



Rochester Hills Minutes Leisure Activities Committee

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Saran Ahluwalia, John Dalton, Jim Duistermars, Mike Hartner, Brenton Kinker, Kelley Kosuda, Linda Raschke, Steven Swann, Suzanne White

Monday, September 20, 2004

6:00 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

Draft

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Duistermars called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: Jim Duistermars, John Dalton, Linda Raschke and Suzanne White

Absent: Steven Swann

Non-Voting Members Present: Mike Hartner, Brenton Kinker and Kelley Kosuda

Non-Voting Members Absent: Saran Ahluwalia

Others Present: Alan Buckenmeyer, Manager, Park Operations

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2004-0707 Regular Meeting - July 19, 2004

Attachments: 071904 DRAFT Minutes.pdf; Resolution.pdf

A motion was made by Dalton, seconded by White, that this matter be Approved.

Resolved that the Leisure Activities Committee hereby approves the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 19, 2004 as presented.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Duistermars, Dalton, Raschke and White

Absent: Swann

COMMUNICATIONS

Chairperson Duistermars explained to the new Youth Representatives that the Communication section is where Committee members may bring letters, articles, or resident comments to the table for discussion. Also, the Clerk's Office forwards "housekeeping" items for to the Committee members via this section.

Welcome Youth Representatives

Chairperson Duistermars welcomed the 2004-2005 Youth Representatives to the Leisure Activities Committee. He also mentioned that beginning in October, the Committee agendas will have an additional header called "Youth Comments" that will provide an opportunity for the Youth Representatives to speak about topics which they

feel are important.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2004-0137

Discuss Clinton River Trail Bridge and Intersection Improvement Project

Chairperson Duistermars gave a brief overview of the project. Mr. Hartner gave an update of the project that included the following:

- * Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is involved by giving the City a grant for \$400,000.*
- * The Clinton River Trail (CRT) travels through Rochester Hills and crosses five (5) major county roads which are: Avon, Livernois, Hamlin, Crooks and Adams.*
- * There will be road improvements to the five (5) major intersections to allow trail users to cross in a safe manner.*
- * The CRT will open up the City and connect to Auburn Hills, the Paint Creek Trail and Macomb Orchard Trail which are all part of the same railroad bed.*
- * At both Avon and Livernois Roads, there will be a proto-type "refuge island" approved by the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) to allow trail users to safely cross when traffic clears in one direction, then cross when traffic clears in the other direction.*
- * Bids for the project are due September 30, 2004.*
- * RCOC must review all road improvement plans which has added several months to the project timeline.*
- * There are eleven (11) different trail systems in Oakland County which all cross over major county roads; Rochester Hills is the first municipality to get approvals from RCOC.*

Discussed

2004-0268

Discuss Clinton River Trail Surfacing & Survey

Attachments: Update & Survey Form - Parks Dept.pdf; Survey Results - Parks Dept dtd 6-18-04.pdf; Trail Surface Survey Form - FCRT 032204.pdf; Survey Results - FCRT 11-04.pdf

Mr. Hartner gave a brief history and update that included the following:

- * When funding becomes available, the Committee will decide what type of surfacing will be used on the City's portion of the trail. Currently, the Committee has been studying and discussing the three (3) surfacing options which are crushed stone, asphalt and stabilized crushed stone.*
- * There is fifty (50) feet of a stabilized crushed stone "test plot" that was put down last year on CRT just inside the Crooks Road gate for people to examine and give feedback. It is made from a plant-based product that looks like gravel.*
- * The Friends of the Clinton River Trail (FCRT) published an Internet survey regarding the three (3) surface choices and received approximately 350 responses which they are still analyzing and will present at a later date.*
- * The Parks Department published the same survey in the Hills Herald which is distributed to 26,000 city homes and received only 53 responses.*

* *The Leisure Activities Committee will be faced with a tough decision regarding the surface choice. There is no clear mandate from the public.*

* *There is a grant request pending for \$750,000 to fund the surfacing. In addition to the initial surfacing cost, items such as operations, life cycle, maintenance and erosion costs must be considered.*

Mr. Hartner encouraged the committee to examine other nearby trail surfaces to make comparisons.

