

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

February 28, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Cincinnati Board of Park Commissioners was held on this day at 950 Eden Park Drive. Commissioners present: President Brad Lindner, Commissioner Kevin Flynn, and Commissioner Linda Lee Thomas. President Lindner called the meeting to order at 9:05 A.M.

Public Comments

President Lindner announced public comments regarding the Dunore Dog Park item would be take place directly after the discussion.

There was one public comment not pertaining to the Dunore Dog Park item. Mr. Collins thanked the Park Board for considering providing matching funds for the Clean Ohio Trails Grant.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Flynn motioned for approval of the January 16, 2020 Meeting minutes. President Lindner seconded. Motion passed by vote.

STAFF RECOGNITION

Jenny Mobley introduced the Krohn Conservatory team and presented all of the hard work that goes into preparing and managing five seasonal floral shows and creating an exciting and pleasant customer experience.

Andrea Schepmann thanked the Board for the recognition and invited them to see the 25th Annual Butterfly Show. Details of the show including promotions and handling of the butterflies were briefly discussed.

DOG PARK AT DUNORE PARK

Director Kish introduced the community group presenting the idea for a dog park at Dunore Park, for the Board's consideration. She emphasized alternate opinions regarding utilization of the park would be heard at the present meeting as well. She explained the Board may choose to direct staff to begin public input sessions if the concept peaks their interest but are not presently being asked to take action on this item.

Clifton resident, Nestor Melnyk provided background on the community interest in a dog park in Clifton as well as their reasoning for promoting Dunore Park as the preferred site. Mr. Melnyk presented the perceived benefits of utilizing the site for this purpose and community groups in support of the concept. Dana Dubay, Molly Gray, and Dave Allen, Clifton residents and proponents of the idea, further described the concept and the desire for a thoughtfully designed park, and addressed concerns.

President Lindner opened the floor for public comments related to this topic. There were eleven public comments in response; five were in opposition, four were in favor, and two were neutral.

Mary Jo Vesper
Shawn Baird
Cassandra Clement
Gabriella Starbuck

Donna Thie
Margot Fosnaugh
Karen Noonan
Marcia McLaughlin

Paul Thie
Bonnie Henry
Rama Kasturi

President Lindner concluded the Park Board would be willing to pursue conversations with the community regarding this topic. Director Kish furthered, Planning staff would engage the community and explore the concept and bring the item back to the Board for consideration at a later meeting.

Commissioner Flynn encouraged advisory councils to express their visions for their parks. He suggested the community work through advisory councils and encouraged them to attempt to align funding for visionary capital projects.

Commissioner Thomas expressed gratitude for individuals engaging in this discussion. She emphasized the need for a process of working with the advisory councils to integrate the community's vision into the Master Plan.

The availability and relevancy of Park Board guidelines for constructing dog parks was discussed.

NEW BUSINESS

Fairview Park Easement

Cindy Witte, Principal Architect presented the staff recommendation to approve an easement in Fairview Park to allow the CUF community to place decorative street lights along the edge of the park and sidewalk. Commissioner Flynn motioned to approve the recommendation. President Lindner seconded. The motion passed by vote.

Approval of Consultant Engagement

Ms. Witte described design work required for upgrades at the Parks Administration Building, which includes dividing the Director's Office to provide additional meeting space for the building. She presented the staff recommendation to approve the described Work Order for DNK Architects.

Commissioner Thomas motioned to approve the staff recommendation as presented. Commissioner Flynn seconded. The motion passed by vote.

The Approval and Advice requirements established by the Park Board were clarified as it pertained to review and approval of this item. Commissioner Thomas suggested reviewing the requirements now that they have been implemented for over a year. Commissioner Flynn suggested creating a consent agenda for similar items.

Ault Park Cherry Tree Grove

Larry Parker presented the plan for planting and maintenance of the Ault Park Cherry Trees, which was a result of engaging community groups and stakeholders to identify needs. He described elements of the plan including enhancements, tree inventory, mapping, and establishing a volunteer corp. He explained the Ault Park Advisory Council have committed to engaging in fundraising efforts to support the cherry trees into the future. He presented the staff recommendation to approve the plan and accept up to a \$10,000 gift from Ault Park Advisory Council for planting and maintenance.

The species of cherry trees were discussed. Commissioner Flynn suggested including a plaque or recognition on the history of the grove. Mr. Parker confirmed donor signage exists, but agreed there is a need for additional signage. Rocky Merz confirmed staff have been working closely with the Japan America Society (JAS) to develop such signage. He thanked Tokiko Freeman from JAS for her assistance.

Hyde Park Square Renovation

Cindy Witte presented the plans for the Hyde Park Square renovation, which will improve safety and the park's function and aesthetics. She described the landscaping renovations.

Commissioner Flynn asked if private funding is secured for this project. Craig Sherman clarified the Parks Foundation has the ability to cover the \$110,000 budget.

Commissioner Thomas asked about the replacement of the blue spruce tree. Ms. Witte confirmed it will be replaced, however the new tree will not be as large. The community's awareness and support of the tree's replacement was discussed. Mr. Parker clarified the tree is not being replaced due to safety concerns, but because it has substantially overgrown the site. Ms. Witte confirmed Hyde Park Business Association and Hyde Park Community Council are aware and in support of the plan. The need to replace the tree due to it being overgrown was discussed further.

