



Minutes of Parks Committee Meeting
Tuesday, April 9th, 2024
Council Chambers
5:00PM

Those in attendance were:

Judd Hart, Chair
Junior Rodemeyer, Staff Liaison
Tom Farmer, Mayor
Frank Baptist
Bill Donner

Steve Brown
Jeff Hamm
Ann Spencer-Cole
Shane Knight
Steve Lee

The Parks Committee met on Tuesday, April 9, 2024, in the Council Chambers and agreed to the following.

Chairman Hart moved to the approval of the March 12th, 2024, minutes. Alderman Knight made a motion to accept the minutes. Alderman Hamm seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Chairman Hart moved to the next item on the agenda, Discussion of Admission Charge for Recreational Programming – Rodemeyer reported that he was asked to discuss this topic, but he does not think this is a good idea. He stated that our goal is to keep our costs low to our customers and provide good, quality programming. We do look at rate increases yearly and feel that if this is a direction we need to go down then we should look at an increase in the program price instead of a gate admission for programs. Chairman Hart stated that we did just pass down the 3% processing fees to our customers this year. There was a short discussion regarding the reason for this review.

Chairman Hart moved on to Youth Track Program – Rodemeyer reported that Benton School District is replacing the track at Panther Stadium. The construction will take place after their season is complete which is when our youth track season would begin. Unfortunately, we do not have any other track options, so we are going to modify the program. Our track program had approximately 200 participants last year, so we do not want to lose momentum. Rodemeyer stated that we plan to use Riverside soccer fields. Rodemeyer went into detail of how the modification program will run. Chairman Hart stated that this modification is only for this year, and we plan to be back to our normal program next year.

Chairman Hart moved to the next item on the agenda, Mt. Bike Park Grand Opening 5/24/24 – Rodemeyer presented the grand opening flyer for review. The event is scheduled for May 24th

from 10am-12noon. The address is 1100 South Market Street. We are expecting 2000 guests to help us celebrate the opening. We plan to have two ribbon cuttings since the park is so large. We plan to have a live radio broadcast along with news coverage of the event. Vendors will be onsite, and we are working with other vendors to have demo bikes available. Mayor Farmer asked everyone to help promote the event. Rodemeyer stated that as the event gets closer, we will be sending out a map of the park to show where parking and amenities will be.

Chairman Hart moved on to Other – Rodemeyer stated that there are progress photos in the packet for the Ralph Bunche Park amphitheater. The stairs are being poured and back filling around the amphitheater is scheduled to be completed by May 7th. The programming staff is starting week 3 of softball, blastball, and Miracle League. All our parks are full, and we are utilizing Tyndall Park for our softball program this year because we have so many participants. Special Events just had Art in the Park, and Farmers Market is now open through October. We are teaming up with the Benton Police Department to host the Fishing Derby on April 13th. On Thursday, April 18th we will have the Inspire Saline Rec Fair and Family Fun Day. Rodemeyer also stated that a list of Spring/Summer programs that are open for registration is available in the packet. Rodemeyer reported that the LED interstate sign was repaired on March 28th. The Emergency Action Plan training will occur May 1st and the River Center will be closed from 4pm-8pm.

Steve Lee made a motion to remove a plaque that is located inside River Center. Alderman Baptist seconded the motion. Chairman Hart stated that the plaque has been there for seven years and gives information about how the process went. He said that he does not see the necessity of removing it now. After further discussion, the motion did not pass.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.