



City of Gahanna

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Meeting Minutes Parks & Recreation Board

Chrissy Kaminski
Kevin McGinn, Chair
Daphne Moehring, Vice Chair
Donna Simmons, Secretary
Eric Miller
Jan Ross
Ken Shepherd

Nichole Butler, Clerk

Wednesday, October 9, 2024

7:00 PM

Gahanna Golf Course Clubhouse

A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Vice Chair Moehring called the October 9, 2024 meeting to order at 7:02 PM. The Agenda was published on October 4, 2024.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: 6 - Chrissy Kaminski, Eric Miller, Daphne Moehring, Jan Ross, Ken Shepherd and Donna Simmons

Absent: 1 - Kevin McGinn

Staff in attendance: Stephania Ferrell, Director of Parks & Recreation; Chris Skidmore, Recreation Supervisor Youth and Family; Amy Moneypenny, Recreation Coordinator; Nichole Butler, Clerk

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Miller, seconded by Simmons, that the September 11, 2024 minutes be approved as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Kaminski, Miller, Moehring, Ross, Shepherd and Simmons

Absent: 1 - McGinn

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D. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

Director Ferrell requested that the item for Youth Programming and Day camps update be moved before old business. Director Ferrell requested

that the 2025 Operational Budget be added to old business.

A motion was made by Simmons, seconded by Miller, to approve the amended agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Kaminski, Miller, Moehring, Ross, Shepherd and Simmons

Absent: 1 - McGinn

E. HEARING OF VISITORS

Vice Chair Moehring provided Director Ferrell the opportunity to provide any comments prior to hearing of visitors. Ferrell stated that similar to the September meeting, she would like to provide an overarching update. Ferrell stated that the Action Sports Park was a preliminary planning effort that was initiated by the city in July of 2024 with the proposal including action park items. She stated that the location that was being evaluated was Lower McCorkle Park, however due to community feedback, the city will no longer be moving forward with the site at Lower McCorkle as an option for that potential development. She stated that the city will continue to evaluate elements of an Action Park, however the site is undetermined.

Tyler Abrams of 105 Brookhill Dr. and representing the Gahanna Soccer Association (GSA) stated that recently they have come into many challenges in their commitments to the field conditions and the code that they have set in their partnership with the City of Gahanna. He states that the association feels that many of their concerns and requests that have been brought forward have gone unheard and is present in the meeting to bring those in front of the Parks and Recreation Board. Abrams states that the maintenance of Headley Park is one of the issues that they are currently having. He states that the park is city owned however the fields and goals are maintained by GSA and they are having issues with other groups and the public utilizing the fields and goals without prior approval. Abrams states that there was previously signage in the park stating these rules, along with how to connect with someone to inquire about renting, and the rule regarding no Dogs being allowed at the fields during games and practices. Abrams states that the GSA is receiving a lot of repercussions and public scrutiny due to no signage in that it is hard to enforce if there is not publicly accessed information. He states that he would like to offer a reciprocating board seat on the GSA Board so that someone from the Parks and Recreation department can better understanding the needs of the community.

Michael Heitzman, 180 Rivers Edge Way, states that over the last several weeks he has taken time to learn about Parks and Recreation in Gahanna. He stated that he would encourage the Parks and Recreation Board, the residents, the City Council to review the Comprehensive

Parks and Recreation Plan and the priority that the residents places on amenities that the residents want to see in Gahanna. Heitzman stated that he did not want to negate what the residents want in regards to the skate park, and does believe it is owed to that group to find a location where that can happen. Heitzman states he appreciates the Parks and Recreation Board members, the City Council Members and spoke with them regarding their concerns. He requested that the Parks and Recreation Board along with Director Ferrell share their perspective on the Action Sports Park project as they did not have a chance to receive that at the last meeting.

Dan Slyby, 3670 Old Ridenour Rd., stated that he lives down the street from Lower McCorkle. He states that he believes the area is better left untouched and that not everything requires a human footprint. Slyby stated that the animals deserve their area to live and enjoy the peace and quiet.

Jenny Hecker, 211 Kamilah Lane stated that she is impressed with the residents who rallied around to make something happen and hopes that it does not stop with this instance. She stated that the teens in Gahanna need a place to go, because without a place to go, the teenagers will be out potentially causing trouble and making others mad. Hecker stated that she hopes the city would consider Carpenter and Hamilton Rd lot as it was recently for sale, and she believes that the location is ideal being close to the freeway. Hecker states that she is working with some people in the community to find private funding to supplement what the city is prepared to spend for the park and is also looking for grants and different foundations.

Hans Weisheimer, 3560 Olde Ridenour Rd. stated that the wooded area in Lower McCorkle is a treasure and believes that there are thoughtful ways that the site can be improved. He thanked the staff for taking the comments and feedback and being willing to do a course correction. Weisheimer states that he hopes the action park can move forward in a thoughtful and productive way.

