

## Parks and Recreation Commission meeting

September 11, 2023

### Minutes

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm. Members Mount, Tawil, and Graham were in attendance along with Council Member Jones and staff members Proud and Moehlis.

Citizen comments included an inquiry to Council Member Jones about plan for refurbishing the playground equipment at the Youth Sports Park. Proud and Moehlis both spoke to frustration with playground at this site. The equipment has not held up as other equipment has in the park system playgrounds and the company went out of business several years ago so the City has no longer been able to get parts so any fixes have been with other playground systems and haven't always worked well. The playground was installed in 2012. Industry standard is 20-25 years for a playground but this particular location will need to be moved up on the timeline. Currently, parks staff are trying to work with another company for parts replacements and for restoration of paint as a top gap measure. This playground serves as the smaller of the two playgrounds that will eventually be at this site. The 2<sup>nd</sup> playground is planned for the area at the entrance to the park where the green shed currently stands and to the west of that area. This will be planned to be a larger playground with potential for a small spray park here as well.

Minutes were approved with a motion by Mount, second by Tawil.

Commission then took two meetings with playground company representatives.

The first company was Landscape Structures with Diane Witt. Landscape Structures built the piece at Kiddie Korral Park installed in 2020. Proud has also worked with Landscape Structures on two playground structures installed at Central Elementary School.

Witt shared information about the company including how Landscape Structures approaches design with their own inhouse designers. She also shared that Landscape Structures, with headquarters and manufacturing plant located in Delano, Minnesota, builds each playground to suit. They do not have warehouses of playgrounds in stock but instead build each one as an order is placed.

Landscape Structures is an employee owned company and owner has done a lot of research on how children play and how to provide the most play value. They believe in making sure all play events are interconnecting.

Warranty for Landscape Structures is 100 year limited warranty on posts, 3-8 year warranty on most playground pieces/features. Designers look at access, age development and appropriate play, multi-generational play, and making independent choices, among some of the things that go into planning.

Looked at a few examples such as Play Booster which serves a lot of children at once, spring riders, Omni spinners. Witt talked about shade being desired but will be a large part of the cost at \$70,000 in the shown examples. Witt also showed several other examples including interactive pulse tables that combines a gaming experience with outside play.

Landscape Structures is currently running 27-29 weeks in lead time and generally takes 3-4 weeks for design process. Landscape Structures recommends temperatures for install be a minimum of 40 degrees or higher and less than 90 degrees.

A staff included install will run about \$5,000-\$6,000. Turn key installation runs \$25,000 to \$28,000. Mount asked what pieces are selected most often. Witt said she'd seen integrated panels being used more and more so that those with sensory processing disorders felt more comfortable on playgrounds.

Commission met next with Karen Sherman with Play Craft. The City has worked with Play Craft for the playground at Creekside Sports Park and on the dinosaur dig and musical elements at Kiddie Korral.

Sherman talked about features of the Play Craft family including the thickest powder coating in the industry and the new rough texture that can be applied to the poles and railings. She also talked about poured in place, if that was selected, could be a feature itself. She showed several different options that could work with the space at North Ridge Park and maximize access while creating spaces for other activities such as outdoor ping pong or bags areas. She also talked about different choices such as ropes and climbing apparatus provide a big play factor for less money than some of the other pieces.

Lead time for Play Craft is running about 12-14 weeks. Sherman recommended looking at the Play Craft Points Promotion which comes out late September and provides savings if ordered by December 1. Sherman will check on this program and get information to Proud.

Commission looked at several of the examples. Several swing options were shown and discussed, several zip lines that provided a longer experience on a zip line and opportunity to have parallel lines. Commission liked the hammock swing and the bookstack climbers. Also discussed that face to face swinging is important for the deaf community to experience.

Sherman also offered ways the price could be reduced by choosing what areas received rubberized surfacing and what areas could remain mulch.

After interviews concluded, Commission discussed both companies and selected to move forward with Play Craft.

There were additional comments for Council person Jones.

Proud referred Commission members to comments provided in the agenda notes and provided here.

