

## THE MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC RECREATION COMMISSION

January 15, 2008

The regular meeting of the Public Recreation Commission was held on January 15, 2008 at 4:00pm at the LeBlond Recreation Center, 2335 Eastern Avenue, with the following members present: Ms. Driehaus and Messrs. Fultz, Smith and Moeddel, with Ms. Driehaus presiding. Staff in attendance: Mmes. Barnes, Cox, Simmons, Shannon, and Benjamin and Messrs. Merrifield, Bigham, Koopman, Thomas, Carlisle, Williams, Pierson, and Celsor.

### MINUTES

Rev. Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Fultz, to approve the minutes of the December 18, 2007 Public Recreation Commission meeting as submitted.

Motion passed.

### CORRESPONDENCE

#### E-Mail from Phyllis Calhoun from the Board of Education

Karen Schoenig received an e-mail from Phyllis Calhoun from the Board of Education advising that Catherine Ingram was reappointed to the CRC Commission at the Board of Education's January 7<sup>th</sup> organizational meeting. This item was received for filing.

#### Letter to Michael Thomas from George A. Jackson, L.R.M. Treasurer/Coach

Mike Thomas received a letter of appreciation from George A. Jackson for Marketia Hoff's knowledge, experience, and professionalism which is exemplified by the way she deals with situations posed by Athletic Directors, Youth Organization Representatives, etc. This item was received for filing.

#### Letter from Marilyn Evans, Executive Director Communities United for Action to Dr. Norman Merrifield

Marilyn Evans wrote a thank you letter to Dr. Merrifield for speaking at the Communities United for Action Annual Congress on December 1, 2007. This item was received for filing.

#### Recognition of Playgrounds

Sawyer Point has been recognized by Cincinnati Magazine as 2007 “Best of the City” for the *Every Child’s Playground*. The Pleasant Ridge 1000 Hands Playground received recognition as the “Best of The City” Climbing Course Playground for 2007.

Letter to Norman Merrifield from Cathie Kuhl

Dr. Merrifield received a letter from Cathie Kuhl commenting on the timeliness of the volleyball schedules and registration information posted on our website and the helpfulness of Diane Sherman in our Athletics department. This item was received for filing.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Cincinnati Reds’ Ballfield Signs

Copies of the signs were distributed to Commission members by Charley Frank of the Reds’ Community Fund. These signs will recognize the partnership between CRC and the Reds’ at the ballfields where the Reds’ Community Fund is doing work. Mr. Frank thanked CRC for our efforts to work with the Reds’. Ms. Driehaus stated that these signs reflect what had been discussed in the previous meeting and that the Commission is grateful.

Mr. Fultz moved, seconded by Rev. Smith, to approve the ballfield signs as submitted.

Motion passed.

2008 Director’s Goals

Dr. Merrifield presented and reviewed his 2008 Director’s Goals to the Commission.

- Develop a revenue plan to increase the Department’s Operating and Capital Funding Levels
- Continue to attend Community Council Meetings to promote the 2007 Aquatic Plan
- Assist our Recreation Foundation secure an Executive Director by December 31, 2008
- Begin Strategic Planning for Indoor/Outdoor Maintenance and Community Recreation Center Programs

- Consider in the near future a Statistically valid survey to determine citizen's willingness to pay for recreational services (aquatics) and how much
- Begin Customer Service Enrichment Program
- Provide City residents with (1) new City Wide Holiday program

Ms. Driehaus noted that it is nice to see CRC representatives at the Community Council meetings. It means a lot to the Community to have Recreation represented at the meetings. Mr. Moeddel commented that we need to talk about ways to obtain revenue. Dr. Merrifield advised that our Foundation is very motivated and anxious to promote fund raising for our Department.

Program Highlight – East Region (Mark Celsor)

Mr. Celsor introduced Laura Benjamin, Community Center Director at the Mt. Auburn Center. Ms. Benjamin provided a power point presentation on the Mt. Auburn Center programs. The Center is a part of the school now but in June 2008 they will become separate.

The Mt. Auburn Community Center has several strong partnerships. The Community Council receives a grant to fund the Earn and Learn Program. Teens are paid to come to the center. The program helps them to be more job-worthy. The Mt. Auburn Chamber of Commerce helps with funding summer concerts and other projects. The Christ Hospital provides a grant for memberships. Their partnership with the Cincinnati Zoo provides participants a free visit to the Festival of Lights.

Mt. Auburn provides a great boxing program. They have around 34 boxers. One of their boxers went to the Olympics. The boxing program is looking for a home during center renovations.

There are over 100 participants daily in the drop-in program and Mt. Auburn provides the free snack program.

Ms. Driehaus thanked Ms. Benjamin for her presentation on the wonderful programs at Mt. Auburn.

