

WHITEHALL PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

January 10, 2018

The meeting of the Whitehall Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman John Fetters. In attendance: Mike Adkins, Chris Bolich, Tiffanie Charles, Fetters, Katie Quincel, Mark Schieber, Zach Wright, Director Shannon Sorrell, and Shannon Werner. Guests: Mayor Kim Maggard, Councilman Wes Kantor, Matt Golden, and Bob Straits.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance.

Mayor Kim Maggard stepped forward and administered the Whitehall Parks and Recreation Oath of Office to Commissioner Zach Wright.

To begin the re-organizational portion of the meeting, Director Sorrell opened the floor to nominations for chairperson. Charles nominated John Fetters for chairperson, seconded by Bolich. There being no further nominations, nominations were closed and a voice vote was taken. All members answered in the affirmative and John Fetters was re-elected chairperson of the Whitehall Parks and Recreation Commission for 2018.

Next, Fetters opened the floor to nominations for vice-chairperson. Quincel nominated Mike Adkins, seconded by Charles. There being no further nominations, nominations were closed and a voice vote was taken. All members answered in the affirmative and Mike Adkins was re-elected vice-chairperson of the Whitehall Parks and Recreation Commission for 2018.

Quincel moved, seconded by Charles, to change the time for regular Commission meetings to the second Wednesday of the month at 6:00 PM and the motion carried 7 – 0. Additionally, the Commission agreed to attend the Big Walnut Trail open house on February 7th in lieu of the regular February meeting and the July Park Party in lieu of the regular July meeting.

As the last item of re-organization, the Commission addressed the Revised Rules of Procedure. Fetters revisited the possibility of including an attendance policy. He suggested setting a minimum attendance rate that could be excused if a member was attending another city/civic meeting. Wright voiced his dissent for an attendance requirement and said a poor attendance record could be rectified when a commissioner was up for re-appointment. Quincel pointed out that it becomes a real issue when the body struggles to have the required quorum to conduct business.

Quincel moved, seconded by Schieber, that the revised Rules of Procedure include a requirement of a two-thirds positive attendance record within any rolling 12-month period. On a roll call vote: Adkins – yes; Bolich – yes; Charles – yes; Fetters – yes; Quincel – yes; Schieber – yes; Wright – no. The motion carried 6 – 1.

Charles moved, seconded by Bolich, to approve the revised Rules of Procedure and the motion carried 7 – 0.

Next, Fetters introduced the newest Commissioner, Mark Schieber. Schieber told the room a little about himself, and everyone in the room also introduced themselves as well.

Charles moved, seconded by Adkins, to approve the minutes for the December 6, 2017 meeting and the motion carried 6 – 0, with Schieber abstaining.

The Commission reviewed the following items: employees' wages/ personal service for 11/24/17 through 12/21/17; bills and refunds for December 2017; and Trust Fund, budget, and income for December 2017.

Wright inquired after several bills. Sorrell explained the department has paid for professional photography at city-wide events as part of a cooperative exchange to promote the city. She cited the example where the service department extended a substantial amount of park paving work as part of the Etna Rd. project. Sorrell also explained the department has paid the YMCA to extend/expand their after-school program for high schoolers, rather than the department attempting to create a new, competing program.

Mayor Maggard added that in December, the city added an additional \$300k to the department's budget for play structures.

Sorrell thanked the Mayor and Councilman Kantor for their financial support of the department's 2018 project list and goals.

Director's Report:

Clean Ohio Conservation Fund – With the Commission's support, she was appointed to the screening committee. Sorrell is very optimistic that the City's application to fund a \$500k+ tributary restoration at WCP may be awarded. The department will be applying for several other large grants.

Central Ohio Greenways – This is the multi-use/ bike trail system that has been growing in Central Ohio since the 1960s. Columbus funded an alignment study to complete the portion of the Big Walnut Trail that will run through Whitehall. The Big Walnut Trail, once fully constructed, will be the north-south connection for the region's eastside corridor. While it would be beautiful to run a trail entirely along the Big Walnut Creek, it would be financially prohibitive due to the terrain and property ownership. The alignment study, done by OHM, has developed the most feasible path through Whitehall. The City's trail portion would extend down North Hamilton Road, through Whitehall Community Park to Broad Street and Hamilton Road. It continues down Hamilton to Fairway Boulevard all the way to Main Street and Columbus' Big Walnut Park. In addition to being a boon to the community, it could be a highly desirable amenity to home buyers and businesses looking at Whitehall. The study will be presented to the public at an open house on February 7th.

Bolich moved, seconded by Charles, to adopt the Big Walnut Trail alignment study and the motion carried 7 – 0.

Parks and Recreation 2018 Events – Commissioners were provided an updated draft event list through August. This includes: Splashpad events (similar to 2017); 10 Music in the Park concerts; and 5 “Party in the Parks” with the first one scheduled for April 21st at WCP. Not yet included on the list are 12 senior programs, lunchtime walking programs, and financial literacy programs from KEMBA. Sorrell is scheduled to meet with representatives from WCS and the YMCA to discuss/ finalize summer camps.

Lime Bikes – This is a company the City was introduced to via MORPC. It is a “dockless” bike sharing program that has been very successful in low-income regions. Rates average \$1.00 for a 30-minute ride and there is no cost to the City. Sorrell has just introduced Lime Bikes to the other City directors and leadership and it is an option we will continue to explore.

Parks Maintenance Facility (Armory) – The roof replacement project will go to bid soon, and the department continues to explore options and pricing to resume work on the building addition.

Paving – Paving for parking lots and WCP entry / roadway is out to bid now.

YMCA – The JPAC (Joint Program Advisory Committee) is still in the process of formation and we are trying to find a group that is demographically representative. There will be one representative from Commission (the Commission needs to decide who that will be), but most members will be selected from the community. The goal is to complete architecture selection by the end of the first quarter and to be up and running in the summer/ fall of 2019.

Hiring – The full-time parks maintenance position will be posted through January 21st. Over 40 applications have been received to date. This will be a weekend/ evening position and there are internal applicants.

Awards – Whitehall Parks and Recreation received two awards from the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association (OPRA): 2nd place for the Urban Park Ranger Program (Law Enforcement Category) and 3rd place for the Splashpad (Capital Improvements \$1M – \$2.5M Category). Sorrell, Werner, and Golden will receive the awards during the OPRA State Conference at the end of the month.

Shelter Rental Policy – The department has made recommended revisions to the rental times and prices, and included a damage deposit. Rental times have been split into two time slots, which allows for twice the rental opportunities and the damage deposit will discourage the most common negative behaviors.

Adkins moved, seconded by Charles, to adopt the updated shelter rental policy and the motion carried 7 – 0.

Charles requested a kiosk or improved signage to indicate/post reservations at the shelter.

There being no further business, Charles moved, seconded by Adkins, and the meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

To the best of my knowledge these minutes are true and correct.

Chairperson

Prepared by:

Shannon Werner