

CITY OF BURTON
PARKS AND RECREATION MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 4, 2012, 5:30AM, COUNCIL CHAMBERS
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The Parks and Recreation Meeting was called to order by Heffner at 5:40 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Heffner, Craig, Bauldry, Miron, Groulx

MEMBERS ABSENT: Adams, Bigsby, Dunsmore

OTHERS PRESENT: Mayor P. Zelenko, L. Young, Clerk's Office

Lisa Easterwood of Fleis & Vandenbrink, said she put together packets of information. She said they received one hundred and fifty one survey responses. She stated the final results were not much different from the survey results from the December 21, 2011 meeting. She The type of facilities that were chosen were trails and pathways, a sports complex and small neighborhood parks.

Mr. Groulx said he took the top three choices of each question and typed them out to create a spreadsheet.

Ms. Easterwood said in summary Kelly Lake was chosen as the most used and the location where most improvements should be made. The residents chose walking as the most popular activity and the highest demand were for trails and paths. The tops six amenities at a new park are picnic areas, water fountains, benches, trails and pathways, public gardens and playground equipment. Nature trails got the highest vote with sidewalks as number two. That the bathrooms and water quality at Kelly Lake were a concern.

Mr. Groulx said maintenance of existing places were a high priority.

Ms. Easterwood added that programming was important to the residents. She referenced a chart titled Level of Service Comparisons that listed the surpluses and deficiencies of amenities in the City. The key parks are Kelly Lake and the property behind VG's. She said they will seek funds for preliminary engineering. She said they need to come up with a name for the property behind VG's.

Mr. Groulx suggested they call the property "Burton Citizen's Park."

Mr. Craig stated it may be a naming rights opportunity for a corporation, such as VG's.

Ms. Easterwood said some jurisdictions get the community involved in naming their parks.

Mr. Groulx asked if they could call it "Burton Community Park."

Ms. Easterwood said they will call it "Burton City Park." She said the number one type of facility were pathways, the second choice was a sports complex and the third choice was small neighborhood parks. The types of amenities were trails and pathways, playground equipment, benches and water fountains, splash pad, picnic areas and public gardens.

Mr. Craig said they can not have a splash pad or water park that is run on a well.

Ms. Easterwood said she received information from the Department of Public Works and believes there is sewer available for the property behind VG's. She said she is sure they want walking trails. She added the site is completely wooded with a huge drop off, which may not even be suitable for sledding it is so steep.

Mr. Groulx said as they develop the property the dirt can be moved around.

Ms. Easterwood said it could definitively be graded. There is a pocket of water that is hard to see from the aerial photograph. Gilkey Creek runs through the northeast corner of the property. The topography is not too bad, besides the steep drop. She said that if they are going to put in soccer and baseball fields it would require a lot of tree removal and would be a major impact on this property.

Mr. Heffner said they should start over with a trail around the outside of the property.

Mr. Craig mentioned New Testament Church who offered their property for City sports programs and said they should look for similar partners.

Ms. Easterwood said this would be a phase development, but the location of the site is not highly visible. If you put in an amenity that is too small on such a large property there is a tendency to forget it is there. The proximity to Kelly Lake park requires finding a balance. She had a meeting with Rick Stout because they are applying for a DNR trust fund grant to decide on their approach to the plan. She said preserving natural features, trails and paths and water areas are what they look for when awarding grants. She stated Kelly Lake is a better candidate for the grant.

Ms. Miron asked where the houses were in relation to the Burton City Park. Ms. Easterwood replied there are houses along the eastern boundary and a strip of land owned by Consumer's Energy along the west. Ms. Miron suggested building an amphitheater on that property.

Mr. Craig said he likes the Kelly Lake aspect here because it already exists and by putting improvements into the park is a great marketing tactic. It will create more support for the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Ms. Miron said to do Kelly Lake first because it is there and they can go to the other park later.

Ms. Easterwood said there are lumbering opportunities at the Burton City Park, in which the City could make money.

Mr. Groulx said there is no need for ball diamonds. He asked what would happen if the Church minister left.

Mayor Zelenko stated it is usually written in a contract that if one Priest leaves, the new Priest has to follow the written agreement. She said it isn't allowed to expend public funds on private property, but will be able to use their amenities. She said they have enough ball fields in the area.

