

Meeting Minutes
Fairview Park Board
September 8, 2014

Board members present: Chairman Ron Rowe, Vice Chairman Jack Cannon, Secretary Richard Edmondson, Patti Carroll, and Jim Power, and; also present Park Superintendent Bryan Bissell and Park Director Keith Paisley

Absent: Neil Rice; Beverly Totty

- I. The agenda was approved and the minutes from the 8-4-14 meeting were approved.
- II. General Park updates: Park staff is getting ready for Nature Fest, to be held Saturday, 9-13-14 from 10-4, said Bissell. Paisley said there will also be a Star Party on September 26, starting at 7 p.m. and a Fall Fun Day on October 4 from 10-4.
- III. Veterans Park master plan rough draft: Cannon raised a question as to the park's official name. Paisley said the official name approved by the Board of Commissioners is "Veterans Memorial Park at Evergreen Lake." In response to a question from Carroll about the Fishing Rodeo, Paisley said plans are to hold it there again next year. Edmondson asked if park staff had had any discussions about what improvements they would like to see at the park. Bissell said several objectives have been discussed, including, a) a cleanup of the driveway leading into the park; b) removal of large boulders, c) develop a parking area d) more picnic tables and possibly a shelter at some point. Both Bissell and Paisley said public restrooms will be needed at some point. Edmondson mentioned that signage is also needed. Carroll said grant money might be available. Rowe said he had had talks with the America Legion about the possibility of them incurring the cost of a flagpole and memorial. Bissell said the park could also possibly become the focus of Eagle Scout projects, and that Bowie has benefited greatly from such scouting projects. Cannon said a primary need is wheelchair accessibility, especially from the parking area to the lake, and that that should be moved from a long range goal up to a near-term priority. He also said Walmart is supportive of veterans and could be interested in helping out with the flagpole. Paisley said he had already talked with the manager of the local Walmart store who had informed him that requests of this nature should be submitted by early February. Power said he would like to see some trees planted as a buffer between the park and the saw mill across the street. Cannon said keeping the lake stocked with carp should also be incorporated into the master plan. Bissell said the lake had been stocked with 30 carp prior to this year's Fishing Rodeo. The species is important because it eats grass and keeps algae blooms from covering the surface of the lake. The lake was also stocked with 800 pounds of catfish. Cannon also suggested that since budgeting is tight this year that a metal sign with the park's name should be placed on Highway 96, one that could be replaced at a later time as finances allow.
- IV. Out Parcel master plan rough draft: Cannon suggested relocating the city chip depository to the lower part of the parcel, closer to Crow Cut Road. This would free the area where the trailer sits (site of the current chip depository) for public park use. Bissell cautioned that a

determination would have to be made as to whether anything could be built in the trailer area since the ground may be unstable due to years of chip-dumping. Cannon said the forester presently employed by the city might make a determination that trees should be thinned from other areas of the property; if so, this could open up additional space for recreational use. Edmondson asked if any of the board members had any thoughts on the skate park proposal in the rough draft. Rowe said the issue ideally would be addressed in a new directive from the BOC with regard to recommendations for park improvements such as camping, splash pad, dog park, etc. Cannon said regardless of the type of recreation offered, the parcel will need restrooms. "Because it's just too far for a bathroom," Cannon said. "It's a five mile hike to the closest restroom." He suggested possibly putting a septic tank in the park along with some inexpensive, pre-fab restroom facilities. Motorhome/RV camping would place additional requirements on the system and need additional sewage capacity. The park is one mile away from the closest sewer line. "There's a demand for camping," said Cannon. "That seems to be high up on the list, but I don't think everybody wants to go tent camping."

Carroll said she thought a campground would be good for the Out Parcel, as it would compliment the Nature Park and would bring people into the community. Edmondson said the biggest plus about the Out Parcel is its proximity to the Nature Park and that the trail system links various parts of the community together in the form of a greenway. Carroll suggested the skate park could go at another location, possibly the Elrod Road property, while the Out Parcel should be used for something else, perhaps camping. "I would like to see something that's conducive to the park setting that really is fitting there," she said. "The draw would be to draw people into our Nature Park, to be able to spend a weekend in Fairview, and I think camping would do that. I always have thought that." Cannon and Rowe also spoke about positive aspects of having a campground. Power said it would make sense to start out small, with maybe only five or six individual campsites, each with individual electrical hookups, to see if the public demand is there. Edmondson pointed out, however, that camping in the Out Parcel has been discussed by the Board numerous times in the past, without any resolution. The chief obstacle has always been the problem of sewage disposal. Rowe said the new tasking assignment from the BOC could maybe lead to a resolution. "The Board of Commissioners wants a blueprint for the next five to eight years on, let's say, one item a year—how much is it gonna cost, what's the staffing—that's pretty simple," he said. "If we break it down to one item, it's baby stuff; it's one step at a time, one item at a time." He suggested also that members of the public could assist with the effort by doing research into such things as how much a splash pad would cost, for instance.

V. Miscellaneous items: Handicap trail to Joann's Classroom: the engineering survey has been done, and the city is now waiting on the results, said Rowe. Cannon said a controlled burn—planned for the Dome, the test site, and areas 1-6—has been postponed until March.

VI. New mandate from the BOC: Rowe read aloud the new BOC mandate, which calls for development of a 5-10 year plan for improvement and expansion of the city's park system. The plan should:

1. Identify new services or facilities to be provided and in what order these should be implemented;

2. Costs involved
3. Best location
4. Additional costs such as maintenance, staffing, or the need to acquire specialized equipment
5. Integration of sidewalk system
6. Recommendations on how to pay the expenses
7. An analysis on how the new services compliment or integrate with county services

The mandate also includes suggested activities/services for consideration, including camping, a splash pad, and dog park. The final plan is to be submitted to the BOC by March 1, 2015. Rowe described the mandate as a “monumental task” but also a “great challenge” for the Park Board. Rowe also read aloud a letter he had written to the BOC recommending against the conducting of another public survey on the park. “Citizens get weary of too many surveys without any tangible results,” the letter states. It also expresses the view that the city already has enough sampling data to make a determination on public recreational needs and that “it would be a shame to expend monies and get the same result.”

“At the next meeting I think we need to sit down and come prepared for some suggestions on maybe five or six or seven items that we feel are important,” Rowe commented.

Discussion was also held on Brownlyn Trails and the Elrod property, along with the positive aspects of having a partnership with the developer, though uncertainty exists as to whether the new owner plans to move ahead with the project. Adequate sewage capacity for the number of houses planned is apparently a problem. Power voiced the difficulties he has had explaining to members of the public about the city’s other park properties in light of the fact that few people have heard about them and even fewer know where the parcels are. A map or illustration identifying the properties that have been designated for park use—and also showing where in Fairview they are—is direly needed for posting on the Internet, he said. Cannon said the National Recreation and Park Association might have a formula for determining the number of parks a city should have based upon population. The organization’s website is at nrpa.org. Power said he would look into it.

VII. In public comments, Al Tarolli, president of the Friends of Bowie Nature Park, suggested adding a feature to the Park’s website that would enable visitors to see maps showing where the different park properties are by typing in an address.

VIII. The next meeting will be October 6, 2014.

IX. Meeting was adjourned.