

Minutes
Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting
January 29, 2018

On this 29th day of January, 2018, at 6:00 p.m., the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board convened in a Regular Meeting, and the same being opened to the public at their regular meeting place; thereof, at City Hall, 303 S. Teel Drive, Devine, Texas. Notice of said meeting having been prescribed in Chapter 551, Government Code, and Vernon's Texas Codes, Annotated, and the following members thereof, being present, namely:

Albert Garza
Linda Gunn
Debbie Randall
Mary Allison

Absent being Chairman Jennifer Schott; thus, constituting a quorum.

Personnel present: Denise Duffy, City Accountant; and Tom Cate, City Attorney; and Ofilia Pedroza, UB Clerk.

Others present: Marly Davis, Devine News; Mayor Herring; Mrs. Faye Murdock; Sandy Lawler; Kelli Maxwell; and Councilman Cory Thompson, District #5; of Devine, Texas.

Board Member Albert Garza called the meeting of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board to order.

The first order of business was to discuss and consider approval of minutes for Meeting on January 15, 2018.

The Board reviewed the minutes.

Motion by Board Member Randall, seconded by Board Member Allison to approve the minutes for Meeting on January 15, 2018.

Ayes	--	Four
Nays	--	None
Absent	--	One – Chairman Schott

Motion carried.

The second order of business was to discuss and consider the lighting at the Briscoe and John Curcio City Parks.

Board Member Randall inquired on status of this. She said Interim City Administrator/City Secretary Dora V. Rodriguez was supposed to look into this.

Since Interim City Administrator/City Secretary Dora V. Rodriguez was not present at the meeting, City Accountant Denise Duffy informed the Board that we are still working on getting a quote from the electric company on what it's going to cost to install two lights at each park.

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Motion by Board Member Randall, seconded by Board Member Allison to postpone the lighting at the Briscoe and John Curcio City Parks until the next meeting.

Ayes	--	Four
Nays	--	None
Absent	--	One – Chairman Schott

Motion carried.

The third order of business was to discuss and consider the Neighborhood Parks.

Board Member Randall inquired if the sticker/weed killer got sprayed at both parks. She thought Director of Public Works Director Ismael Carrillo had mentioned that it would be done during December/January. City Accountant Denise Duffy said she was not sure and told the Board that this will be looked into since Interim City Administrator/City Secretary Dora V. Rodriguez was not at the meeting.

Board Member Allison commented that a lot of communities are going with neighborhood parks. She mentioned that a lot of parents who both work sometimes don't have the time to pick up their kids and take them to the park, so if we just had a playground in certain pockets of the neighborhood especially in underserved areas, the children would have the ability to go and play. She thinks it's something we should to consider. She's aware that we want the big super park at some point but suggested that in the interim, we could do one or more at a time until we get the big park and money to support it. She told the Board that maybe we need to think about where we would put those and how we would acquire the property for them. She inquired if there were any vacant lots or property available. She told the Board that she would like to see one in each district. Board Member Allison then inquired if there would be any re-districting anytime soon.

Chairman Schott arrived at 6:08 p.m.

Mayor Herring told the Board that re-districting won't happen until after the 2020 Census. He told them not to look for any major changes in this, and he informed them that the law firm that does the re-districting will be at tomorrow night's council meeting to discuss that.

The Board held discussion on the districts that we currently have parks in. The John Curcio City Park is in District #2 and the Briscoe Park borders between District #4 and District #5. Discussion was held that we only need a park in District #3. Board Member Randall inquired if the area where the skateboard park was going to be (across the football field), which is in District #4, could become a neighborhood park. Since Briscoe Park is so close to District #5, she doesn't see a necessity to add more to that park, but the skateboard park would be in the middle of District #4, and she suggested adding something small to it.

Board Members Gunn and Allison explained to Chairman Schott what they've been discussing. Board Member Allison told her that small pocket parks seem to be the trend in urban areas so that children can walk safely to the park because so many parents both work. Chairman Schott commented that she wouldn't let her children walk anywhere alone.

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Board Member Randall inquired into property behind the Devine VFW. Mayor Herring commented that there are apartments there now, and we would need to look around.

Chairman Schott commented that she feels we need to take care of the parks that we already have. Board member Randall agreed with that, and Board Member Allison told the Board that we're not saying in lieu of; we're just saying that before we do a great big park, in the interim, we could put in some pocket parks.

Board Member Allison told the Board that she also spoke to some of the Garden Club ladies and they are willing to talk to the Board about what they can do to help out.

Chairman Schott inquired about the work orders that were put in for Public Works.

Board Member Gunn told the Board that according to Interim City Administrator/City Secretary Dora V. Rodriguez, they are working on those. City Accountant Denise Duffy told the Board that the Public Works guys have started working on them. They've been trimming trees and doing some of the other stuff. She explained that they've been told that when they're not busy, that they need to go to the park and get some of the work orders done.

Chairman Schott commented that if they don't have the time, maybe the Board could still have a service day at the park and involve the community and maybe even the Boy Scouts. She asked if the Board would need to go before Council to move forward with that, or if it's something they can start organizing.

City Attorney Tom Cate advised that, yes, they would need to bring it before Council.

Ms. Kelli Maxwell suggested talking to Mission Devine to see if they possibly could do something to help out, since they volunteer their work and it's about making everything better. She said Mission Devine is in June, and it would be something to consider and it's just a suggestion. Some of the Board members commented that it's a very good idea.

No action was taken.

The fourth order of business was to discuss and consider the Inspection Report on the Swimming Pool.

Vice Chairman Garza commented that there's not a lot we can do with the pool because it's going to cost a lot of money to get it fixed.