Mr. Heffner said there is a need for better parking by the sledding hill at Kelly Lake.

Ms. Bauldry stated there have been many complaints regarding the bathrooms at Kelly Lake. She asked if they are regularly maintained.

Mayor Zelenko said they are cleaned every Friday and Monday. She said initially it was proposed to build the bathrooms with no roof so rain water may help to keep them clean. She said the trash receptacles are the other biggest problem at Kelly Lake.

Ms. Easterwood said there may be a need for more bathrooms.

Mr. Heffner said there is no running water at Kelly Lake.

Mr. Craig said the handle to the hand pump was taken off because people were trying to drink the water and it isn't safe.

Mr. Heffner said he lives next door and has the same well, so it better be safe to drink.

Ms. Easterwood said there is a need for water fountains as it is the second highest amenity.

Mr. Groulx stated a need for improved lighting.

Mr. Heffner said the park is closed at night.

Ms. Easterwood said these things are included in the goals and objectives. She said that under the Capital Improvements plan it is required that they have detailed improvements so cost can be applied. She said they could include everything and see how much it will cost. A new restroom that is more sustainable would be a good improvement. An observation area, walking trails, lighting and a water fountain should be identified under the objectives.

Mr. Craig asked how much money was in the budget.

Ms. Easterwood said there is \$25,000 to \$30,000 allocated in the budget and the DNR will do a 25-30% match, which would be a \$100,000 project. She said they can pay for smaller amenities through groups like the Rotary and Kiwanis.

Ms. Miron said they should get the community involved and that businesses may want to donate.

Mr. Craig said there needs to be more recognition for the people that do donate.

Ms. Bauldry asked if they can apply each year for grants and if they have to have matching funds.

Ms. Easterwood said they must have some accountability for showing matching funds. She said they are not able to submit for the same project the year after being denied for a grant.

Ms. Miron asked how long they have to use the grant money.

Ms. Easterwood replied they are able to ask for extensions.

Mr. Groulx spoke in reference to the walking trails around the perimeter around Kelly Lake.

Mayor Zelenko said in regards to pathways along wetlands, the DEQ considers it to be protected and would not be allowed to build in the center of the wetland.

Ms. Easterwood said the DEQ factors in the quality of the wetland when determining what can be constructed. She said she has enough improvements to Kelly Lake Park. She asked the board if they

wanted the trails paved or natural.

Mayor Zelenko said that the path that is there now started as a natural trail and was paved later.

Mr. Craig spoke in reference to workout stations at Kelly Lake park and stated that Lowes or Home Depot could get involved.

Mr. Heffner said he would like to see sand volleyball pits.

Mayor Zelenko said she would like to see sitting areas or benches at Kelly Lake.

Mr. Craig said they should get a list together of things that they need and put it out to the Community.

Mr. Groulx spoke in reference to an observation tower.

Mr. Heffner mentioned a bridge or a boardwalk and could put it on the side of the lake.

Mr. Craig asked if they would be able to push back the fence, which is probably handled by MDOT.

Ms. Easterwood said the fences are normally on the right of way. An observation tower should be off of a paved walkway. She said that they need to keep in mind that the standard for a multi-use pathway is ten foot wide with two feet of cleared areas vertically. She added time is short and they need to just get together an itemized list of improvements and get a rough number. She mentioned they need to look at other park improvements, such as Fireman's Park 1 and 2 and Veteran's Memorial Park. She said she called Mary to get a copy of her plan for the Library. For Fireman's Park #1, the top choice was for better maintenance and more beautification, parking and lighting.

Mr. Groulx asked if there was room for more parking.

Mayor Zelenko said that park was built to be a walk-to park, which is why there is limited parking. At the time, the firefighters at that station wanted a park. Parking wasn't an issue back then. Years ago the firefighters helped to maintain the park, which is no longer the case.

Mr. Groulx asked about the comments regarding better maintenance and asked who is responsible for the maintenance.

Mayor Zelenko said that the Department of Public Works take care of mowing and weed removal, but there isn't a whole lot of ground maintenance. She is not sure if they are talking about painting of the equipment or new equipment. Fire station #2 is going to be renovated by DCC as a gift to the City. There is adequate parking there and it will be lit.

