

**Minutes of the Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting
Held in the Caucus Room of the Municipal Building, 36080 Chester Road,
at 7:00 P.M. on Thursday, August 10, 2017**

Chairman Tom Mitchell called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL:

Members in attendance were: Vice Chairman John Weigman; Mary Berges; Mary Brady; Cady Cianciolo; and Chairman Tom Mitchell

ABSENT:

Lee Belardo and Diane Corrao – Parks & Recreation Director

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JUNE 8 AND JULY 13, 2017 MEETINGS

A motion was made by Mr. Weigman and seconded by Ms. Brady to adopt the minutes of the June 8th and July 13, 2017 meetings as published; all Yeas on roll call and motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

- Basketball/Soccer at Board of Education gymnasium/property
Mr. Weigman suggested those discussion points be pushed back until next month since Ms. Corrao was absent.
- Bike Path – Update expected in September

SURVEY REVIEW

- August Presentation to Avon City Council
Mr. Mitchell stated the presentation was held at the Monday, August 7, 2017 Work Session. He felt it went well and said he kept it relatively brief. Mr. Mitchell advised his approach was to go through a few of the simple demographic type questions and show who responded. He stated he talked about the breadth of the responses and how they were pretty well distributed across the different demographics. Mr. Mitchell said he went over one question to help Council understand how the questions were structured in relation to the comments and how they were organized and brought together. He said there were some good questions and many thanks from the Council Members for all the work that was put into it and recognized the value of the survey. Mr. Mitchell felt Mayor Jensen had a good question asking what he and the rest of the Park & Recreation Commission recommend if the voters should approve the Charter Amendment to abolish this Commission and there is no Park & Recreation Commission going forward. He advised he felt the City should focus on two different things:
 1. – Continue to survey the community every 5-7 years.
 2. – Maintain the strategic plan as the structure is already in place.

Mr. Mitchell advised he mentioned one possible way to handle maintaining those two recommendations would be to form an ad hoc committee similar to the Charter Review that meets for a specific purpose over a short period of time at a designated number of years apart. He inquired if the other Commission Members had any thoughts they would like to share on the subject.

Ms. Brady stated she spoke with a few people who live in other cities and they suggested keeping the Commission as opposed to abolishing it as it seemed to help the City focus. She said others felt when there was not a designated committee, the parks and recreation departments seemed to go off on tangents. Ms. Brady advised she spoke with people who work with/for different cities and parks departments and they told her it seemed to work better when they had people behind them knowing they were going to have to answer to them.

Ms. Berges advised she agreed with Mr. Mitchell. She stated the Ordinance was revised a few years ago because the survey was supposed to be done every five years and it was felt that five years was perhaps too frequent. Ms. Berges noted the Ordinance states no longer than every ten years stating it could be sooner if it was determined to be necessary, but it was not required. She said she liked the idea of assembling a group of people for that specific purpose and hopefully Mr. Weigman would be available to help out in that area and she felt that was a great way to handle it by a committee that meets solely for that purpose.

Mr. Weigman confirmed it is required to have the survey and he said it certainly helps to have multiple people.

Ms. Berges agreed and said she felt it was not so much putting the survey questions together, although that does require some work, but organizing all the responses takes the greater amount of time to tabulate the comments.

Ms. Brady stated that by doing the survey they were able to see how they were measured against other cities. She inquired if there were a lot of people in attendance at the Work Session of Council when the survey was presented.

Ms. Berges said she believed there were six people in the audience.

Ms. Cianciolo inquired if Council asked Mr. Mitchell any question that he was not prepared for or that the survey could not substantiate in any way.

Mr. Mitchell stated no, but added they did not delve into too many details. He noted, he asked beforehand about how much time would be expected for his presentation and he was told approximately 15 minutes, but he could take more if he needed. Mr. Mitchell felt he did not need more time as the content was all there and he decided there was no sense in going through every question.

Mr. Weigman noted that City Council was provided the survey results ahead of time for their review.

Ms. Berges confirmed they had ample time to read it and prepare their questions. It was also noted, the results are on the City website.

Ms. Brady inquired if anyone from the community provided any comments on the survey results. None on the Commission heard directly from anyone in the community regarding the survey results.

Ms. Berges added the final results were professional looking and very well done. She also noted, it was a faster turnaround time in terms of getting back to the public and City Council from previous years mostly because of technology advances.

Mr. Mitchell advised the survey is complete and there were no further action items.

