



RECREATION COMMISSION WORKSHOP

MAY 24, 2023

OFFICIAL MINUTES

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

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I. CALL TO ORDER

- ❖ Chairman Mitchell called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

II. ROLL CALL

- Recreation Commission Members - Present
 - Dennis Mitchell (Chairman)
 - Jit Saha (Vice Chair)
 - Cheryl Rand
 - Jeremy Scott
 - Karla Peidrahita
 - Shuntel Beach
 - Brad Bowers
- Recreation Commission Members – Absent
 - John Norton
 - Derek Kaighin
- Staff
 - Morgan Rodgers – Director, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services
 - Kurt Kirby – Project Manager, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services
 - Nate Hand – Park Services Supervisor, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services
 - Claire Thurber – Special Events Coordinator, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services
 - Amber O'Dwyer – Administrative Office Coordinator, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services

III. WORKSHOP ITEMS

a. Webb Bridge Dog Park Opportunity

- Nate Hand, Park Services Supervisor for the Department of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services presented the item.

- Recapping the project, the plan was in a conceptual phase as the donor family simply proposed the idea.
- Now, the site plan has not changed, but the donor has verbally committed \$50k towards completion of the project. The total project cost will exceed \$50k by approximately \$3-4k and staff feels confident the city can cover the difference.
- The next time the project comes before Recreation Commission, it will be for formal approval.

RECREATION COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

RE: WEBB BRIDGE DOG PARK

Q Commissioners inquired as to the role of stormwater/land disturbance and the need for permitting to complete the project.

A Staff stated no land disturbance will take place that will require permitting. Only debris removal, pruning, and removal of small, inconsequential trees is needed.

Q Commissioner Bowers asked how the city will cover the difference in cost and what the plan would be should the donor family decrease the monetary commitment.

A Staff informed the expense would be covered from operating and/or capital funds but should the donor decrease the funding amount resulting in a more substantial cost to the city, staff is prepared to deny the project to address more pertinent initiatives.

Q Chairman Mitchell inquired as to the time frame.

A Staff responded that the time frame for completion is dependent upon the contractors; the first contractor would clear/cut trees; the next contract would install plumbing for the water fountains; the next would establish the trail, and so on. Fencing would be installed last to avoid premature usage of the park.

Q Commissioner Rand asked if any guidance from Matt Casey in terms of requirements or recommendations in hindsight to Wills Park Waggy World were incorporated in the Webb Bridge Park design.

A Staff stated they have a better understanding of what should be in place, learning from Waggy World. Such implementation includes the rounded versus sharp corners for fencing, the pass-through gate locations, nearby parking, etc.

Q Commissioner Rand sought clarity on whether staff believe a chain linked fence was a good aesthetic.

A Staff stated the chain linked fence to be acquired is not standard metal fencing. Rather, it is heavy gauge, encased, and black in color so it will have a nicer look and better durability. To add, the dog park's area is wooded and will help blend the fence into the

environment. The fencing will also be in keeping with what is on the baseball and soccer fields already at the park. Lastly, the alternative options were triple in price.

- Q Commissioner Bowers inquired as to whether the donor family has requested recognition for the dog park.
- A Staff replied, yes, but in the form of a small sign (estimated at around 2" x 2") to read "Funded by the Mulroy Family". The sign would likely be located just near "Entry 1" of the park. Nevertheless, before proceeding, design approval would be required by the Recreation Commission and City Council.

IV. ITEMS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS

- Vice Chair Saha asked to speak retrospectively about the success of the Taste of Alpharetta event and staff's concepts and/or suggestions for next year.
- Staff replied that the Mayor proclaimed from the dais that it was the best Taste of Alpharetta event to date.
- The event was more spread out and had between 45,000-50,000 people in attendance.
- Special Events staff felt some improvements could be made to include the following:
 - Increasing from 60-100 restaurants. Unfortunately, many downtown restaurants will not participate as a booth because they are already located downtown.
 - Increased awareness of the ticket app in advance of the event as well as incorporating a QR code on event staff t-shirts.
 - Facilitating better communication with Innovation Academy on road closures and day-of event logistics to try and avoid conflicting schedules as this year, Innovation Academy had AP testing and could not pivot to a virtual school day.
 - Jacob's Eye, the event management company, did the lion's share of work, but staff remains engaged and involved to ensure the event's success.
 - GDOT's approval of the road closure of HWY 9 permitted Public Safety to focus on event safety and lessened fears of pedestrians crossing HWY 9.

RECREATION COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

RE: TASTE OF ALPHARETTA

- Q Commissioners posed questions regarding event ticket sales, the lack of school booster club presence at the event, challenges between the event management company and city staff, and Innovation Academy parents' concerns regarding road closures the day of AP testing.
- A Ticket sales were \$188,000 (an increase over the prior year) with 27% obtained via the phone app. This was a tremendous success as the city went paperless with tickets for the first time and the new digital system proved effective and did not crash.

The biggest issue with the tickets was that many did not read the information and download the app ahead of time to procure tickets. The solution, this year, was to print fliers and pass them out to event attendees to reduce long ticket lines.

The event management team introduced a tiered percentage-based approach to revenue proceedings for participating restaurants based on ticket count and seven restaurants exceed all tiers.

Of all tickets sold, only 12,000 tickets were not used.

Unfortunately, school booster clubs that serve as non-alcoholic drink vendors met with two issues this year; 1) the event management company had a sponsorship with Coke, thereby requiring that no other competing vendors be present (including the school booster programs) and 2) the event management company desired a percentage of the schools' sales.

There were challenges, as can be the case with any partnership, between the city and the event management team but these were all behind the scenes and staff's hope is to be able to work with them again next year.

Staff was unsuccessful in having Innovation Academy have a virtual school day on account of AP exams the day of the event. This proved slightly frustrating for parents. Staff was not made aware of the testing day but was told the school could not permit another virtual school day on account of too many virtual school days on the calendar for the year already. Nevertheless, between AP testing at Innovation Academy, other school baccalaureates and graduations, Mother's Day, etc., staff will work harder to better schedule the event in future years.

- C The recommendation was made to have the ticket app show initial purchase/receipt details to help clarify if a charge was accidentally posted twice (as this did happen for a commissioner albeit easily resolved).
- Q Chairman Mitchell asked about the terms circling around the event management company's option to backout of the contract when they begin no longer being subsidized by the city.
- A Staff was unsure and would have to reference the contract.

RE: MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS

- C Commissioner Piedrahita mentioned the City of Milton has a "Check the Parks Off the List" prize game that Alpharetta could consider.
- She also mentioned that in meeting and speaking with people living outside of Alpharetta, "DTA" (Downtown Alpharetta) is considered awesome! She proposed the idea of a space boasting the City's name in letters (as other cities do) as a photo-op site in which visitors and residents can tag Alpharetta as yet another marketing tool.

- C Morgan Rodgers reminded commissioners to take advantage of the *Concert Series at the Park* at Union Hill Park. The space's renovations are coming along nicely, and he predicts it will be one day known as the "The Hill".
- C Morgan Rodgers also mentioned that if anyone had donated a picket for the original Wacky World project, he or she could visit WackyWorld.org. to claim the picket!

V. ADJOURNMENT

❖ *Chairman Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 6:24 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,



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