Mr. Groulx said better maintenance was an issue on all the parks and three out of four for parking.

Ms. Easterwood asked what DCC would be improving at the park.

Mayor Zelenko stated she wasn't sure. She added there is a bathroom available to the public at the fire station and there will be at least one person there once a day.

Ms. Miron asked if there are bike racks being put in at all the parks.

Ms. Easterwood said that Fireman's Park #2 had a need for water fountains. She said for Veteran's park a play scape was requested.

Mayor Zelenko said there is no room and other improvements are going to have to be made to the paving bricks. This year is our 40th anniversary of being a City, and the Memorial Day celebration will be bigger than usual.

Ms. Easterwood spoke in reference to the Goals and Objectives regarding non-motorized recreation transportation networks. She suggested they establish a Burton Trail Coalition that would report back to the Parks and Recreation Commission. She stated they need to obtain funding for conceptual engineering. She said they need to make sure they secure easements as many grants fail because of improper easement acquisition. She said her company can create easement sketches. Consumer's Energy is good about giving easements. The detailed non-motorized plan will include all the key destination points, where the best routes are and put that information into a Master Plan for pathways. It will show where sidewalks are disconnected and need to be connected, and where bike paths could be placed. There is a Safe Routes to School Program, which needs to be initiated by the schools but could be coordinated by the Parks and Recreation Director. Having a representative from the Commission on that board would be advisable. She said they would need a representative from each school.

Ms. Bauldry mentioned I-69 cut the Bentley School district in half, which makes it difficult to walk to school. She added they used to have crossing guards.

Mayor Zelenko said that long ago the City provided crossing guards. She said that her concern is with the cuts the schools have to make, at what point are they going to cut transportation.

Ms. Easterwood said that one of the things that comes out in the non-motorized pathway plan is routes to schools. She added Vick will be here to talk about the Complete Streets Policy. She spoke in reference to the Goals and Objectives regarding the enhancement of the quality of life, assist the Friends of the Library group and develop a new community park for the property behind VG's.

Mayor Zelenko said the City has many tax reverted properties that were not sold at the County.

Mr. Heffner suggested the City Council could make an action to take desirable properties off the list.

Ms. Easterwood said spoke in reference to the Goals and Objectives in regards to expansion of programming and coordinating with local schools. She said that many of these things will have to coordinated through a Park Director.

Mr. Craig said their is a great opportunity to get involved with the Library for educational purposes.

Mr. Groulx said we could coordinate with surrounding communities for sports tournaments. He mentioned the website is a good resource.

Ms. Easterwood stated they should continue to update the website with Park and Recreation information.

Mayor Zelenko stated putting all the information on the website is a lot of work and she is hoping Council will be understanding in the fact that funds will have to be allocated to pay people for the increased work load. She said that when they go to other communities she would like them to look into what they need for their Parks and Recreation Department budget internally.

Mr. Craig stated that Rochester Hills has full time staff for their Parks and Recreation.

Mr. Groulx stated he would love to create a ribbon cutting ceremony for the opening of the new park.

Mayor Zelenko said ABC 12 and the Burton View would be willing to cover it, It is important to have good marketing and having someone here to reach out as a public relations correspondent. She added that she is looking to appoint Betty Bigsby as the Parks and Recreation Director, who has PR experience contacting the media. She said the Parks and Recreation Director would be on the Administrative side and the Public Access Committee is a sub-committee of the City Council, which is the legislative group.

Mr. Craig said the Parks and Recreation director should be the liaison between City Hall and the Commission.

Mayor Zelenko said that another role of the Director would be to help write grants. She added in the past Jeff Major was given a \$15,000 increase in his salary and Ralph LaDuke was given a \$10,000 increase in his salary to act as Parks and Recreation Director. She said that if the Commission wants the Director to be a stand alone position, they will have a hard time finding someone to fulfill a stand alone position on a part time basis. There must be compensation for the additional work and there are bargaining units that need to be in agreement.

Ms. Easterwood said the next step is to get a draft plan together, which will go to the City Council. That will begin the thirty day review period.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

Jim Shustock, 1346 Howe Rd., said the park behind VG's would generate traffic that could become a problem. He asked who would be maintaining the park. He added he would like to volunteer.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

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