

Parks Commission
Tuesday July 16, 2019 / 6PM
Meeting Location: Montpelier Police Station Conference Room

Commissioners: Fabienne, Dan, Kassia, Carolyn

Staff: Geoff, Alec

Public: Pat Hazouri, Donna Bate

Meeting Minutes

- 6:14 Approve June meeting minutes
 Approve June special meeting minutes
 Approve July Meeting Agenda
- Carolyn moved to approved. Dan seconded. Unanimously approved.
- 6:05 Comments from the public - none
- 6:17 Park Staff Update
- Parkapalooza -
 - This Saturday. Music, tree climbing, slip 'n slide. All set with volunteers.
 - June - 230 attendance.
 - August - Saturday, August 17. Need some volunteers still.
 - Possible revenue generation in future:
 - \$2-5 wrist band to consume BYOB. Not sure if this fits with state laws (requires fenced in area?). Could also have designated driver incentive.
 - Suggested donation model
 - Review draft memorial policy
 - *Cost*: Include additional donation, cover personnel costs. Apply towards special fund, ideally land acquisition/Greenprint fund.
 - Tree additional fee: \$250
 - Bench additional fee: \$500
 - *Quantity*: Cap total number of memorials? Address when quantity is an issue.
 - *Additional language*:
 - Cannot leave non-biodegradable objects, momentos, etc. by the memorial.
 - Parks Dept. approves final message on memorial.
 - *Tree Size*: Trees - delete "it is possible..." to plant smaller trees.
 - *Bench Type*: Parks Dept. will approve style.

- → Alec to incorporate edits. Discuss and finalize at next meeting.
- Hubbard request - sign warning risk to dogs jumping off tower
 - Pat Hazouri joined the meeting, and shared that her dog fell off Hubbard Tower, and is now doing ok, though initially had fairly serious injuries. There is not currently a warning of this risk on the tower.
 - Discussed Options:
 - Leash your dog to ascend and descend tower. Challenge: Can't be enforced. May be danger to dog owner on the way down, and presence of dog (even leashed) may be danger to other people on stairs.
 - No dogs on the Tower.
 - Could provide place to leave your dog on a leash. Challenge: Dog leashed at bottom could have conflict with dog off leash at bottom.
 - Numerous risk to bringing dogs up the tower. Risk to dog falling off tower, risk of conflict on stairs, anxious people at top, etc. Taking dog up tower creates risk for other people. Public safety aspect.
 - Would require signage.
 - Wording similar to: For the safety of dogs and humans, no dogs beyond this point. → Parks staff to wordsmith and install permanent sign.
 - Education: Ex. Warning: Dogs have fallen from the top of this tower and died or experienced serious injury. Consider leashing your dog or not ascending the tower. Challenge: Also a risk to climb tower, jump off tower, rappel from tower. Which risks get signed, and which don't? → Add this more specific message to the Parks website.
 - No action
 - Solution: Dan move that we ban dogs from being on Hubbard Tower structure. Fabienne seconded. Approved unanimously. Parks Staff will determine final language and install sign.
- VYCC Camp Request
 - VYCC is doing two weeks of work in the city. 10-person crew is looking for camp location.
 - Concerns:
 - Lots of tents in one area. Conflict with recreation traffic during the day.
 - Restroom access.
 - Vandalism.
 - Possible locations: 7 Fireplaces, Old campsites near New Shelter

- Staff to request VYCC to provide volunteer time in Parks in the future.
- Approved by unanimous consent. Staff to keep concerns in mind and determine appropriate location.
- ADA Compliance - table until September
- Year-end budget overview - table until September. Dollars still coming in from FY19.
- Significant storm damage in North Branch Park - failure of retaining wall, knocked out second retaining wall. Halfway done repairing it. Future solution could be to repair with a long bridge, though that may be dangerous when wet. Dona: Is there expertise within DPW that could help? Can get Parks infrastructure in the City Capital Plan (accomplished by DPW rather than Parks).
- International Volunteers are in Parks through next week.
- Dan: Request that staff put together report for how we're spending funds so that we can report back to the Council.

7:26

Parks Planning

- Re-read mission:
The Parks Commission advances a long-term vision to ensure that parks, gardens, greenways, and natural areas are vital to Montpelier's community identity and are forever available for the enjoyment of all.

Find alternative word for "advances." Like "moving forward" element, not passive. Keep considering.

- Re-read vision:
In Montpelier, our parks are a vibrant part of everyday life. No resident is more than a ten minute walk from a neighborhood park or playground and no more than a fifteen minute walk from a large protected natural area. A hub and spoke system of interconnected parks and greenways enhance opportunities for people, especially children, to move throughout the City on safe routes that maintain our connection to nature, ourselves, and each other.

Discussion:

- Keep "large," which is evocative.
- Delete "hub and spoke"
- Change "especially children" to "all ages and abilities"

Revised:

In Montpelier, our parks are a vibrant part of everyday life. No resident is more than a ten minute walk from a neighborhood park or playground and no more than a fifteen minute walk from a large protected natural area. A system of interconnected parks and greenways enhances opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to move throughout the City on safe routes that maintain our connection to nature, ourselves, and each other.

- Workshop/draft strategic plan
 - Commissioners to edit google doc between now and September meeting, and discuss one-on-one with other Commissioners and staff.

7:50 August meeting: August 20th, 6:00-8:00pm. Staff not required to be there. Commissioners will walk in North Branch Park. Meet at new kiosk on Cummings Street.

7:52 Fabienne plans to step down from the Commission early fall, but would like to continue as a volunteer and continue on the Commission while the vision discussion is completed.

8:00 Adjourned by unanimous consent