



## City of Denton

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### **Parks, Recreation, and Beautification Board Minutes**

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After determining that a quorum of the City of Denton, Texas, **Parks, Recreation, and Beautification Board** is present, the Chair of the Board thereafter convened into an open meeting on Monday, March 4, 2019, at 6 p.m. in the Civic Center, Denton, Texas.

**Present:** Frances Punch, Alana Presley Taylor, Gary Barber, George Ferrie, Ben Huttash, David Shuck, and Kent Boring

**Absent:** None

**Staff present:** Gary Packan, Director, Laura Behrens, Assistant Director, Drew Huffman, Parks Superintendent, Eddie Valdez, Management Analyst, Caroline Seward, Program Area Manager

**Guests:** None

Chair Punch called the meeting to order at 6pm.

#### **1. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION:**

##### **A. Consider approval of the Parks, Recreation and Beautification Board meeting of February 4, 2019.**

Shuck had one minor adjustment on the minutes. Shuck arrived after the second item, “Part B”, under “Items for Consideration.” The vote should be (4-0) and not (5-0).

Barber motioned to approve the Parks, Recreation and Beautification Board meeting of February 4, and Shuck seconded. Motion passed (7-0).

##### **B. Receive an informational report regarding the construction improvements on Bonnie Brae St and Scripture St and how they will impact McKenna Park.**

Packan reviews the construction improvements on Bonnie Brae St and Scripture St.

- Reviews project goals
- Option 1
  - Loop trail and ADA accessible
  - 20 space parking lot on Thomas Street
  - Keep playground in its current location
  - Cheapest Option
- Option 2
  - Parking lot on the hill (20) spaces
  - Playground located east adjacent to Thomas Street

- Council prefers as second Option
- Option 3
  - Playgrounds relocated east of the park
  - No dedicated parking lot. Parking will be street parking on Thomas
- Option 4
  - Least desirable Option
  - Relocate playground and parking (20 spaces) on northeast corner of the park
- Review funding and construction cost

Punch asked why there is not a sidewalk going down the hill from the parking lot. Packan explains it can be considered if Option 1 is chosen, but can be costly.

Barber asked how much the current parking spaces are utilized in the Park. Packan clarifies there are forty parking spaces currently in the park, and it is never full. The new proposed parking lot will be about half the size of the current parking lot and there will be parking on both sides of Thomas.

Boring asked if there has been a traffic study on Thomas Street. Huffman confirms a traffic study has already been done on Thomas Street. Boring is curious regarding Razor Ranch development and growth that could impact the busyness of Thomas Street. Huffman comments adding a traffic circle on Bonnie Brae, should not increase the busyness of Thomas Street.

Shuck asked if Option 3 playground will be visible from Thomas Street due to the trees and location. Huffman confirms the playground will be visible from Thomas Street.

Shuck comments that a parking lot can be retrofitted in Option 3 if desired in the future. Packan agrees a parking lot can be retrofitted and points out areas in the presentation where it can be constructed.

Taylor is concerned with Option 3 there are no neighborhood sidewalks, street parking only, and people would have to walk on the street to get to the park. Packan confirms a trail will be built to access the park. Regarding the parking situation, Packan presents various street parking alternatives that are still in discussion.

Punch asked if the basketball court will be moved to a different location since it is too close to Scripture Street. Packan clarifies it hasn't been in the discussion yet. However, there are ideas of creating a barrier such as installing decorative fencing and trees to prevent children and basketball balls going out to the street.

Ferrie asked if the trails are accessible from the street instead of walking through mulch or grass. Packan explains the paths have to work around the trees but will keep the trail as close to the road as possible while having a linear curve feel.

Huttash asked if there is a possibility of installing an exercise station in the park. Packan explains an exercise station could be an option and points out areas of possible locations in the

PowerPoint. Packan also points out areas in the PowerPoint of possibly adding more picnic tables in the park.

Ferrie asked why the playground structure in Option 1 is \$100,000 less expensive compared to the other options. Taylor clarifies the playground structure in Option 1 is not being moved. Packan also confirms the playground structure in Option 1 will be in the same location and there are plans to move the playground in Options 2, 3, and 4. Packan summarizes moving the playground structure to a different location could increase the cost by \$100,000.

