

**PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 2, 2019**

Therese Longe, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at 851 S. Eton.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Therese Longe, Ross Kaplan, John Meehan, Ellie Noble, and John Rusche

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Heather Carmona, Dominick Pulis and Bill Wiebrecht

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:** John Butcher, Seaholm High School

**ADMINISTRATION:** Lauren A. Wood, Director of Public Services  
Carrie A. Laird, Parks and Recreation Manager  
Brooks Cowan, City Planner  
Connie Folk, Recreation Coordinator

**GUESTS:** Cheryl Couretas, Pam Graham, Cindy Rose and David Young

It was moved by Ross Kaplan, seconded by John Rusche that the minutes of the March 5, 2019 regular meeting be approved.

**Yeas – 5** Therese Longe, Ross Kaplan, John Meehan, Ellie Noble, and John Rusche

**Nays – 0**

**Absent -3** Heather Carmona, Dominick Pulis and Bill Wiebrecht

**AGENDA ITEM #1: Recommended Parks & Recreation Bond Priority List**

Lauren stated that a very detailed packet has been provided based on the directive from the City Commission that states, To direct the Parks and Recreation Board to review the 2018 Parks and Recreation Master Plan's Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan and work with staff to identify facility needs related to the Parks and recreation operation through a public engagement process to identify a priority list of projects and associated amounts to be considered for a potential parks bond to be implemented over the next 3 to 5 years, and further, to return to the City Commission with a recommendation for consideration.

Lauren stated that an extensive Parks and Recreation Bond Priority List with estimated cost was created by the Master Plan Sub-Committee and City Administration.

Therese stated that since the full Parks and Recreation Board is not present that she would like to hear feedback from the public and from the Parks and Recreation Board in attendance but to postpone the suggested resolution until the May 7, 2019 Parks and Recreation Board meeting.

Therese stated that all ten projects were supported by the public and that the Master Plan Sub-Committee would like to proceed on all ten projects to the City Commission based on public support.

John Rusche likes the order of the Parks and Recreation Bond Priority List.

Therese stated that **the** Parks and Recreation Board would make a motion to recommend the ten projects in the Parks and Recreation Bond Priority List with the costs listed in ~~the~~ order and then have them presented to the City Commission, the City Commission can choose to endorse the Parks and Recreation Board recommendation or modify it and once they have, they would direct the City Manager to then go to ~~bond-council~~ **counsel** to complete a financial forecast about what kinds of bonds could be issued, when the bond language for a vote would have to be completed and when an election could occur.

Therese stated that the next ~~regularly~~ **regular** election is November.

**No Action was taken by the Parks and Recreation Board**

**AGENDA ITEM #2: Maintenance of Natural Areas**

Carrie stated that over the past five years, the Department of Public Services has hired Cardno to assist in the maintenance of various natural areas throughout Birmingham, including Quarton Lake, Barnum Park, Martha Baldwin Park, and the Birmingham Museum & Park. Cardno has a dedicated division in environmental management.

Carrie stated that Cardno has consistently provided competitive pricing as they are an approved vendor for a cooperative agreement with Oakland County. The City has hired them to perform various small tasks from year to year as needed, totaling under \$6,000 per project. In addition, they have been awarded larger projects that went out to bid including Invasive Species Removal Project 2015 taking place at Quarton Lake and the Museum Park property, approved by the City Commission in November 2015 and Martha Baldwin Native Wet Meadow Garden, City Commission approved in May of 2018.

Carrie stated that in December of 2018, Cardno was asked to provide pricing for maintenance of Quarton Lake, Barnum Park and the Museum for the upcoming 2019 season. Scope of work includes cutting, treating and removing woody invasive species including black alder and spot treatment of herbaceous invasive species such as purple loosestrife, burdock, and garlic mustard along the shoreline at Quarton Lake and planting 700 native plants (plugs) to fill in the areas of which invasive species were removed.

Carrie stated that at Quarton Lake there is an area near the bridge at Oak that will be planted with 30 native quart size species in order to stabilize the slope. Further, work includes planting more native plants at Barnum Park in the natural areas and continuing maintenance of follow up treatment of invasive species including Canada Thistle at Barnum Park and Phragmites at the Museum Park property near the pond and in the nearby woods.

