question #4 – Do you have children in the household

- 73% - Yes
 - Check all ages that apply – a wide range of ages were acknowledged

Question #5 - Outdoor Facilities

Mr. Weigman indicated they were categorized by Very Important=1, Important=2 and Unimportant=3 and then it is average calculated. He mentioned those outdoor facilities most requested.

- Walking trails
- Biking trails
- Playgrounds
- Swimming
- Baseball fields

The Commission members were satisfied with the layout and felt it was easy to visualize the survey results in that manner. He also provided the same data in a mathematical format with the same percentages.

Question # 7 - Indoor Recreational Facilities

- Community Center
- Swimming
- Indoor basketball courts
- Ice rink
- Volleyball courts

Question #8 – Programs

- Swimming lessons
- Outdoor concerts
- Yoga

Question #9 – Feedback - 603 surveys had comments for a total of 1529 comments

- Aquatic Facility – Mr. Weigman
 - Love the pool
 - Would like lazy river
 - Would like an indoor pool
 - Add sidewalks and trails for access to pool facility
 - More swimming lessons offered
 - Supervise area better
 - Would like umbrellas or shaded areas
 - Healthier/cheaper concessions
 - More chairs
 - More affordable
- Northgate Park – Comments reviewed by Mr. Belardo – 175 comments
 - Control/clean geese droppings
 - Early comments about slide being dangerous, but later comments compliment the Parks Department on the new equipment
 - Fishing contest at the pond is most commented activity that is positive – Fishing lessons/fishing camps
 - Restrooms
 - Interesting comments included:
 - Bulldoze and renovate
 - Paint over graffiti on fence – it was noted that fence is private property and not park property
 - Dredge the pond
 - Better lighting – parking lot area

- Distance markers on trail
- Ohio Geese Control 1-877-914-3373
www.ohiogeesecontrol.com
- Heritage Square – Mr. Weigman
 - Beautiful space for flowers and holiday lights
 - Small and not considered a park
 - Host movies or concerts
 - Update landscaping
 - Light at night – Ms. Corrao noted it is lit at night unless power outage occurs
 - Holiday music playing
 - Recycle containers
- Avon Isle – Ms. Cianciolo
 - Firepit – not sure liability
 - Wider driveway
 - Second entrance
 - Park or Party Center
 - TV
 - Cable – Satellite (wifi available already)
 - Indoor Yoga/Pilates
 - Outdoor event in parking lot
 - Park Benches – Sitting area by water
 - Craft shows
 - Mini concerts
 - Better marketing of offerings
 - Recycle containers
- Little League Park – No changes from previous minutes – Ms. Berges

Mr. Weigman said some of the comments related to lighting or more lighting at the parks. Ms. Corrao said the parks are not lit and is the reason they close at dusk and open at dawn, although she noted there are lights on two ball fields for game play.

Question #10 – List up to three areas where you would like to see funds allocated in the parks and recreation program with a focus on items that were not asked about above. Approximately 400 responses - many responses only had one idea

- Top three themes:
 - Ice Rink: curling, figure skating, hockey
 - Citywide sidewalks, walking-biking trails, connecting parks to other parts of the city
 - Dog Park, query: off leash?
- Interesting responses
 - Keep up good work focused on maintenance, safety and grounds care
 - Corrupt and political soccer management
 - Indoor rec/pool like Rocky River, Westlake or Fairview Park
 - Parks & Rec Newsletter w/calendar
 - Parks & Rec should be more like Avon Lake or Westlake in programming
 - Spider ball
 - Multiple requests for First Aid/CPR – available year round at Fire Dept.
 - Fixing things at the YMCA – not City operated

- Obtaining more park space
- Classes for art, music and theater

Ms. Berges showed the Commission a newsletter from Avon Lake from Autumn 2016 and suggested the parks department may want to put something similar out that would be separate from the City's newsletter.

Mr. Belardo added the Boy Scouts have consolidated two Councils and Avon in Lorain County is a part of the new Northern Ohio Council, not formally named, that encompasses the Greater Cleveland Council and the northern parts of the old Heart of Ohio Council, which is Lorain County, Erie County and Huron County and it goes all the way to the border of Ohio now. He said they are looking for venues to hold summer camps and they bring in their own staff and programming. Mr. Belardo stated they are looking for places where they can shoot bows and arrows as well as BB guns. Ms. Corrao was uncertain as to whether Avon has the facilities they are looking for in that regard. Mr. Belardo advised some of the projects requested in the survey such as recycling containers or the fire pit can be used in projects for those scouts trying to earn their Eagle Scout, Court of Honor designation. He indicated it would just require some communication to the scouts that these items are needed.

