

STOW PARKS AND RECREATION WORK SESSION BOARD MEETING

Monday, March 13, 2023 – 4:00 PM

Minutes of the Stow Parks and Recreation Work Session Board Meeting held Monday, March 13 at The Leona Farris Lodge

Members Present: Bob Pontius, Christie Sheets, Patrick Crawford, Jeff Datkuliak

Members Absent: Houston Morgan

Others Present: Nick Wren, Director of Public Service; Linda Nahrstedt, Director; Kathy Lewis, Recreation Supervisor; Chris Sheridan, Asst. Recreation Supervisor; Ann Malthaner, Library Liaison; Amanda Rome, Outreach Librarian

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Pontius called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Crawford moved to approve the minutes from the February 6, 2023 and the February 13, 2023 meetings, seconded by Mr. Datkuliak. All were in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nothing to report.

REPORTS/UPDATES

Ms. Nahrstedt stated as you know the consultant was ill and his presentation on the feasibility study to council has been rescheduled for March 23. We are researching what a levy would like and are asking the consultants to update the numbers in the feasibility plan. It has been about six months since the projections were made so we are asking them to look down the road at an anticipated construction start date of early 2025. They are going to tweak some numbers and a couple of other things that our Finance Department requested.

Mr. Wren stated once we finalize an overall number with contingencies and with a million dollars annually set aside for capital projects in the parks from the consultants, we can contact the Summit County Auditor to give us the exact millage that we would need. After the consultants give their presentation to council on March 23, at the next council meeting on April 16 we would bring legislation forward to city council to put that information on the ballot and let the voters decide if this is something they want.

Ms. Nahrstedt stated the millage would include the cost of construction for the potential recreation center, a subsidy that the city will have to cover and a million dollars annually for other capital improvements in the parks.

Ms. Nahrstedt stated regarding capital projects, I am looking more closely at the 10-year plan and we can drill down on that in subsequent meetings. When I sent out the proposed capital projects in January, I have had many different thoughts and changes that we can discuss further down the line plotting out, especially if the levy were to pass and we do have a million dollars for capital improvements, what we might use that for as we move down the line. Smaller projects, saving for bigger projects, etc. I have submitted the ranked listing that we have all worked on to Mr. Wren and the Mayor to move along to council.

Mr. Wren stated thank you to everyone for your hard work at ranking these projects in our parks. We plan to cherry pick a little bit and go on a timeline of certain things but some things are going to take a consultant to come in like the wayfinding and the nature play. Other things can happen much quicker so I am trying to build off the momentum of the Parks and Recreation Board and the Parks Department and get a couple quick wins. Right now, we are going to go to bid for the Nature Play playground at Adell Durbin and also go to bid for the playground replacement at Meadowbrook Lake Park. The reasoning why these two projects went first is I do not need any plans to do it and there is still a major supply chain issue.

Once we have permission, we will put together a bid book that will state exactly what we want to pay and the companies turn in their work product. It takes a while to put together the bid book but once completed we will meet with the local playground companies. There is one provider of each line of playgrounds in the state of Ohio. We will have a pre-bid with them to let them know what we are looking at onsite at those facilities so they can see the area and then we give them generally about four weeks to design. They will submit to us and we will narrow down the designs to what we think is best and the parks board will be involved in the selection of that once we are happy with the ADA and the National Playground Safety Institute.

The items listed at Oregon Trail, which include the trail, pickleball courts and the main parking lot are included in our transportation bids. They are not out yet – we just completed our portion last Thursday of putting the road, the panels and the concrete at the different parking lots that we are going to do and then park amenities. This is usually a six week bid because overall we are talking about \$4.5 million between the concrete, asphalt, and city infrastructure. At the same time we will bid our sidewalk program, which we have about \$750,000 set aside for this year. Once those are awarded, we will work with the contractors as far as a timeframe. It depends where they want to start in the program as to when we get to Oregon Trail completed but we should see that sometime this summer.