Carrie Carrie stated that it's important to note that the invasive species removals are site specific and include spot treatment of woody and herbaceous invasive species to the cut area directly and does not involve mass treatment using a large quantity of approved chemicals.

It was moved by Ellie Noble, seconded by Ross Kaplan to approve the project for Natural Areas Maintenance with Cardno for a total cost not to exceed \$20,650.00. Funds are available from the General Fund-Parks Other Contractual Services account #101-751.000-811.0000 for these services. Further, to recommend this project to be considered for approval by the City Commission.

**Yeas – 5**

Therese Longe, Ross Kaplan, John Meehan, Ellie Noble, and John Rusche

**Nays – 0**

**Absent -3**

Heather Carmona, Dominick Pulis and Bill Wiebrecht

**AGENDA ITEM #3: Piano in Shain Park**

Brooks Cowan, City of Birmingham Planner stated that the Public Arts Board has considered placing pianos in various locations throughout downtown Birmingham for the public to play at any time. On October 17, 2018, the Public Arts Board reviewed suggested sites for a public piano and prioritized the pavilion in Shain Park as their top choice. There was consensus with the Board that they only wanted to place one piano in the City at this time.

Brooks stated that Public Arts Board voted to recommend adding a Piano beneath the pavilion of Shain Park with the following conditions:

- 1.) The Public Arts Board approved \$750 to be used from its budget for picking up a piano from site and delivering it to Shain Park. Finances will also be used for potentially removing the piano for a certain amount of time.
- 2.) Members of the Board find a piano to be donated for free.
  - a. The piano must have wheels for the City to be able to move when necessary.
- 3.) The piano will be placed in Shain Park from June 1st through August 31st
  - a. Piano will have sign "this area is under surveillance" to deter vandalism.
  - b. On August 21st the Public Arts Board will vote on whether or not to extend the amount of time the piano is kept in the park.
  - c. Funding from the Public Arts Board will be used to have piano removed from the park if necessary.

Brooks stated that Jason Gittinger of Detroit School of Rock and Pop Music joined the Public Arts Board to provide insight about policy for public pianos. Jason Gittinger discussed his relationship with Professional Movers and how they help assist Royal Oak's public piano program.

Brooks stated that the Public Arts Board approved a recommendation to the City Commission to accept the piano donated by **Birmingham residents** Michael and Marybeth Flynn for the recommended site beneath the pavilion at Shain Park with the condition that the piano is managed by the Detroit School of Rock and Pop, and would be replaced with another piano donated by Professional Movers if the current piano falls into disrepair.

Brooks stated that the Public Arts Board then approved a motion to recommend a public painting event for the piano to be painted with an outdoor floral theme and that the Public Arts Board noted that a plaque recognizing the donors as well as the Detroit School of Rock and Pop **and Professional Movers** will be placed on the piano.

Therese stated that both Ferndale and Royal Oak have struggled with vandalism of their public placed pianos. Therese stated that the Shain Park band shell is already scheduled for the summer concert series, weddings and special events.

Therese asked Brooks who would be responsible for moving the piano prior to the **Wednesday night** summer concert series, weddings and special events.

Brooks stated that the ~~City of Department of Public Services (DPS)~~ **Department of Public Services staff would be responsible in moving** move the piano prior to the scheduled events.

Brooks stated the vandalism is **a** very small percentage in Royal Oak.

Therese stated that the pianos that have been placed in Ferndale and Royal Oak are on public thoroughfares. Therese stated that in Shain Park there are children running around without parent supervision. Therese stated from an injury prevention standpoint whether there is a tipping safety hazard, children could be playing on the piano and having the piano be pulled over on them since it will not be anchored in anyway.

Brooks stated that any moving parts would be anchored down.

Therese stated that there are concerns making the DPS staff in charge of having to watch the piano, maintaining the piano and pushing the piano out of the way on concert nights, weddings and special events.

Connie stated that on Wednesday nights she is by herself, large crowds and the band setup with children running around and during the concert the child is banging on the piano while the band is performing and she would have to stop the concert and sometimes bands will take up the full length of the band shell.

