



RECREATION COMMISSION WORKSHOP

MARCH 29, 2023

OFFICIAL MINUTES

ALPHARETTA CITY HALL
COMMUNITY ROOM | 2 PARK PLAZA | 5:30 PM

This summary is provided as a convenience and service to the public, media, and staff. It is not the intent to record proceedings verbatim. Any reproduction of this summary must include this notice. Public comments are noted as heard by the Recreation Commission, but not quoted or paraphrased. This document includes limited presentation by the Recreation Commission and invited speakers in summary form.

I. CALL TO ORDER

- ❖ Chairman Mitchell called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm.

II. ROLL CALL

- Recreation Commission Members - Present
 - Dennis Mitchell (Chairman)
 - Jit Saha (Vice Chair)
 - Cheryl Rand
 - Jeremy Scott
 - Karla Peidrahita
 - John Norton
 - Shuntel Beach
- Recreation Commission Members – Absent
 - Derek Kaighin
 - Brad Bowers
- Staff
 - Kurt Kirby – Project Manager, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services
 - Christine Young – Recreation Services Manager, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services
 - Kevin McDonald – Recreation Services Coordinator, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services
 - Amber O'Dwyer – Administrative Office Coordinator, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services

III. WORKSHOP ITEMS

a. Union Hill Park Conceptual Site Plan – Discussion

- Kurt Kirby, Project Manager of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services presented the item.
- The conceptual site plan designed by Dix Hite was presented to commissioners.

- Results from the Public Input Survey held over the last two weeks in response to the plan were in line with original comments from initial public input sessions with only a few outliers (request for a golf course, pickleball, etc.). Most residents appeared pleased that the covered arena would remain and be able to be used as a multipurpose space. Additionally, the design seemed successful in encompassing multigenerational and demographical requests including but not limited to the new concept for the skate park.
- Kurt Kirby stated staff is also trying to improve Greenway access in safe and effective way. Signage encouraging cyclists to not ride bikes through the pedestrian space as well as the inclusion of bollards or ledging to deter bikers from speeding through the space are being considered.
- Regarding parking, staff plans to enhance the current parking space to accommodate more parking and implement better traffic flow to ease accessibility.

RECREATION COMMISSION DISCUSSION

- Q Commissioners Rand and Saha posed questions pertaining to the skate park including if the design met requests by the residents most interested in the amenity and in reference to the size of the skate park and the interest in making it larger by encroaching on the tree line.
- A Kurt Kirby stated that feedback from residents was not so much on increasing the scale of the park, but on the amenities. Additionally, encroaching into the tree line was not a possibility due to other limitations such as buffer requirements. Regardless, most residents preferred the focus be on including more challenging features and the designer, having a background in skateboarding himself, helped ensure the requests were successfully met.
- Q Commissioner Norton inquired as to the status of completion for the restrooms and covered arena renovations.
- A Kurt Kirby responded that the restrooms renovations began over the winter with fresh coats of paint. The covered arena electrical upgrades were recently approved by City Council and the hope is to have all electrical and restroom enhancements completed by June 1. Even if the renovations are not fully complete, Camp Momentum and the Home By Dark Concert Series in the Park concerts will move ahead as scheduled.
- Q Commissioner Rand asked about those interested in having the space be considered as another facility for pickleball.
- A Recreation Services Coordinator, Kevin McDonald, stated he would not recommend the space for pickleball as the flooring is too slick and could result in injury.
- Q Commissioner Saha inquired as to staff's proposed solutions for slides that could become too hot in warmer months.
- A Kurt Kirby stated that the slide nears an area where natural shade may address the issue organically, but it is too earlier to tell. Staff will try to accommodate the concern as the final build design is developed. With the project currently on budget, perhaps alternative solutions could be considered near the project's completion.