Shuck would like clarification if City Council wants a Park Board recommendation. Packan confirms he would like feedback from the Park Board to give to City Council.

Punch had a question about the playground relocation in Options 2 and 3, and if grading is needed. Huffman confirms both options will need to be graded and will cost approximately the same. However, based on the location of the playground, trees could provide shade. Playgrounds last longer when they are shaded.

Taylor still has concerns the street parking modification should be included as part of the development of the park using the \$100,000 fund to go towards street parking instead of phased in. Packan comments he will pass the concern along to staff and City Council.

Taylor asked if the money in the trust fund will be used in this project or for something else. Packan explains the trust fund will be used in this development and confirms there is still approximately \$80,000 left in the trust fund.

Ferrie asked if a parking lot can be added in Option 3 using the parking lot layout in Option 1. Packan explains that it could be an option using different variation from the other designs from the presentation if it is phased in. Boring concurs that Option 3 with a parking lot in a phased approach is a good idea, especially with a traffic study. Taylor has concerns the development of Rayzor Ranch will impact the road, and the parking lot should be added with the construction of the park. Punch agrees with Taylor the parking lot should be included with the development of the Park. Shuck likes the idea but is concerned about the cost. Shuck further explains he would like to see the cost of the parking lot before he endorses the idea.

Boring asked if any parks in Denton are similar in street parking to compare. Huffman confirms Milan and Owsley Park. Packan adds Bowling Green Park. Boring had concerns regarding accidents in those parks. Huffman confirms Owsley only has a sidewalk in front of the park. Huffman explains Thomas Street is on the CIP project for early spring of 2019. Based on how the public meeting goes, and if Option 3 gets chosen, the \$100,000 could be used for the improvements of Thomas Street.

Punch asked the board members if they have a preference for the playground to be moved to a shaded area assuming Option 3 is their preference. Shuck, Boring, and Taylor agree the playground should be in the shade.

Ferrie clarifies he likes the idea of Option 3 merged with the parking lot design from Option 1. Packan confirms the cost of \$721,000 if the parking lot will be added to Option 3.

Huffman reviews surfaces that can be used for the development of the parking structure that meets ADA requirements. Taylor asked about other permeable surfaces. Packan comments permeable asphalt as an option. Huffman suggests permeable concrete as another option.

Packan summarizes

- Option 3 with the opportunity to add a parking lot now or in the future.
- If the neighborhood doesn't want a parking lot, the money can possibly go towards the bumpouts on Thomas Street.

**C. Consider recommending approval of an ordinance of the City of Denton, adopting Standards of Care for recreational care programs administered by Denton's Parks and Recreation Department as required by Texas Human Resources Code Section 42.041 (b) (14); and providing an effective date.**

Seward reviews the Standards of Care for recreational care programs administered by Denton's Parks and Recreation Department.

Boring asked if there are any history of any types of abuse or sexual abuse in camp. Seward explains there hasn't been an issue with staff since she overseen the program. However, staff has reported abuse done from other campers in the past. Seward further explains that staff immediately reports any abuse to the State. There was an incident last year and was reported that day. Seward clarifies they take these matters serious and train staff to look for signs of abuse. Packan adds City Council passed an anti-bullying policy last year fall. Boring is still concerned that sexual misconduct still happens often. Seward confirms a child is never alone and there is always a staff member around to monitor the children. Seward adds, per the policy, the ratio is 1 staff to 17 children, but recently has been 1 staff to 13 children. Also, when staff are driving the van, there are cameras in the van to monitor all incidents that arise. Camp counselors goes through a full week of training and includes harassment training, how to drive the van safely, and bullying training.

Punch asked if all staff goes through a full background check. Seward confirms all staff has been and goes through a full background check. Seward notes camp counselors are over the age of eighteen.

Huttash asked for clarification how children are separated by age. Seward clarifies that all children are divided into smaller groups close to their age range.

