

MINUTES

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
WEST HALL 1, CHARLESTON COLISEUM AND CONVENTION CENTER
(THE MEETING WAS ALSO MADE AVAILABLE AS A LIVE STREAM VIA ZOOM PER THE AGENDA)

5:30 P. M., APRIL 29, 2021

Caitlin Cook, Chairperson, called the meeting of the Charleston City Council Committee on Parks and Recreation to order at 5:30p.m., APRIL 29, 2021.

Committee Members Present:

Caitlin Cook, Chair

Chad Robinson, Vice Chair (attended virtually over Zoom)

Jeanine Faegre (attended virtually over Zoom)

Joseph Jenkins (attended virtually over Zoom)

Pat Jones

Deanna McKinney

Robert Sheets

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

1. Approval of Previous Minutes 3-25-2021–
Councilmember Faegre motioned to approve the minutes of the previous meeting on 4-29-2021. Councilmember McKinney seconded. There were no objections and the minutes were approved.

March 25, 2021

2. Bill No. 7901 – A BILL to amend the Municipal Code of the City of Charleston related to providing authorization for the waiver of certain fees for use of public parks and recreation facilities.

Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation, Jennifer Neal, added that the bill would enable the Department to work cooperatively with other groups, and would allow them to use the facilities in a more diverse way.

Councilmember Cook added that organizations are in various financial situations due to the impact of the pandemic. As the Rec Centers open back up, they want to make sure that a diverse group is using the facilities.

Councilmember McKinney asked if the fees were for all organizations or individuals. Councilmember Cook replied that currently a member of the community would not pay a fee to use the Centers. Some organizations (pickle ball, table tennis clubs, etc.) will pay a fee to use the facility because that space cannot then be used by the public.

Councilmember Jones motioned to approve the bill. Councilmember McKinney seconded. With members present recorded thereon as voting unanimously in the affirmative, Bill No. 7901 was approved.

3. Update on the AEP Project at Cato Park –

Councilmember Cook stated that, on the recommendation of Councilmember McKinney, there had been a walkthrough of the proposed area of the AEP Project at the Cato Park trail. Councilmember Cook shared with the Committee some pictures she took of the trail as it currently stands. The pictures showed that the trail wasn't much wider than it originally was except in a few spots, and the older trees that had been identified to be saved were clearly marked. It was evident that AEP worked with concerned citizens to keep the integrity of the trail as much as possible.

4. Update on City Pools –

Councilmember Cook stated that currently the City plans on opening at least the Cato and North Charleston pools. Neal added that the new filtration/sanitation system was just installed at the North Charleston pool, but has never been used. Their plan is to make sure that system functions properly, and then possibly use that system for the MLK pool. She added that the new pump is more efficient and, hopefully, more cost effective. The chlorination system is also now automatic and safer.

5. Recreational Investment Opportunities (American Rescue Plan) –

Councilmember Cook reminded the Committee that she had asked them to think of some recreational projects that would be good investments to potentially use the ARP funds.

Councilmember Cook suggested:

- A natatorium, adding that West Virginia is lacking aquatic centers.
- Connect to the Elk River for paddlers.

Councilmember Faegre suggested:

- Lip-sync contests for children 5-14 at Haddad River Front Park.

Councilmember Jenkins suggested:

- A Regional Parks Commission to combine funding with Kanawha County to utilize the rivers and trail plans.

Councilmember Cook relayed suggestions of the Director of Parks and Recreation, Rashaun Sayles:

- Update Cato Pool.
- Replace gym floor at the Roosevelt Center.
- New roof for the Cato Administrative Building.
- Turf all Little League Fields and the MLK Softball Field.

Councilmember Robinson suggested:

- Turf all Little League Fields and the MLK Softball Field.
- Wi-Fi hotspots, especially for children to do schoolwork.

Councilmember McKinney suggested:

- Pocket Parks.
- Wi-Fi hotspots.

6. Miscellaneous –

Councilmember McKinney asked about the status of Laidley Field. Councilmember Robinson replied that the situation had not been resolved (in reference to the various groups that use the field). He added that ideally, the Scholl Board would buy out the contract with UC.

Councilmember Cook encouraged everyone to visit the newly renovated East End Dog Park.

Councilmember McKinney motioned to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Jones seconded.

Meeting adjourned.