Discussed

NEW BUSINESS

2004-0659

Discuss Possible Increase of Park Fees - Motor Vehicle Entry Fees

Attachments: 0585 Resolution from Council dtd 07-28-04.pdf; Chapter 54 Fees - Parks and Rec.pdf; Dept. Recommendation dtd 10-12-04 .pdf; Motor Vehicle Entry Fee Survey 09-2004.pdf; 0659 Draft Resolution dtd 10-12-04.pdf

Chairperson Duistermars explained that a resolution was referred from City Council asking the Committee to review the motor vehicle entry fees to City parks to determine if they could be increased. The resolution resulted from construction costs that will be incurred to reconstruct the main concession building at Spencer Park and bring it up to code. The building is approximately twenty-three (23) years old.

Mr. Hartner and Mr. Buckenmeyer presented background information that included the following:

* *Funding for the Parks Department comes from the City's General Fund; it does not have a dedicated millage or a separate source of funding.*

* *The City also maintains a separate Capital Improvement Fund that is used to rebuild major buildings and structures when warranted.*

* *The City is looking for ways to increase dollars that support the General Fund and the Capital Improvement Fund.*

* *The Parks Department is currently examining the sport field rental fees charged for activities such as soccer and baseball, etc. and will present a proposed increased to the current fee schedule to the Committee next month which would then be presented to City Council.*

* *By reconstructing a new concession stand at Spencer Park, more services can be offered which will also generate additional revenue.*

* *The City only charges an entry fee for three (3) City parks: Spencer, Bloomer and Yates. They are as follows:*

*Yates: \$5 daily
Bloomer: \$5 daily
Spencer: \$5 daily for residents; \$10 for non-residents*

*Bloomer: \$25 annual
Spencer: \$25 annual for residents; \$50 for non-residents
\$5 annual for Senior Citizen residents;
\$10 annual for Senior Citizen non-residents*

* *Spencer Park was the first City-owned park and it was decided the City would have a resident and non-resident fee system. Bloomer and Yates were acquired from the State*

of Michigan.

* The philosophy behind the daily/annual fee system is that parks are also subsidized by taxpayers through the General Fund, so regular users should pay for special services, i.e. life guards, trash pick, etc. However, bicyclists or pedestrians can walk into the City parks at no charge.

* Park entry fees were raised in 2000 to the current structure of \$25 for residents and \$50 for non residents; prior to 2000, entry fees were \$20 and \$40 respectively.

* The Parks Department conducted a motor vehicle fee survey which shows that the City is currently charging the highest park entry fees. Oakland County and some other entities levy a millage on top of their park vehicle entry fees.

* There is a fine line of "diminishing returns" whereas if park entry fees are raised too high, users will be discouraged and go somewhere else.

* The City's park entry fees, sports field rental fees and concessions sales currently bring in about \$600,000 per year.

* Revenues at Bloomer Park have increase by 100% in the last 2 years since the Veledrome opened.

The Committee had a general discussion on various aspects of park entry fees and ways to promote the parks to businesses. Mr. Hartner recommended that the park entry fees remain at the same level, however, he will be bring a recommendation to increase the sports field rental fees which will be discussed at the October Leisure Activities Committee meeting. The Committee decided to wait until October's meeting to make a recommendation to City Council.

Discussed

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Raschke suggested that the monthly calendar of City park events could be announced by the local schools through their public address system to students with school approval. The Committee's Youth Representatives, Ahluwalia, Kinker and Kosuda volunteered to speak with school officials to see if the monthly calendar could be a part of the school announcements. The Committee concurred and Mr. Hartner will provide the youth representatives with the calendar on a monthly basis in an effort to publicize the City parks and the Web Page.

Mr. Hartner also mentioned that the City used to have a full-time position that promoted the City to the community, but the position was eliminated, however, current employees do try to incorporate public relations in the regular duties.

NEXT MEETING DATE

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chairperson Duistermars adjourned the meeting at 7:30 PM

Minutes prepared by Denise Mertz.

Minutes were approved as presented/amended at the _____, 2005 Regular Leisure Activities Committee Meeting.