Boring is concerned regarding camp counselors and children too close to each other's age. Seward clarifies this is the first year the City is offering a Counselors-in-Training program for fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen years old. Only ten will be chosen to be trained as future camp counselors. Boring gives examples of situational questions to ask future camp counselors.

Huttash comments about the age range shown in the marketing material for the spring break day camp. Huttash recites the age range shown between 5yrs and 12yrs old. Huttash suggests updating the marketing material to show the breakdown of age groups. Huttash also comments about special education children. Seward explains how staff communicates with parents regarding their child's need and if the program is a good fit for their child.

Ferrie motioned to recommend moving forward with the updates to the Standards of Care. Taylor seconded. Motion passed (7 – 0).

#### **D. Receive an informational report regarding the 10-Minute Walk to a Park Campaign**

Valdez presents the 10-Minute Walk to a Park Campaign.

Shuck asked if we know how the percentage will change with the planning of new development and implementing 10-min walk as a standard. Packan comments we are already reviewing new developments under this standard (31 new parks in new Hunter / Cole development) to gauge the impact. During the review of the heat map, clarification was made on the meaning of the legend colors, primarily that the grey color is considered a served area that met the 10-minute walk distance.

Taylor asked if this standard aligns with the Sustainability Plan for green space. Packan clarifies we have only been assessing land based on the standard, but in the long term, we can compare to see how they align. Packan explains we expect them to complement each other, not conflict.

Punch asked if the identified areas on the heat map the only recommended locations. Packan responds, no and this was produced by an algorithm. Packan further explains parks can be added anywhere within the area in red.

Punch asked if this aligns with the City 2030 plan. Packan responds there is currently no requirement on the placement of parks. This is a self-initiated project.

Shuck inquired if there are any incentives for participation or penalties of not meeting the standard. Packan comments at this time, it is all self-imposed. Packan explains there are no incentives or penalties, but we can try to build partnerships to achieve the standard.

#### **E. Receive an informational report regarding the first update on the Parks, Recreation and Trails System Master Plan.**

Packan reviews the Parks, Recreation and Trails System Master Plan.

- Every month give update to Park Board regarding the Master Plan
- 10,000 post cards has been sent last week
  - Survey is live and currently gathering feedback
  - Hope to get 1,000-2,000 people for feedback
  - 2 types of survey platform
    - Statistically valid

- Non-Statistically valid
  - If there is not enough feedback from the surveys, there will be a follow-up
  - Get a breakdown of community and demographics
- Conduct public and focus group meetings.
  - Meet with subject matter experts about one per week
  - Behrens and Seward met with a recreation consultant last week to review and analyze all of the recreation centers
  - Just had a skate park focus group meeting
  - Beautification focus group happened two weeks ago
  - Cemetery focus group will happen in the next couple of weeks
- Partnership with UNT and receive assistance from them
- Launched new Master Plan website (Denton Parks Master Plan)
- Goal is for Park Board to review in October and November

Taylor filled out a Facebook survey and wanted to know if that's the same Parks Master Plan survey given to the public. Seward confirms the link is the same Parks Master Plan survey given to the public. Taylor suggests the survey should be mobile friendly. Packan agrees and comments he had a discussion with the consultant regarding the survey being mobile friendly.

Huttash shows his excitement for the Master plan. Huttash asked if there are ways to express to the public the importance of participation and gathering of information from its citizens. Packan responds social media, articles for the DRC, and special event booths (Arts and Jazz Festival, Juneteenth, and Cinco de Mayo) will be used to provide information about the Master Plan survey.

Ferrie comments the overall goal should be the dissemination of information to help others navigate and understand the Parks Master Plan. Ferrie also mentions his excitement for the planning of the Master Plan.

Punch asked if anyone had suggestions to improve the Master Plan process. Taylor comments the online survey should be mobile friendly. Packan agrees with Taylor and mentions the survey website should be more responsive.

**F. Receive a report, hold a discussion, and provide staff a recommendation regarding the May 6, 2019, Parks, Recreation and Beautification Board Meeting and scheduled tour.**

Packan reviews the Parks, Recreation and Beautification Board Meeting and scheduled tour.