The Board held discussion on the cost just to bring it up to code being anywhere from \$55,000 to \$75,000 but at the last meeting, City Engineer Raul Garcia informed them of all the extras that needed to be done. Some of the things that City Engineer Raul Garcia talked about were:

- Piping – Mayor Herring told the Board that City Engineer Raul Garcia had mentioned that the pipe from the pump is too small which led to the water not being clear. Chairman Schott inquired if fixing this is part of that \$75,000. City Accountant Denise Duffy explained that it

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is not because without digging it up, he can't see what kind of pipe is under there, and we can't dig it up because it's not ours, so Mr. Garcia guesstimated the cost to be \$30,000 to \$40,000 for the piping.

- Pool house – Councilman Thompson gave the Board a ballpark figure of no more than \$25,000.
- Parking lot – Let's say \$10,000
- Handicap ramps and sidewalk – We're looking at approximately \$5,000 to \$6,000
- Making current bathroom ADA compliant – City Accountant Denise Duffy referred the Board to the Page 4 of the Minutes for January 15, 2018, second paragraph from the bottom. She told them that because City Engineer Raul Garcia doesn't know if we can do one bath house as a family or if we have to do two; he is estimating around \$75,000 to restore or re-do what we currently have. The Board felt this is too much.

Discussion was held among the Board members that everything has to be ADA compliant.

Chairman Schott threw out a question to the Board, "Who of us here, on our Board, sitting up here, thinks that if it costs \$200,000 to get that pool up to par, it would be worth it?" Board Members Randall and Allison said, yes, but Board members Garza and Gunn opposed to it. Board Member Randall stated that our community deserves something. Board Member Garza stated that it's going to take too much money to get it fixed. He said it's all adding up too much and asked where we would get the money, from a grant? Board Member Randall told him, "That's not us; that would be Council and we need to bring this to them and say this is what the community wants."

Board Member Gunn added that we, as a Board, have looked at it and the Council is going to make the ultimate decision.

Board Member Randall brought up that there was a petition turned in back in August to bring the pool back and to start the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board. She commented that she's guessing there were like 70 signatures but doesn't think there was too much publicity done on that petition or there would've been more signatures. She also mentioned that back when they first talked about the Master Park Plan, the pool was number one on the survey that the community wanted. She told the Board that we have a possibility for a \$200,000 grant to give our community a pool. But, it will be \$2 Million to build a new one, so we're only looking at a tenth of the money.

Chairman Schott added that if the community is saying that they want a pool, we have two options; we either build a new one, or we re-build the one that we have. She said that if \$200,000 covers all of our concerns either mechanically or structurally, she asked is that would be something that the City would appreciate. Board Member Garza feels that it will go over the \$200,000.

According to Chairman Schott, with everything that City Engineer Raul Garcia quoted, and we even gave a little bit more, we're only looking at \$140,000, so we have an extra \$60,000 for things that we didn't think about.

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Board Member Gunn spoke out as a taxpayer and in her personal opinion that she would love to have a pool but said that she's also looking at the yearly cost to maintain it, and she's also looking at the negative numbers. She told the Board that back 20 years ago, they were looking at \$20,000 to \$30,000. Right now, she said that some of the Board is for it and some are against it. So, she said, we can take it to Council with whatever, but the Council will make the ultimate decision with whatever we say

Ms. Sandy Lawler addressed the Board and introduced herself as part of the Castroville pool. She informed the Board that she had pulled the numbers and said that at least in the last two fiscal years, they did make money; and Hondo as well. She told the Board that you can make money but we need to have the right person to run it. She also said we need to have an Aquatics Director; the one she knows of makes around \$45,000 to \$50,000. She also said we can get the American Red Cross to train for free, and she knows of trainers who have all their certifications. She also spoke of having a swim team because it is a 25-meter pool; we could do rehab and everything else that goes with a pool; it's more than just for swimming.

Chairman Schott stated that to say that it's not going to make money and it's going to be a huge loss for the City, is only based on how it was managed before. She doesn't think it's fair to the community of this town today or to the management of this town today, to say that they can't make it a more positive situation.

Board Member Allison commented that even when we were talking about a splash pad, that was going to be anywhere from \$350,000 to \$400,000.

Brief discussion was held on renting the pool for birthday parties, use it for swimming lessons, and a lot of other things to offset the monthly cost of running the pool.

Board Member Allison inquired about doing something in collaboration with other organizations. Mayor Herring mentioned that Interim City Administrator/City Secretary Dora V. Rodriguez had talked to the YMCA but they turned us down because it wasn't feasible for them.

Board Member Randall brought up that one of the things discussed at the last meeting is that our Board would need to oversee what is being done at the pool. She stated that we need to make sure that the Parks & Recreation is being done right. But, Board Member Gunn disagreed. She stated that is the City's job because we're just an advisory board. Board Member Allison agreed and said she'd rather just be an advisory board.

Discussion was held that this doesn't mean that they can't keep an eye on things and maybe take a look at the budget.

Motion by Board Member Randall, seconded by Board Member Allison to bring this to Council to take the pool back from Fred Morales, and to start the process to see what we can do about getting this done for the community.

Ayes	--	Three
Nays	--	One – Board Member Gunn
Abstain	--	One – Board Member Garza

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Motion carried.

Discussion was held after the motion. Mayor Herring requested for one person who voted yea and one person who voted nay to be at the meeting tomorrow night.

The fifth order of business was Information Items.

- There will be a Council Meeting tomorrow night at 6:00 p.m., and this recommendation will be on the agenda.

There being no further business to come before the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, motion was made by Board Member Allison, seconded by Board Member Randall to adjourn the meeting.

Ayes	--	Five
Nays	--	None

Motion carried.

Chairman

Secretary