ESTABLISH PLAN FOR COMPARATIVE WEBSITE REVIEWS

Mr. Mitchell stated this item was on the docket because it was brought up in the survey as a part of the comments section. Mr. Weigman inquired if they should ask Ms. Corrao her thoughts on this topic as to whether she wants this researched or not since it is her department. Ms. Cianciolo thought it was researched previously where the Commission each took similar suburbs and divided and concurred and reported back thoughts to which Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Weigman confirmed her statement. Mr. Weigman stated the cities mentioned on the agenda were specifically mentioned by the public from the survey and the handful of cities they would look to and he inquired as to what they should look for if they are going to move forward that would help the Avon site. Ms. Berges commented they needed to figure out what the issues were whether it was navigation or something else. Mr. Weigman noted there were not a large number of complaints about the recreation website on the survey and he again suggested they reach out to Ms. Corrao for next month and see if she has any guidance for the Commission.

FUTURE DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Review Parks and Recreation Websites
 - See above discussion

- Invite City Engineer to discuss possible bike path easements
 - Update at September meeting to discuss and decide the next course of action

- Strategic Plan
 - Mr. Mitchell suggested next month they discuss and update the strategic plan. The Commission Members felt it was a good idea. Ms. Brady inquired if they are talking with the Metroparks along with the City Engineer to make certain they are on the same page. Mr. Mitchell confirmed that was basically the same conversation.
- New Basketball Court at the Board of Education Building
 - Mr. Mitchell mentioned this could also be discussed at the September meeting.

COMMUNITY VOICE

- Pickle Ball

Mr. Weigman stated he received a question about Pickle Ball and inquired if the City currently has any public pickle ball courts. Ms. Berges stated they only place she knew of was the YMCA. Ms. Berges also stated that it was brought up as a question for the Board of Education gymnasium whether one pickle ball court could be set up and tried out to see how it was received. Ms. Cianciolo advised that Ms. Corrao said that the Board of Education building could handle one court. Ms. Berges said there was a recent news report about pickle ball and how good it was because it was less stress on the joints and knees. It was noted that pickle ball is similar to tennis, but there is a larger paddle and ball. Mr. Weigman related it to heavy wiffle ball. The Commission was in agreement the gym at the Board of Education building should be used whether for pickle ball or something else. Mr. Weigman was uncertain, but felt one tennis court was the size of two pickle ball courts. It was noted they could get the measurements and look into further. Ms. Berges stated pickle ball would most likely be limited to the hours the building is open for the Board of Education offices.

Mr. Weigman updated the Commission Members by saying the school was currently renting the building out to an outside group for educating students. The school receives rental fees plus one free slot for an Avon student as well and it was felt to be a win-win situation. Mr. Weigman stated Ann Fox has been brought over as the Director and she is still an Avon employee, but all of her pay and benefits were being paid by this outside group. Ms. Brady inquired if it was for children at risk or something similar. Mr. Weigman said he was not certain if it was behavioral based or some other challenge, but he thought it was possibly limited to Lorain County or the surrounding school districts. Mr. Weigman indicated he was also not certain just what area of the school building was going to be used, but he said it is going into effect the start of the school year. Mr. Weigman stated he would confirm exactly what portion of the building was being used and let them know at a future meeting.

REPORTS

- Council Representative – Mary Berges advised the bid was awarded for the Schwartz Road Park Improvement Project for a second access road. She noted the project is scheduled to be completed in October.
- Park Director – Diane Corrao – Absent
- School Board Representative – John Weigman advised school has not started as yet and everyone is still enjoying the summer weather. He stated the next School Board meeting is Tuesday 8/22 and they are looking forward to the new school year. He stated the School District lost several teachers to administrative positions outside of the district and those positions had to be filled. Mr. Weigman noted that otherwise it has been pretty quiet.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Brady had no further comments.

Ms. Cianciolo had no further comments.

Mr. Weigman had no further comments.

Ms. Berges advised that Summerfest was this past Sunday 8/6 and proceeds are to benefit the Every Child's Playground. She said it was reported in the paper that they collected \$8,000 but after expenses \$2,000 was going to be contributed for the playground although she did not know if those numbers were finalized. Ms. Berges advised there were about 500 people who attended Summerfest and it was very nicely done. There was a lot of work involved and they could have used more volunteers, but the weather was great and the event was really nice. Ms. Berges stated they were hoping to hold the event again next year and support a different charity.

Ms. Berges stated one of the things reported in the survey was that Northgate Park swings were too low to the ground. She said it was corrected as soon as Ms. Corrao heard about it because she was at that park the following weekend and it was fixed. Ms. Berges advised it got her to thinking that the survey was some time between December and March and during that time period no one realized there was a problem with the swing level. She said her question is if the parks are inspected on a regular basis and is there a mechanism for someone to notify the Parks Department through the website or otherwise if they see a problem such as this one.

ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Ms. Cianciolo and seconded by Ms. Berges to adjourn the meeting, all in favor and motion passed.

Transcribed by Barbara Brooks, Clerk of Council
City of Avon