Richard Blaes, of 200 Founders Court, thanked Mayor Jadwin, City Council, Director Ferrell and the Parks and Recreation Board on listening to the community on the matter of the Action Park. He was thankful that after the last meeting, and his commentary on speeding down Olde Ridenour, he noticed the next day there was a speed monitoring sign on the road, which told him that the city was listening. Blaes also requested that the streets be swept by the city. Blaes stated that he appreciated what the representative from GSA had to say, and that when he spoke with coaches that were down at Lower McCorkle,

they told him that the field was not well maintained and had not been rolled or painted all year. Blaes requested that the field be rolled and painted.

F. OLD BUSINESS

2025 Operational Budget

Moehring stated that Director Ferrell handed out the 2025 Operational Budget requests at the September meeting. Moehring asked if the requests provide what the department needs to be successful. Ferrell stated that it does, as each division within the department presents their requests in response to the programs, the needs or the work that needs to be accomplished in the upcoming year along with the capacity the staff has to complete the requested items, and these are all taken into consideration for the budget requests that are being presented.

Moehring stated that she had concerns as to if the department was being provided with an adequate budget to help maintain fields and facilities like the concerns presented by the Gahanna Soccer Association. Ferrell stated that the staffing budget is not included in the report, however with the growth of the staffing over the last five years, and as the staffing grows, and training is done, staff will begin to be able to better manage the assets the city has such as mowing, lining, maintenance of fields and right size the assets to match the expectation.

Moehring asked what the jump in tech services requests was. Ferrell stated that the department hopes to introduce a new software to manage waivers across not only day passes, but all programs and facility rentals that will allow a more user-friendly approach to completing these apart from many of the paper and pdf forms currently in use.

Master Plan Action Plan Update

Ferrell stated that the updated Action Plan is available as an attachment and that any updates were provided in red. Ferrell stated that the department will be submitting for a technical assistance grant thru Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC). Ferrell noted that the grant will help with the interdepartmental functions of the Geographical Information Systems regarding the trails.

Master Plan Action Plan

H. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS

G. NEW BUSINESS**Youth Programming and Day Camps 2024**

Director Ferrell introduced Chris Skidmore, Recreation Supervisor, and Amy Moneypenny, Recreation Coordinator to the board. Ferrell stated that the staff would be providing a recap of the 2024 season as well as a look ahead into 2025. Moneypenny highlighted the Storytime in Parks and Recreation program in collaboration with the Gahanna Public Library, which had a high interest with approximately 70-80 participants. Moneypenny stated that the department was able to offer winter family hikes, an Earth Day coloring contest which both were well attended. Moneypenny stated that the department was able to offer options such as Schools Out, Funs On for days out of school. Moneypenny stated that thanks to the donation of funds from the Gahanna Parks and Recreation Foundation, they were also able to offer Snow Cones at the Splashpad this summer and were able to hand out 300 snow cones for free , 1 Friday a month, to those attending the splashpad. Moneypenny highlighted that the department was able to partner with COSI for the solar eclipse and handed out over 500 learning kits around the eclipse, and in return offered a S.T.E.M. program in our parks. Moneypenny stated that an additional partnership in 2024 has been with Peace Lutheran Church. She noted that Peace Lutheran has offered space for programming that was previously done within the schools, however due to the difficulty navigating the systems in place and the expense of utilizing the schools, the partnership with Peace Lutheran has helped grow additional programs that the space is perfect for.

Skidmore stated that a priority for summer camp in 2024 was to update some of the facilities, as there was feedback from the staff that the improvement in the facilities would increase the ability to do their jobs more effectively. He stated that the staff were able to enjoy an updated office space in both facilities complete with air conditioning units in the offices. He also highlighted that the storage facilities were cleaned up and equipped with organization.

Skidmore stated that the staff were able to benefit from American Camping Association training. He highlighted that there were 50 total staff including 10 on the leadership team, 29 counselors, and 10 counselors in training. Skidmore highlighted that the staff were trained on behavior management, and many other mental health resources. He stated that all of the available positions were filled by May 2, 2024. He noted that they were able to offer a summer camp open house to allow for those parents and kids who may have questions prior to the session

starting, to help them become more familiar with the camp location, daily process and staff. He noted that at the end of each program, the staff send out an evaluation to parents for the programs, and provided some examples and reviews.

Skidmore highlighted that Camp Thrive was offered in 2024 as a teen camp. The department was able to offer 4 weeks in 2024, for ages 12-14 and plans to offer 8 weeks in 2025. Skidmore noted that the 254 Teen Center partnered with the City of Gahanna and allowed us to host Camp Thrive from that location. He stated that the department was also able to offer additional programs thru contract programming such as theater, arts and engineering. Skidmore noted that in 2025 their goal is to host Middle School Adventure Day with the 6th graders of all three middle schools, host additional spaces for summer camps, host more outdoor education courses for the community, as well as additional programming around mental health for youth, staff and families. He closed by noting the Law of Two Feet in that people have the right to plant their feet where they want to grow, and the staff should feel that they are supported here in Gahanna, as he has felt that since he started with the City. Skidmore thanked Director Ferrell for the support she provides the Youth and Family program staff and helping them bring their ideas to life.