Punch asked clarification if the tour time got moved from 5pm to 4pm. Behrens confirmed last year tour started at 4pm to visit as many sites as possible. Behrens further adds some of the sites will only be drive-by.

Taylor asked if we can have a picnic in one of the pavilions in the park as an alternative to a recreation center. Behrens confirms a picnic is possible and proposes a back-up plan in case if there is bad weather.

Barber asked if we can invite the Parks Foundation to the tour. Packan likes the idea and confirms he will reach out to the Parks Foundation. Punch asked if additional City staff were invited in last year's tour. Behrens confirms there was additional staff invited.

Punch asked if we can add Patrick Park to the list. Packan comments we can add Patrick Park and states the drive may take a little time to get there. Taylor comments that she has driven pass Patrick Park and there is not much to see there. Packan agrees with Taylor. Packan explains Patrick Park is mostly a pile of dirt and there hasn't been much development there yet.

Barber asked if we can eliminate Sequoia Park from the list since it was one of the location listed in last year's park tour. Behrens confirms Sequoia Park was visited in last year's tour. Boring also confirms Sequoia Park has been visited last year and comments his proposal to add Patrick Park to the list. Boring further suggests not to tour sites that have the same playground to provide more opportunity to visit other sites. Packan confirms adding Patrick Park and taking Sequoia Park from the list.

Huttash comments he would like to visit the splash park from last year's tour.

Barber asked if we can include Southwest Park since we are visiting Patrick Park. Packan agrees since they are close in proximity to each other.

Taylor asked if there are plans to visit Rayzor Ranch. Packan confirms Rayzor Ranch is on the list. Punch agrees with Taylor and comments Park Board is interested visiting Rayzor Ranch. Taylor suggests McKenna Park added to the list. Punch also comments McKenna Park should be added. Packan confirms McKenna Park can be added to the list.

Valdez wants clarification from the group that Patrick Park, Southwest Park, and Sequoia Park are added to the list, and Sequoia Park is eliminated from the list. Valdez has concerns we are adding three additional sites and only eliminating one site from the list.

Ferrie questions about Industrial Park remaining on the list since it is a tiny park, with a retaining wall being built, and with only two trash cans. Taylor agrees with Ferrie. Packan confirms we can take out Industrial Park from the list.

Taylor asked if there is anything new in South Lakes Park. Packan responds there is nothing new. Packan adds there are plans to have two new tennis courts part of the bond package but will not be considered until fall when the new Tennis Center is in the bidding process. Taylor inquired about the new additional park that will be in the same property of South Lakes Park near the middle school. Packan explains that there are additional things that need to be addressed before the city moves forward with the construction of the project. Packan clarifies Huffman had a traffic study done. The result of the traffic study was to consider adding a left turning lane North on Teasley to enter the park. The turning lane will cost between \$50,000 and \$70,000. Packan further explains staff will be working with the property owners in the area of plans to put up fencing between their lots with signage to direct people to the school parking lot.

Taylor comments agreeing to eliminate South Lakes Park, Industrial Park, and Sequoia from the list.

Valdez reviews the list:

- Add to the list
  - Patrick Park
  - Southwest Park
  - McKenna Park
- Eliminate
  - Industrial Park
  - South Lakes Park
  - Sequoia Park

Packan comments to eliminate one of the sites that has the same playground such as Denia Park. Boring also suggest taking out one of beautification node sites such as Dallas & Teasley or Eagle & Elm.

Punch comments of a resident asking about the pickleball courts at Denia Park. Behrens clarifies that staff will be exploring options for future pickleball programs at Denia.

**G. Receive an informational report regarding the development of Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) policies and procedures.**

Behrens reviews the PARD policies and procedures

- Rules of Conduct Policy
  - Department wide
  - Aligns with Bullying Policy
- Computer internet use policy
- Employee Recognition Program Policy
  - Revision of a current policy (recognition and appreciation of staff)
  - Gives opportunity to recognize employees in recreation and parks

Taylor comments she likes that temp and seasonal staff were included in the policy. Behrens agrees and comments temp and seasonal staff is a large component of what we do.