Mr. Marc Anderson met with EDG who is an engineering firm that has two employees that specialize in campgrounds. We are expecting a quote from them mid-March. If we receive it before noon on Wednesday, March 15, I will be able to get it on the council agenda for next week's meeting. If not, it will have to wait until April 16. We have also received quotes for the demolition of the buildings at Bow Wow Beach. I thought it was important to build off of the momentum that the Parks Board has started and get these projects in front of city council and get their approval.

Mr. Datkuliak asked is there a way to start prioritizing the projects in the parks earlier, maybe October, November or December for the following year so that we have a plan ready for the beginning of the next year? Mr. Wren stated we do not really know from Finance what the budget is for the year. We typically turn projects in until we are told we no longer have the funds to do these projects. This could go a little quicker because this council wants the budget approved before the end of December. Ohio state law states we technically have until the end of March. Ms. Nahrstedt stated that as we continue to work on this 10-year plan it will flow more as we do this for next year. These projects are things that we need to plot out as we go along. If a levy passes or not that will have a big impact on what we do but if it does not we will still be planning and moving forward.

Mr. Crawford stated I recently attended an Arts Commission meeting because they had some business on their agenda in regards to parks and playgrounds. I thought they mentioned that there were going to be two community playgrounds being replaced this year. I know Meadowbrook Lake is one but I was not sure what the other park was. Mr. Wren stated the two neighborhood parks that were slated for last year and were completed were Sherwood and Northport. They could be referring to Meadowbrook Lake and SKIP. Mr. Crawford asked is there anything else we were planning on replacing. Mr. Wren stated we are always replacing playground equipment. We have two members of our maintenance staff that are certified in playground safety and do routine inspections of the playgrounds to check for broken or worn out pieces of equipment.

Mr. Wren stated that Sun Pipeline owned the pipeline that runs through Fox Den Golf Course. Currently, Energy Transfer owns the pipeline. They need to come in and clear around 54 trees from the pipeline. Trees are strategically placed in a golf course to protect tee boxes from approach shots from a previous hole. We have been discussing how they are going to access the golf course to remove these trees. They want to remove these trees at the end of March. We explained to them that you would have to mat every foot in front of their trucks to reduce divots on the course. Energy Transfer agreed to bring in a helicopter to remove the trees and transfer to the driving range parking lot around March 26 and 27. Energy Transfer has offered the city funds to replace trees on the golf course and surrounding areas. A press release will go out to inform the public of what is being done.

Mr. Crawford asked regarding maintenance and playground repair, the Master Plan recommended signage if it was going to be more than 48 hours for some of these items to be repaired. Is this something the city can do? Mr. Wren stated we could definitely do something like that.

Mr. Wren conducted a tour of The Leona Farris Lodge, Silver Springs Tennis Courts and Basketball Courts and Bow Wow Beach explaining to the board members what projects have been completed and are scheduled for each location.

LIBRARY REPORT

Ms. Malthaner reported since the library has joined CLEVNET, our staff has gotten over six times more items from other libraries into cardholders' hands, which is an increase of 535%. We are fundraising to do outside book lockers, very similar to Amazon lockers for a couple of reasons. This will increase access of materials for people who cannot get to the library during

regular business hours and there are some people who do not want to come in and pick up sensitive material like a book on divorce or sexually transmitted diseases. Having the lockers eliminates the person-to-person interaction and it will give them another option to use instead of self-check out. Ms. Sheets asked how are you doing the fundraising for this project. Ms. Malthaner stated the Stow Library Foundation would be doing the fundraising on this project because we are not permitted to fundraise for ourselves. It will probably take a couple of years to raise the money for this project. The estimated cost for this project is \$72,000. Ms. Rome stated the technology for this project has improved but so has the price point.

Ms. Malthaner stated we have been working on our parking lot design since 2020. We want to incorporate an extra outdoor shelter so that we can do some programming in the summer. The cost has increased from \$650,000 to a million dollars. We are trying to see where we are with the funds that we have and try to address all of the bullets points in our strategic plan. Ms. Rome stated one of the big feedbacks that we received was people wanted more green space around the library. In the next month, we will have museum and zoo passes. You will be able to check those out with your library card in order to visit several museums and zoos in the area.