NEW BUSINESS

Airport Playfield Presentation

Chris Bigham introduced Brett DeCurtins, Tennis Pro at Five Seasons. Mr. Bigham gave a short history on the Airport Playfield. There are two buildings; the Tennis Building and the Land of Make Believe Building. CRC has no operating funds for these buildings. They are subsidized by adult sports.

Due to retirements, staff recommends amending the golf contract to include the Tennis and Land of Make Believe operations to be under the control of Casper Golf. CRC does not readily have a full time staff person with knowledge of the sport of tennis, tournaments and a true passion for the game. The tennis community has been concerned about who will replace Karen Montavon. Ms. Montavon recommended a tennis professional take over the operation contractually and introduced Brett DeCurtins to staff. Staff is concerned about Mr. DeCurtins not having the management support needed to continue the success of the program. Due to this concern, staff contacted Billy Casper Golf to determine if BCG could provide the management support to Mr. DeCurtins. After discussion, BCG, CRC and Mr. DeCurtins met to see if there was a possible relationship that could be agreed upon to reduce fragmentation of the Playfield and also provide a seamless transition to our customers. All parties felt that this was the best option for our program and customers. This relationship would be reevaluated in the fall of 2008 to further improve the quality of the Playfield.

Ms. Driehaus asked how this would affect the bike trail. Mr. Pacella advised that use of the bike trail has really dropped off and that maybe the bike rental will come back after the mini golf opens. Ms. Driehaus asked how the relationship would work between Billy Casper Golf and CRC. Mr. Bigham replied that the BCG contract would be amended to mirror the current golf relationship. Mr. Fultz asked when the BCG contract would expire and Mr. Bigham stated that the contract runs through December 31, 2011. Mr. Moeddel asked if more tennis programming could be done at the Playfield. Mr. DeCurtins answered that he would like to add to the programming to create a more vibrant facility. Ms. Driehaus asked how many employees we have at the Playfield. Mr. Bigham stated that we have no full time staff and around 12 part-time employees. Mr. DeCurtins advised that he would intend to ask most of the part-time people to return to work for him.

Commission has many questions and would like more information on the proposed plan. Mr. Pacella stated that BCG would like to make Reeves the best experience the customer can receive. Mr. Bigham advised that this was being introduced to Commission today for informational purposes only and we would need to have a special meeting for approval. He would like to call a special meeting in two weeks.

It was decided to call a special meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> of January at 4:00pm in the Main Office Main Boardroom.

#### Cadbury Schweppes Contract

Mr. Fultz moved, seconded by Mr. Moeddel, to approve the execution of the agreement with Cadbury Schweppes Bottling Group as the Family of Events Carbonated Soft Drinks Official Sponsor as recommended by the selection committee.

Motion passed.

#### Oakley Recreation Area Master Plan

Commission was provided copies of the Oakley Recreation Area Master Plan. Jeff Koopman advised that they had started meeting with the Community on this master plan about three years ago. The Community Council approved the plan in September 2007. Mr. Koopman showed a power point presentation of the master plan and reviewed it with the Commissioners.

Rev. Smith expressed concern about the need for adequate parking. Mr. Koopman advised that we don't have a good solution to this concern. Mr. Moeddel stated that it is important for the Community to be aware of maintenance expenses related to the plan. Mr. Koopman stated that there is an endowment for maintenance.

Mr. Fultz moved, seconded by Mr. Moeddel, to approve the Oakley Recreation Area Master Plan as submitted.

Motion passed.

#### Capital Project Update

Jeff Koopman provided copies of the Technical Services Division Capital Project Update January 2008 and reviewed with Commission.

Ms. Driehaus asked if the Community Council was aware of the plan for the Oskamp Pool demolition. Mr. Koopman and Mr. Thomas replied that they

had met with the Community and they are aware. Mr. Thomas stated that they will go back out to talk with the Community and update them.

The “Fish” Concept

A presentation of the “Fish” Concept was given by Doris Simmons and Mark Celsor. The “Fish” Concept is a customer service tool that promotes being happy on the job which carries over to our customers. Attitude makes all the difference in the world. We are going to put this concept to work in our Department. We want to make it a part of our organizational culture. This presentation was given at our last All Staff Meeting also.

Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs Grant

Seventeen centers participated in the Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs program in 2007 and we expect the same number in 2008.

Rev. Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Fultz, to approve the application for and acceptance of the Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs Grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources in the amount of \$10,000 for 2008.

Motion passed.

Field Trips

Rev. Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Fultz, to approve the Field Trip Requests as submitted.

Motion passed.

COMMISSION MEETING

The next meeting of the Public Recreation Commission will be held on Tuesday, January 29th, 2008 at 4:00pm at the Main Office Boardroom.

Meeting Adjourned.

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Denise M. Driehaus, President

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Norman C. Merrifield, Ed. D., Director