Brooks stated a cover could be placed on the piano. Therese asked if a Public Arts Board member would like to babysit the piano and or move the piano out of the way on Wednesday nights, if there is a sole person is there a way to get help.

Brooks stated he does not believe so and that the Public Arts Board proposed a good faith sort of like a Community Garden. The Public Arts Board is proposing this for the public good it will bring and there might be some vandalism or children banging on the keys causing a distraction.

Ross stated that there is not a long term commitment and if it does not work in two months or after the first concert **the piano can be removed**.

Brooks states that the Public Arts Board wants to set up a deciding factor that at the last City Commission meeting in August, 2019 if there have been complaints that the piano can be removed based on funds from the Public Arts Board.

Therese asked if other department heads would review the piano proposal, would the city attorney review the proposal. Therese stated that she is still concerned about the piano being pulled over on a child. ~~or dragging it into the fountain.~~

Lauren asked Brooks if other departments such as police, fire or the engineering department will be reviewing this request.

Brooks stated that based on an art installation that the proposal goes through the boards channels like any other art installation like the foundations of art pieces once it is approved by City Commission.

Therese stated that the installation at Shain Park is a lot different than an installation in front of a business, library or on a sidewalk.

Connie stated that the sidewalk is exposed aggregate and based on the weight of the piano how easy would the piano be able to move?

Ross stated he liked the concept of the idea but his concerns would be **how** the humidity and heat ~~and how it will~~ **would** affect the piano and how long would the piano last.

Brooks stated the life of the piano is short lived but it's the experience of having the piano at Shain Park.

John Rusche asked if the piano could be anchored to a pillar.

Connie stated that she would not want it to be anchored in case the piano has to be moved and then how about the trip hazard.

Brooks stated that it was the intention to have the piano mobile and the use of the piano would be used during Shain Park hours.

John Meehan stated that the plaza in front of City Hall would be a lovely spot for the piano.

It was moved by Ellie Noble, seconded by John Meehan to recommend approval to the City Commission of a piano on a trial basis for the time period of June 1<sup>st</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019 with sufficient sturdy size lockable wheels suitable for exposed aggregate and that the piano would be placed in the Shain Park pavilion area in a location as directed by the DPS staff, in addition a piano cover would be provided by the Public Arts Board to prevent public access during all scheduled events, such as weddings and concerts in the park and that the desired piano painting event be off-site.

**Yeas – 5**

Therese Longe, Ross Kaplan, John Meehan, Ellie Noble, and John Rusche

**Nays – 0**

**Absent -3**

Heather Carmona, Dominick Pulis and Bill Wiebrecht

### **COMMUNICATION/DISCUSSION ITEM #1: Dog Park Report**

Carrie provided the Off Leash Dog Park revenue and expenses from 2011- present. Carrie stated that the department would like to hydro-seed in late April, early May.

Connie stated that most sales occur May – July.

**No Action was taken by the Parks and Recreation Board**

### **COMMUNICATION/DISCUSSION ITEM #2: Proposed 2019-2020 Capital Projects**

Lauren stated as part of the budget process, the Department of Public Services submits recommended budget requests for the upcoming fiscal year to the City Manager. These are recommended expenditures and may not become part of the final budget.

Lauren stated all of the Capital Improvement requests are considered expenditure items over and above regular department operational expenditures.

**No Action was taken by the Parks and Recreation Board**

### **COMMUNICATION/DISCUSSION ITEM #3: January/February 2019 "The Review"**

#### **Michigan Municipal League magazine**

Connie stated that this article is being presented as a communication.

**No Action was taken by the Parks and Recreation Board**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Carrie stated that the prescribed burn will be take place at Booth Park the week of April 8, 2019

**No Action was taken by the Parks and Recreation Board**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

The Annual DPS Open House has been changed to Saturday, May 4, 2019, from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Newspaper Articles were presented at this evening's meeting on other community happenings.

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:**

Therese Longe stated the next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 7, 2019 at 6:30 pm at DPS.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:52 pm  
Connie J. Folk, Recreation Coordinator

**Parks and Recreation Board Meeting 4/2/2019**

Approved