Question #11 – What type of park amenities would you like to see when French Creek Park is developed.

- Top Themes
 - Ice Rink
 - Trails
 - Dog Park
 - Playground
 - Sled riding
 - Multi-purpose training facility

Mr. Weigman stated he did not list opportunities out because all of these would be opportunities.

Question #12 – What other programs would you like to see - Ms. Berges

- Top Themes
 - Hockey
 - Ice Skating – Speed, Precision
 - Adult Leagues – Indoor volleyball, basketball, soccer, softball, flag football, cards, games
 - Informal learning – cooking, quilting, sewing, music, woodworking, self-defense, photography, cake decorating
 - Recreation Center/Community Center
 - Yoga

Ms. Berges added she did not list Bike Paths here because she did not think of it as a program. She noted there were lots of positive remarks about the Parks and Recreation.

Question #13 – Additional Comments – (yet to be added)

Mr. Weigman stated that concludes the run through of the survey. He noted he would take the additional comments from the minutes of the previous meeting. Mr. Weigman noted that for Schwartz Road Park he would go through those between now and the next meeting. He said the

goal was to get the survey results out to the Commission Members 2 weeks prior to the next meeting and he felt they could wrap it up and be done, ideally. Mr. Weigman said he make an executive cut of the survey and he noted he would most likely need help making final edits when they met again next month and get additional feedback from the rest of the Commission.

The Commission Members were appreciative of Mr. Weigman's efforts and complimented his work and all the time and effort he put into compiling the information.

COMMUNITY VOICE: - No updates

REPORTS:

- COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE– Ms. Berges advised for the record Mr. Jim Schmitz resigned last month. She said that Mr. Schmitz wanted the other Commission Members to know it was in good standing and he sends his regards. Ms. Berges clarified that Mary Brady who was appointed last month was actually a Mayoral Appointment with a concurrence by City Council.
- PARK AND RECREATION DIRECTOR– Ms. Corrao advised they just sent the summer flyers to Avon East as well as to the Heritage Schools. She noted at the middle school level the flyers are not passed out, but placed in the office and an announcement is made of their availability for them to be picked up by the student. Ms. Corrao said there are a lot of summer programs listed and she reminded the Commission that Avon does not have the facilities that Avon Lake, Rocky River and Westlake have and they are doing the best they can with what they have available in the time allotted. She stated a lot of mowing was completed in the parks this week. Ms. Corrao said it was nice to get the feedback from the survey on what is happening in the Parks and Recreation Department.

Ms. Berges said she read about a contest called “Meet Me at the Park” and she asked Ms. Corrao about it.

Ms. Corrao said “Meet Me at the Park” is something that came out through OPRA (Ohio Parks and Recreation Association) and there is a \$20,000 award available to the community that receives the most votes. She advised it was put out on the City Facebook page and shared in the hopes of getting people to vote for Avon parks and possibly be awarded the \$20,000. It was noted, the rankings are not shown.

Ms. Berges said she also read something about the Park and Rec being in the Avon Isle building.

Ms. Corrao advised it was to get the Youth Theater Program started and they did not have the space available at the Community Center so for the spring session they are having different classes held at the Avon Isle such as modern dance, theater, music and singing. She said the Avon Isle is being used twice a week for 2 hours during the day and the City receives their stipend for its use to help get the Youth Theater Program up and running. Ms. Corrao indicated they were not going to get into the business of having that facility used as a Park and Rec program facility.

- SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE – Mr. Weigman said the School Board met this last week and the property behind the Board of Education building was being used for soccer fields. Ms. Corrao concurred and noted they have rolled the fields and have offered to mow just around the soccer fields, but they are looking into whether that is something the City should continue to do or not because of union regulations with the maintenance staff. Mr. Weigman stated if there is anything Ms. Corrao should need in regards to the school property he suggested she reach out to Superintendent Mr. Laub. Mr. Weigman also noted there is an electronic scheduling tool for the access to the fields that Ms. Corrao could utilize if necessary.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS:

Mr. Belardo wished everyone a Happy Easter.

Ms. Berges wished everyone a Happy Easter.

Ms. Cianciolo had no further comments.

Ms. Corrao had no further comments.

Mr. Weigman had no further comments

Ms. Brady was absent

Mr. Mitchell was absent

ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Mr. Belardo and seconded by Ms. Berges to adjourn the April 13, 2017 meeting of the Park and Recreation Commission. The vote was unanimous in favor and Mr. Weigman declared the motion passed.