- Q Commissioner Rand asked if park's playgrounds would focus on children six years of age and older since Windward Park's focus was mainly on six years of age and younger. Commissioner Piedrahita asked if the park's amenities would be appealing to those looking for leisure and/or rest from traversing the Greenway (which borders the park).
- A Kurt Kirby and Recreation Services Manager, Christine Young, answered that staff is not looking to construct a typical playground. The goal is to include features not currently available at other City parks as well as appeal to ages ranging up to twelve years of age. As for citizens stopping at the park while utilizing the Greenway, swings, benches, and picnic tables would be provided.
- C Commissioner Rand commented that those with children six and under could play at Windward Park while older children could play at Union Hill Park.
- Q Commissioners inquired as to the future of the existing cul-de-sac, the location of the road shown in the site plan, and potential right-of-way signs.
- A Staff responded that the cul-de-sac must remain and that the road in the site plan travels between the skate park and the park's other main features. While a sign could be erected to inform park attendees that the cul-de-sac is a right-of-way property and should be avoided, residents would likely see this as a "suggestion" and nothing more.
- Q Commissioner Norton asked about the capacity of the parking lot and if any offsite parking was being provided.
- A Kurt Kirby stated he did not have an exact number of spaces but could provide it. Currently, no usage agreements are in place with private developments for access to offsite parking, but such agreements could be explored in the future.
- Q Commissioner Rand asked if staff envisions people would use the cyclist trail access (#4 on the site plan) as an exit out of the park.
- A Kurt Kirby responded that #4 was earmarked for when McGinnis Ferry is completed. Today, the establishment of a trail to connect to Forsyth County via McGinnis Ferry would require several switchbacks and would be very costly. For now, there is a temporary trail in place until road construction is complete, and the access trail can be finalized.
- Q Chairman Mitchell inquired about the construction schedule for the park.
- A Kurt Kirby and Christine Young stated construction should begin early 2024.

b. Athletic Field Rental Fees

- Christine Young, Recreation Services Manager of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services presented the item.
- Recreation Services and Parks Services staff met to discuss the concern that current athletic facility use rental fees do not successfully recuperate costs of operating the fields, the staff, and the materials that are needed, especially during tournaments.
- Staff wished to present the revised fee structure formulated as a result of the discussion to the Recreation Commission for review and consideration prior to approval.

- The increase in fees are not intended for profit, but only to balance costs for staffing, supplies, and maintenance from the wear-and-tear of city facilities and fields associated with rentals.
- Staff proposed changes include:
 - A rate of change to the cost per field based on hours of usage.
 - Increasing to \$100 per field for first 1-4 hours.
 - Increasing to \$150 per field for 5-8 hours.
 - Increasing to \$200 per field for 9-14 hours.
 - Staffing, lighting, materials, and supplemental field prep beyond the day's initial prep would be additional charges.
 - Staffing would be raised from \$25/hr to \$45/hr.
 - Trash and bathroom maintenance would be included in the services at no additional cost.
 - The number of games permitted on a field per day would still be five but all play must end by 10 p.m.
 - A revision to #3 of the policy, to read, "When facilities are available, City of Alpharetta residents are given priority for all private facility rentals. Facilities will not be rented to individuals, teams, groups, businesses, etc. that compete/conflict with a program/activity offered by ARPCS and/or its partner associations, or to those that intend to profit from the rental activity and/or participants, with the exception of partnered tournaments."
- Commission proposed changes included those recommended by staff with the following modification:
 - A rate of change to the cost per field based on hours of usage.
 - Increasing to \$150 per field for first 1-4 hours.
 - Increasing to \$200 per field for 5-8 hours.
 - Increasing to \$250 per field for 9-14 hours.
- The modifications recommended by the Recreation Commission are to be incorporated into staff's revised fee packet and presented for approval by the Recreation Commission at the next official meeting.

RECREATION COMMISSION DISCUSSION

- C Chairman Mitchell voiced his concern that the newly recommended rate may still not be enough to compensate for the staff, materials, and maintenance.
- Q Commissioner Scott asked if comparable data from Roswell or other neighboring cities was available.