Ms. Rome stated our story time room is really too small for us. We have been doing story time in our upstairs meeting rooms for about a year. We have been looking at making our other story time room into a literacy playroom sometime in April. There will be toys and other items that are specifically picked out for kids to learn from. It will be mostly imaginative play but then there will be a special station that will change each month.

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

Ms. Sheets stated the allotment that is being proposed on North River Road will probably be approved. If the backside of the property was not already platted with streets, we could deny the allotment because of the cul de sac situation. Due to the streets already be platted, it makes the cul de sac temporary. We can put conditions on the approval like soil testing and a local traffic study, which will only delay the approval.

We have not heard anything new on the Stow Glen building or the Macys building.

OLD BUSINESS

Nothing to report.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Nahrstedt stated the library had planned to do a story walk at SKIP playground but we are now considering moving it to Oregon Trail. Initially, the SKIP playground was going to be in pods and the story walk made better sense but the way SKIP is panning out now and that it will be fenced in we have decided SKIP may not be the best playground for this. The story walk cannot really be inside the fence because it affects the playground fall zones and it cannot be

outside of the fence due to its location next to Darrow Road. We talked about maybe having it at Oregon on the loop trail that is being installed.

Mr. Crawford stated the Art Commission has an idea to put chalk book outlines on the sidewalks so the kids could come up and color in the outlines. They had mentioned doing this at SKIP but thought there was some funding for an idea like that at SKIP. Maybe this is something that would be better at the neighborhood pop ups? Ms. Nahrstedt stated we had an opportunity to work with a local business that is going to supply materials and do some design. We will also work with a printer to put some kind of decal that is adhesive on the sidewalks. We were looking at 3D art to use on the sidewalks. Some of the designs we were looking at might be something that looked like a hole in the ground with a bridge over it but it is 3D. Some of it could be like games that are 3D. We are waiting to see what this designer comes up with.

Mr. Pontius asked what we are planning on doing with the skate park at Oregon Trail. Ms. Nahrstedt stated it is in the Master Plan to remove it. Mr. Datkuliak stated that if we are going to have trucks there doing concrete work and pads, we need to have them remove the skate park. Ms. Nahrstedt stated I will contact Mr. Wren regarding this issue. Mr. Datkuliak stated maybe when the skate park is removed, a pad can be installed for a shelter. Ms. Nahrstedt stated in the Master Plan it was suggested to put interactive games in that space.

GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEMS

Ms. Nahrstedt stated we have a spreadsheet of all of the dates that I came up with for potential Parks and Recreation Board meetings. This way we will be able to track who is available and not available and we will decide maybe going on a three-month projection out as to whether or not we will have a meeting. If there are two people missing, we would still have a quorum but I would rather not have the meeting. We will plot in locations for these meeting and take into consideration what everyone has given as far as dates.

Mr. Datkuliak stated having our meetings at different locations is very helpful to me. There are times of the year where it would make sense to be indoors and maybe there is a way to have quarterly meetings in council chambers. Ms. Nahrstedt stated there have not been any commissions that have voted to have their meetings in council chambers but if that is something that you all desire it is up to you. Mr. Datkuliak asked is there ever any request from the general public to come to our meetings. Ms. Nahrstedt stated people do not typically come to the meetings unless there is an issue like maybe Pickleball or we also had plans to build an amphitheater on the green and that brought people to the meeting. Ms. Sheets stated that our meetings are all posted on our website so the general public is aware. Mr. Crawford asked what happens if we have a meeting scheduled at a shelter and 30 people from the public show up. Would we have another place we could go to hold the meeting? Mr. Pontius stated we have never had more than seven community people show up to our meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Sheets and seconded by Mr. Crawford at 5:30 pm. All were in favor.

Bob Pontius, Chairperson
Parks and Recreation Board

Deanna Mihalus, Secretary
Parks and Recreation Department