Ross stated that she is happy to see the partnerships grow each year. Kaminski stated that her daughter is a camper and that she really enjoys it and still speaks highly of her counselors.

Youth and Family Program Update 2024

GASAC By-Laws update

Ferrell stated that provided in the agenda was the recommendation from the chair of Gahanna Active Senior Advisory Committee as well as a revision of the GASAC bylaws. Ferrell noted that the board had discussion as to whether the members of the board needed to be Gahanna residents. She stated that ultimately the board members decided that at least 5 of the members should be Gahanna residents.

GASAC By law update 2024

A motion was made by Ross, seconded by Kaminski, that the updated GASAC Bylaws be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Kaminski, Miller, Moehring, Ross, Shepherd and Simmons

Absent: 1 - McGinn

I. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ferrell stated that the 2023 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan is used as the guardrails for anything the department does. Ferrell stated that trails was a largely requested want and need by residents. Ferrell stated that the Big Walnut trail is nearing completion, and that the department was able to submit for additional funding in a grant thru MORPC for Attributable Funding to construct the trail from Rocky Fork to Pizzuro Park. Ferrell stated that the City wanted to make sure Gahanna was in a good position with connectivity even outside of trails, and was able to obtain funding thru the Ohio Department of Transportation to accomplish an Active Transportation Plan. Ferrell stated that the department also secured alternative funding for the trailhead at Academy Park to service the mountain bike trail. Ferrell noted that the cart paths at the golf course are also in the process of being redone as a long overdue project. Ferrell stated that the Master Plan is used to inform these projects. Ferrell noted that with the Action Park, an adventure park was identified in the needs and wants requests in the master plan. Ferrell noted that due to feedback from residents, the Lower McCorkle site is no longer being considered as an option for those assets. Ferrell noted that the consultants will continue to evaluate what Action Park means and what assets are most fitting for the need and want of the community, however they will no longer be assessing Lower McCorkle as a possibility. Ross asked if the referenced open house will still be taking place regarding the Action Park. Ferrell stated that the open house will still occur, however a date has not been set yet. Ferrell noted that the consultants will continue to evaluate and the department will continue to look for ways to serve the teen population. Kaminski stated that because the skateboarding community lost their park, it would be nice to make them whole again. Moehring requested an update on the Link to Literacy Trail. Ferrell stated that there are four easements that will be required in order to continue, Gahanna Jefferson Schools as well as the Library have already approved, however there are two private entities that the city is still waiting on the approval for but do not have anticipated concerns. Miller requested an update on the Aquatics Master Plan. Ferrell stated that the Aquatics Master Plan is based on the response of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, as an evaluation of the current aquatic facilities and needs of the community. Ferrell noted that the steering committee has met twice and will meet again in November. She stated that the focus of the October meeting was to review the survey results that went out to the public, and had over 800 respondents. Simmons asked if those steering committee meetings were open to the public. Ferrell stated that they are not, however the information from those meetings will be made available thru the report. Miller asked when the report is expected to be

completed. Ferrell stated that they expect it to be completed in the first quarter of 2025.

Directors Report September 2024

J. COMMITTEE REPORTS

i. Bicycle & Trail Advisory Committee (BTAC)- None

15296 ii. Gahanna Active Senior Advisory Committee (GASAC)

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Simmons stated that the Senior Expo took place on September 12, 2024 with over 40 vendors. Simmons stated that the next meeting is November 19, 2024 at 3:00 PM at the Gahanna Senior Center.

GASAC Minutes September 2024

Senior Expo Map

iii. Natural Resources Advisory Committee (NRAC)- None

K. POLL MEMBERS FOR COMMENT

i. Gahanna Parks & Recreation Foundation

Ross stated that the 2024 Hops and Vines event was the best year ever as far as funds raised. Miller stated that the Foundation is going to make changes to their bylaws in that currently all members must live in the Gahanna Jefferson School District. Miller stated that the new bylaws would allow two of the 13 members to live outside of the school district. Ross stated that the Foundation discussed the communication panels that are being installed at the parks. Ferrell stated that the ribbon cutting for the communication panels will take place on October 19, 2024 at 10:00 AM Sunpoint Park. Ferrell stated that the project was presented by a Special Education Coordinator from Gahanna Jefferson schools to allow non speaking or limited speaking individuals a way to communicate in the parks thru visuals. Ferrell stated that the panels were a collaboration thru Gahanna Jefferson Public Schools, Gahanna Jefferson Education Foundation, the Gahanna Parks and Recreation Foundation and the City of Gahanna.

ii. School District Update

Moehring stated that the district is in the process of updating their five-year forecast. She noted that the grade card from the state has been issued and Gahanna Jefferson has been given 4 stars, which is a great accomplishment.

iii. Veteran's Advisory Committee

Shepherd stated that he emailed an update from the committee to the Parks and Recreation Board. Miller noted that the ceremony for Veterans Day will take place on November 11, 2024 at 11 AM. Moehring noted that the event is always well celebrated and the committee does a beautiful job organizing the event.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Nichole Butler
Clerk

*APPROVED by the Parks & Recreation Board, this
day of 2024.*

Kevin McGinn