

City of Alpine
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting
April 14, 2021
5:30 PM in a Virtual Zoom Meeting

Minutes

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM.

2. Determination of Quorum and Proof of Notice of Meeting

PAB members present were Kirsten Moody, Darin Nance, and Ben Struthers. City staff present were Cynthia Salas, Geo Calderon, and Marci Tuck.

3. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Darin moved that we approve the minutes from the last meeting and Ben seconded. All members were in favor.

4. Announcements from Board Members

Kirsten said that board member Bibi Gutierrez was moving and would no longer be on the board.

5. Citizen Comments

None

6. Information and Discussion Items

a. Update from Big Bend Parks and Recreation for Kids

BBPARKS is still focused on the splashpad and will continue fundraising once Covid restrictions are lifted. Marci said that she will talk to the Sul Ross theater department about their joint outdoor movie project. BBPARKS is the movie license holder for the partnership.

b. Update from Parks Crew

Robert Llanez, head of the parks crew, had talked to Kirsten earlier in the day and told her that the parks crew had been busy keeping the ballfields nice as the season gets underway. So far the fox urine seems to be helping to drive the gophers away from the fields. He said the crew had finished the tree planting in the Kokernot parking lot and had made a water fountain for Kokernot Park that included a fountain for dogs. He also said that the bathrooms at the Payne Field had been closed because of vandalism and that the skate park sign had also been vandalized.

c. Discuss any comments or complaints about parks that board members or parks crew have heard from citizens.

Cynthia said that she had gotten a message from someone upset about the closure of the bathrooms at Payne Field. The caller said that the city had agreed at a recent meeting with the ball clubs that a bathroom with sinks and hand sanitizer would be available at the ball park. Now that the bathroom at Payne Field has been closed

because of vandalism, Cynthia said that the city could provide portable bathrooms with sinks and a hand sanitizer station.

Cynthia also said the caller had complained that kickball games were being played on the ball fields when scheduled baseball games were supposed to be being played.

The board also discussed the lights at the field being left on after games were over. Cynthia said that she and Geo would speak with Eddie Morales, the public works director, and Robert Llanez, the head of the parks crew, about making a workable lights policy.

- d. Discuss dog park improvements.

Kirsten said that the parks staff had told city manager Erik Zimmer that the dog park would be easier to maintain if it were grass instead of decomposed granite. Kirsten said that Erik had also said that planting shade trees inside the fence would add shade to the park, which has been requested by dog park users. There is irrigation already at the dog park that could be adjusted to accommodate the new trees. These projects would happen this fall.

- e. Discuss the Texas Municipal League's document entitled "Key Legal Requirements for Texas City Officials"

Kirsten said this item was included in the agenda to let the new board members know about the open meetings and open records requirements that apply to the board, even though the board is an appointed and not an elected board.

- f. Update on Kokernot Lodge/Poet's Grove project with Sul Ross.

The project grants that the group is planning to apply for are being postponed until an agreement for the project is signed by the City of Alpine and Sul Ross State University.

- g. Discuss 2021-22 budget

The board studied the 2020-21 budget to gain an understanding of the regular expenses of the parks department. They then discussed possible additions to the budget for the coming year. If the grant from Texas Parks and Wildlife for that development of Pueblo Nuevo Park is approved, the budget would include \$60,000 (for the first of three years) toward that project. The board will discuss the budget further at the May 12 meeting.

- h. Discuss board members' selection of work areas from the parks master plan.

Darin said that Betsy Esparza might be interested in using the bikes (bought from Marfa) at Printco.

Darin said that he would take on a new work area because he had finished researching the three others he had chosen. He lives near American Legion Park and will research possible upgrades to that park.

Kirsten said that the sign she drafted for Juan Medina Park (using former Councilman Ramon Olivas's notes) would not be nearly as big as the informational signs the board had seen pictures of, such as the new one at Hancock Hill. She said she would ask Chris Ruggia and Printco about the cost of having that sign printed.

Ben will be taking on the Kokernot Lodge/Poet's Grove/Trail project as his focus area, and Letty will be looking at accessibility upgrades to the ball parks.

7. Action Item

Discuss and consider making a recommendation to Council to approve the proposed changes to Chapter 74, Article I, of the city ordinances.

Ben moved, and Darin seconded the motion to discuss and consider making a recommendation to Council to approve the proposed changes to Chapter 74, Section I, of the city ordinances.

The board discussed the broadness of the language in the proposed changes. Kirsten said that the proposed language was broad in order to allow city staff to develop an appropriate process for any events allowing alcohol or an extension of hours in the parks. It was asked whether Chief Martin was aware of the proposed changes and Kirsten said that he was. It was pointed out that there might be some liability for the city if alcohol is allowed in parks.

A vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Items and locations for coming meetings.

Next meeting will be online, and maybe also in person, on May 12, 2021.