Commissioner Thomas motioned to approve the plan as presented. Commissioner Flynn seconded. Motion passed by vote.

Grant Application Request: ODNR Grant Application for Bramble Park

Ms. Witte presented background on the ODNR Clean Ohio Trail grant and described the Little Duck Creek project, which it would support. She presented the opportunity for the Board to contribute half of the matching funds for the grant. There was further discussion regarding the details of the trail plan.

Director Kish presented the staff recommendation to approve applying for the grant, with approval of a Resolution, and approving the adjustment of the Commissioner Fund Budget of \$24,000 from the Meyer Fund for the matching funds.

Commissioner Flynn expressed excitement for the ADA compliance of the design and commented that the total cost of construction is reasonable. He also commented City Off Road

Alliance (CORA) was originally going to apply for the grant but are supportive of the present application instead.

Commissioner Flynn motioned to approve an adjustment to the Commissioners Fund Budget of \$24,000 to provide half of the local matching funds. Commissioner Thomas seconded. The motion passed by vote.

Commissioner Flynn motioned to approve Resolution #2020-0001. Commissioner Thomas seconded. Motion passed by roll call vote.

Grant Application Request: Parks Foundation Grants

Craig Sherman presented the staff recommendation to apply for two Parks Foundation grants for Hyde Park Square Renovation and Fulton Avenue Roundabout, totaling \$120,000.

Commissioner Thomas motioned to apply for the grants. Commissioner Flynn seconded. Motion passed by vote.

Acceptance of Parks Foundation Grants

Mr. Sherman presented the staff recommendation to accept \$111,771 in grant funding from the Parks Foundation for Krohn Conservatory programs. Commissioner Flynn motioned to approve he recommendation. Commissioner Thomas seconded. Motion passed by vote.

Commissioner Thomas asked for clarification regarding the reasoning for separate processes for approval and acceptance of grants. Staff explained it was the result of a Commissioner request and was intended to demonstrate and track incoming grant funds. There was discussion regarding alternative ways to inform the Board of accepted grant funds and acknowledging their receipt. There was a general consensus from the Board that this process would be considered.

Commissioner Flynn commented caution should be taken when accepting anonymous gifts to avoid inadvertently accepting funding from an interested party. There was discussion regarding ways in which to ensure this. Jennifer Spieser confirmed the Foundation has a firm process for evaluating anonymous donations.

City Travel and Credit Card Policies

Mr. Sherman presented the staff recommendation to follow the City's policies and procedures for credit card purchases and travel, per the request of the Ohio Auditor of the State. Commissioner Thomas motioned to approve the staff recommendation. Commissioner Flynn seconded. The motion passed by vote.

STAFF COMMENTS

Rocky Merz provided updates to the Board regarding flood response at the Riverfront and announced Parks representation at the Neighborhood Summit. He described the community engagement session held on February 11 for enhancements and changes to the Mt. Airy trail

system and explained feedback was distributed to participants and on the website. Commissioner Flynn commented on the variety of trail users present.

Mr. Merz announced the quarterly CPAC meeting scheduled for March 10 at the Ault Pavilion, the theme of which is volunteerism. He announced staff will be presenting at the Neighborhood Leadership Academy on March 10, which will educate community leaders and activists on the department. He mentioned a collaboration with Cincinnati's sister city Nancy, France, in which Parks will design a floral bed to be installed in France to celebrate 25 years of the sister cities program. He announced the busy season will begin on or around April 15, during which staff will be de-winterizing facilities. He mentioned an All Staff meeting will be scheduled for early April.

Commissioner Thomas asked if there are any announcements on the website to mark the beginning of the season and amenities offered. Mr. Merz described outreach and messaging efforts and timing. Consideration of event schedules for opening facilities outside of the normal schedule was discussed.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Commissioner Flynn asked if there is a way to demonstrate the progress of the budget and committed funds. Mr. Sherman said he could investigate and provide something.

Commissioner Thomas commented on the Krohn staff recognition and commended staff for their work.

President Lindner commented on the dynamics of recent years and his appreciation of staff.

Commissioner Flynn thanked Director Kish for her work and the meeting procedures she has implemented.

The dates, times, and location for upcoming meetings were discussed. Mr. Merz commented extra steps will be taken to ensure interested stakeholders are notified of the upcoming Special Meeting on March 11. The legalities of the notice language and agenda were discussed. Mr. Flynn commented on the importance of indicating action may be taken at the meeting in the notice. Christine Zimmer, City Law, clarified only items listed on the agenda can be discussed at a Special Meeting. Director Kish stated notices will be run through Law and she suggested expectations for the meeting. Commissioner Flynn suggested a more visual timer for public comment.

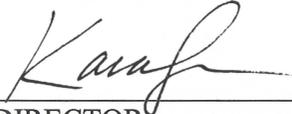
ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Thomas motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Flynn seconded. Motion adjourned at 11:12 A.M.

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "A. M. Jones", written over a horizontal line.

PRESIDENT

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kauf", written over a horizontal line.

DIRECTOR