From Agenda Notes:

A Dovetail Recreation Area community meeting was held on Tuesday, August 29 with nine neighbors in attendance. Both Parks and Recreation and Stormwater participated in the meeting. It was a productive meeting with the following topics discussed:

General overview of Dovetail Pond and conveyance to City

Wetland evolvment and clarifying borders of designated areas

Retention Basin Drainage Area

Auburn Ridge development

Erosion and Sediment Control – past, current, future

Update on EPA Report for Auburn Ridge

Water Quality Features and Natural Resources

Wetlands, Soil Quality Restoration, and Stream Work

Conveyed outlots to park system

Timber Stand Improvement and hillside seeding

Outlot D – Future Trailhead

Fee in lieu Program

McClure Engineering Study for stormwater improvements

Possible silt basin at head of wetlands

Ideas for improvements and keeping wetlands in designated areas.

Dovetail Improvement Plan

Controlling poisonous plant material

Outcompeting cattails

Timber Stand Improvement and Nature Trail

Small Water Craft Launch Area

## **Projects**

Parks and Recreation will be leading the process for updating the City monument signs at all the major facilities. We'll be working with Confluence to review signage in Coralville, review precedents and establish desired aesthetic, review and give feedback to Confluence who will develop final sign concept and estimated budget.

The master plan for the West Land Use Park land will begin this fall. I'd like to have a Parks and Recreation Commission member be a part of the process which will include 3-5 meetings likely late afternoons. Let me know if you would like to be a part of this.

## **Upcoming Events:**

Tuesday, September 26, 4:30 – 6:30 pm. North Ridge Pavilion and Playground Open House. Event is celebrating the Pavilion being open for 20 years and it will be an opportunity for the community to give input on new playground choices.

Sunday, October 1, the official 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary party will be held at Xtream Arena from 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. with something for all ages.

Division Updates:

Parks – Alex Buhmeyer

Parks- The Parks Department hired a new Athletic Fields Coordinator from the City of Iowa City, Eli Elliot. We hosted numerous festivals (4<sup>th</sup>, 150<sup>th</sup>s, Fry) including RABRAI's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the largest to date. Long time seasonal staff member Abdoulaye Barry was also hired as a full time union staff member.

Forestry- The Forestry Department continues with the 150<sup>th</sup> tree planting initiative with support from the IDNR Community Forestry Grant. We were recognized as a 30 year Tree City USA along with another Growth Award for our excellence in urban forestry including the REAP funded Coralville Timber Stand Improvement project at Colony and Dovetail.

Building Maintenance- The Building Maintenance Department began its HVAC controller and programming replacement project. This is a 5-7 year process upgrading public buildings HVAC systems involving BM staff, technicians, and multiple departments. We also hired a new union staff member Hager Ibrihim.

Recreation – Amy Erickson

We look forward to celebrating the North Ridge Pavilion 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on Tuesday, 9/26 from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. Join us to learn about the venue and potential rental options, potential lay-outs for events, North Ridge Park playground enhancements, and enjoy some refreshments.

The recreation division scheduling and time-clock will be going digital on Thursday, 9/07 using the When I Work app. Schedules were posted on the app for staff to review as of 9/05 (previously provided to staff) and staff will officially start clocking in and clocking out using When I Work on 9/07/23.

Fall programming for youth and adults are underway. We have a number of new programming opportunities for youth and adults this fall. We are currently actively hiring for lifeguards, swim lesson staff, youth counselors, concessions, and youth sports positions.

Level 1 swim lessons are once again offered at no-charge to Coralville residents, utilizing our scholarship dollars to provide local youth the opportunity to learn how to swim. We had 38 participants utilize this program during the summer of 2023 and we estimate 60-70% of those participants are immigrant families.

Golf – Sean McCarty

Golf play continues to be high with sold old days happening frequently. Course will need extra aeration and fertilization to help keep turf in good shape after so much play this summer.

Staff will work to get about 20 dead ash trees on the course down this fall.

There were no additional Commission comments. Proud asked about planting the tree in honor of Fred Fevold's years of service on the Commission and tentatively set time to do before the next Commission meeting.

Motion was made by Tawil, seconded by Mount to adjourn.