

MINUTES

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING

5:30 P. M., AUGUST 29, 2019

A/V CONFERENCE ROOM

Caitlin Cook, Chairperson, called the meeting of the Charleston City Council Committee on Parks and Recreation to order at 5:30p.m., AUGUST 29, 2019, in the Audio/Visual Room in City Hall.

Committee Members Present:

Caitlin Cook, Chair
Chad Robinson, Vice Chair
John Kennedy Bailey
Bruce King
Pat Jones

A roll call was taken and it was determined that a quorum was present.

1. Vice Chair Robinson moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting on 5-1-2019. Councilmember King seconded. There was no objection and the minutes were approved.

2. Discussion of Capital High football field collaboration opportunities
Councilmember Cook introduced Ric Cavender, representing the Board of Education to discuss Laidley Field. He explained that it is the only public field that is used by a high school for every home game and practice. The agreement between Capital High School and the University of Charleston was made in 2005, and is admittedly not the best especially for the high school. It is a 50-year agreement. Cavender and other members of the Board have been meeting and gathering information (from Coach Carpenter, for example), and anticipate being able to present a proposal in the next coming weeks.

Councilmember Cook asked who decides where Capital High practices when they can't use Laidley Field. Cavender answered that Coach Carpenter has the final say. Councilmember King added that they also share the field with Horace Mann and Stonewall, who play their home games on Laidley Field. He asked why Sissonville is playing their home game on the field (their field is under repairs) when they could have used the middle school's field.

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Councilmember Cook asked what the suggestions from Coach Carpenter were and if they are feasible. Cavender stated that based on his feedback, that they are going to seek a better agreement with the University of Charleston.

Councilmember Cook asked how the Committee could support the Board and Capital High School. Councilmember Robinson stated that there needed to be more response from the leadership of the School Board as a whole.

3. Resolution No. 235-19 - Re-dedication of Hunter Park

Resolution No. 235-19 - Re-dedicating the park located at the corner of 57th Street and Watson Street in the City of Charleston as Hunter Park.

Now, therefore, be it Resolved by the Council of the City of Charleston, West Virginia:

That the City Council hereby authorizes and approves that the park located at the corner of 57th Street and Watson Street in the City of Charleston be named Hunter Park in honor of three children that perished in the Upper Donnelly Flood of 1973. The park was originally named The Hunter Playground via Charleston City Council Resolution No. 266-73 in July 1973. The City Council hereby re-dedicates Hunter Park to continue to serve as a memorial "to remind us all of the uncertainty of this life and the duty of us to love, protect and nourish the little ones that dwell among us as friends and neighbors," as stated by City Council in 1973.

Mackenzie Spencer explained that City Council passed a resolution in 1973, after a flood, dedicating a playground as Hunter Playground. The City had recently replaced a lost sign and cleaned up the area, renaming it Hunter Park.

Councilmember Robinson moved to approve the resolution. Councilmember King seconded. With a majority of members present recorded thereon as voting in the affirmative Chairperson Cook declared Resolution 235-19 approved.

4. Recap of summer programs, pool use and golf course

The splash pad is running again. Mayor Goodwin added that while the splash pad is difficult to maintain, she has observed children using it every day. The Administration is going to create an instructional video on how to operate the splash pad for social media.

In addition to programs from previous years, Parks and Recreation have added 9 weeks of summer camps, a free lunch program and swimming lessons. A registration process was also instigated at the Community Centers. Councilmember Jones asked about the policy for young children being dropped off and left at a Community Center all day. The Mayor answered that the Administration supports this if the Centers are the safest place for children to be. The Department is looking into purchasing tables and chairs for the Centers to make them more accommodating.

Councilmember Cook added that Cato golf course usage has been studied and it is believed that it can be made successful with updates. The Mayor added being that the City loses money on the maintenance of Cato Park, the Administration would like to discuss its future with the Committee.

5. Discussion of East End Dixie Street Park

The City has been working with AARP, and is writing a grant to install a mini splash pad, a community garden and low-impact exercise equipment.

6. Discussion

Councilmember Bailey discussed having the walking paths along Kanawha Boulevard recognized as a park.

Councilmember Bailey motioned to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Robinson seconded.

Meeting adjourned.