- A Staff responded that the City of Roswell is charging \$40/per hour for residents and \$60/non-resident for baseball/softball fields and \$60/per hour for resident and \$90/non-resident for soccer fields.
- Q Commissioner Norton asked if the new rate would include staffing and the dragging of fields after every game.
- A Kurt Kirby answered staffing would be separate and the frequency of the dragging of fields was dependent upon what the organization needed for the tourney and the level of service requested. Generally, the dragging of field is after every other game.
- C Chairman Mitchell asked for the max cost for 9+ hours.
- A Staff replied \$250 per field.
- Q Commissioner Beach and Piedrahita asked if the tournaments bookings could be lost as a result of the increased fees and if such a large increase could be justified.
- A Commissioners and staff responded that costs for everything have increased so it would seem understandable that the cost to rent fields would as well. Additionally, Kurt Kirby stated that staff works very hard to ensure tournament success and that the level of service provided by the City for the ACVB, and organizations is often appreciated and keeps the event hosts returning.
- Q Commissioner Norton asked for confirmation that associations have a choice to opt into additional services.
- A Christine Young confirmed trash and restroom service is included, all other services are optional with additional fees.
- Q Chairman Mitchell asked how many park staff were required to meet the services for a tournament.
- A Kurt Kirby responded that if an organization chose to rent all eight fields, as many as six people (which would include dragging fields) could be on site.
- Q Commissioner Rand reminded that the having the external organizations hold tournaments in the City helps with economic development and that we want to ensure we are not trying to profit by increasing costs as the City already reaps benefits through hotel stays, dining, and other sales produced from tournament attendees. Commissioner Rand also reminded that the increased fees would be universal to include local/residential organizations and not just foreign associations.
- C Chairman Mitchell assured that the purpose of raising fees is not to profit but to recoup costs only.
- Q Commissioner Scott asked if staff had any historical rental fee numbers to review.
- A Christine Young stated an estimate might be \$30,000 per year in revenue.
- Q Commissioner Saha asked for clarity on clause #2, "ARPCS may refuse rental of facilities to person(s) who wish to conduct activities deemed detrimental to the philosophies (program and safety) of the City of Alpharetta."

- A Christine Young and Kevin McDonald stated the clause was to ensure proper usage of the facilities and fields. For example, the City would not want a CrossFit group using heavy exercise equipment on a baseball field that could result in divots, holes, and/or drag marks thereby causing unnatural wear and tear to the field.

c. Pickleball Court Rentals

- Kevin McDonald, Recreation Services Coordinator for the Adult Activity Center of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services Department presented the item.
- Kevin McDonald has been receiving court rental requests from ALTA and to address such requests, he utilized the template for the tennis court rental packet to draft a packet for pickleball.
- While most conditions mirror that of tennis, the few changes included a change to the fees to rent the courts as pickleball games have a shorter playtime than tennis.
- If the Recreation Commission had not questions, the pickleball court rental packet would be presented to the Recreation Commission for approval at the next official meeting.

RECREATION COMMISSION DISCUSSION

- C Commissioner Saha commented that he had asked several questions to staff in advance and both the questions and answers had been printed and made available to the commission for review and discussion.
- Q Commissioner Rand asked if the ratio of resident to non-resident players needed to comprise a team that met the "resident rate" was at 40% or 50%.
- A Commissioners responded that the percentage rate was specific to athletic associations and more specifically, travel. Exceptions would be an organization/business residing in the city limits and crafting a team (such as a local church).
- A Staff replied that for general field/court rentals, teams have a standard base fee. Teams that include non-resident players must pay the base fee and an additional \$25 fee per non-resident player.

IV. ITEMS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS

- Chairman Mitchell informed commissioners that the article featured in *The Revue* and discussed during the March 14, 2023, Recreation Commission meeting had been addressed by city staff and the reporter. The reporter connected with Morgan for corrected information regarding the misprint and will issue a reprint.

V. ADJOURNMENT

❖ *Chairman Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,



Amber O'Dwyer
Administrative Office Coordinator
Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services