Punch comments of a resident in the community that has concerns about the master plan regarding the different type of committees involved that could potentially slow down the process of getting something initiated or asked. Packan agrees that having a variety of committees involved can slow down the process, but will give a more thorough review of what's being discussed. Packan also adds one of the major components of the master plan is identifying a needs assessment of what people want to help the department plan for the next 5-10 years. Ferrie agrees citizens and neighborhood involvement will give the opportunity for checks and balances, and understanding what citizens need as a whole. Shuck agrees and comments it is beneficial to get as much information as possible to gather ideas.



## 2. CONCLUDING ITEMS:

Punch comments about absenteeism from the last meeting. Packan reminds everyone to sign-in every meeting. Packan explains the sign-in sheet is to keep track who's present in the meeting, and headcount of future food orders.

Punch comments regarding follow-up on issues and projects. Packan referenced and discusses the project report.

- Barber asked if the rewrite of the 915/916 can be added to the project report. Packan agrees this can be added to the project report.
- Punch asked Huttash if the project report is what he envisioned follow-up on issues. Huttash comments he likes the breakdown of the projects.

Packan explains the Park Board will receive the project report updates via email prior to the Monday monthly Park Board meeting. Packan also notes, staff will update the project report on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, and will share to CMO prior to sending the project report to the Park Board.

Punch asked if there was a meeting with the Denton Black Chamber. Packan responds the meeting will be held after the ordinance is finalized. The special events ordinance will be brought to the Park Board next month and to City Council afterwards.

Taylor asked for a follow-up regarding changes to the hours of the water park. Behrens confirms there was a staff report on the impact of the changes. Behrens clarifies there is already programming in the morning in addition to staff training. Behrens explains further that opening the water park for the general public would require some additional movement in terms of what classes are already being held in the morning. Taylor clarifies she was there for the meeting but wants more information regarding additional days or times the water park can expand on. Boring agrees an update is needed for the water park. Behrens confirms she can follow-up with Cathy.

Punch comments a group will be on the next meeting regarding a potential park on Bonnie Brae and Roselawn. Packan explains of emails he received regarding a resident inquiring purchasing land, and there are concerns from people there is too much growth happening quickly. Packan comments there is a database being created of land being pursued. There will be a future executive session with City Council regarding the discussion of land that needs to have a combination of qualifying within the 10-minute walk, and preservation of trees. There are approximately thirty properties on the list. For funding to acquire land, there is \$1 million in 2014 bond, \$2.2 million in tree mitigation, and \$2.5 million of 915 land acquisition.

Huttash asked if the tree fund could be spent to purchase land to save trees. Packan explains how the ordinance is written. The tree fund could be used to buy land, plant trees, install irrigation, educational properties regarding trees, and tree inventories. Huttash asked if the City is at risk of getting locked out from buying land if prices increase. Packan confirms the City is at risk of getting locked out. Behrens agrees.

Huttash wants clarification on how to extend the life of park playgrounds since the school district playgrounds last longer. Huffman explains playground safety, and the industry standard of replacing playgrounds ever fifteen years. Companies change their product every 10 - 12 years and can be challenging to get the original parts for the product beyond its lifespan. Huffman further explains public parks are different from school playgrounds. School playgrounds are used during the day, being monitored more often against vandalism, and are fenced within the school. Also, park playgrounds are replaced every fifteen years to give the opportunity for the next generation to receive new playgrounds. Packan shows on the PowerPoint of park playgrounds being replaced. Packan explains playgrounds can last longer if it is under the shade and is inspected on a daily bases. Huffman states there is current staff that is certified in playground inspection. Huttash gives an example of a school that has a playground structure approximately 40 - 50 years old and still there today. Huffman comments McKenna Park is over fifteen years old, and the slide was out of commission for 8 months last year due to finding the replacement parts. Taylor requested if this item can be on the agenda for the next Park Board meeting. Shuck reminds everyone per Texas Open Meetings Act, this item should not be discussed during this meeting since it was not on the agenda. Punch agrees. Ferrie agrees and comments this should be on the next agenda item for the next Park Board meeting.

Boring motioned and Taylor second to adjourn the meeting. Motioned passed (7-0). Meeting adjourned at 7:57.