REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, February 9th, 2022

PRESENT: Abousaleh; Aljahmi; Murray; Othman; Platz; Schobert; Sczomak; Seidel; Smith; Woodyard

EXCUSED: Abusalah; Bruce; Cialone; Fidama; Gomolak; Hartley; Kreger; McLogan; Ruselowski; Sherman; Siciliano

ALSO PRESENT: Dan Plamondon; Interim Director of Dearborn Recreation & Parks
Amanda McClanahan, COO, City of Dearborn
Samraa Luqman; Dearborn Resident

Meeting called to order by Vice-Chair Platz at 7:04pm.

Being no quorum, agenda or January minutes were not approved.

Interim Director’s Report

- Preparing onboarding of new Recreation and Parks Director, Sean Fletcher.
- **Dearborn Hills** – Interim Director Plamondon continues to serve as interim course manager. Working on a possible arrangement with Davey Golf to run course operation.
  Working on log jam mitigation.
  Events continuing in clubhouse. Most recently *Tale of Our Cities*.
  Gearing up for new season.
- **Camp Dearborn** – working through getting tents offline. Working on new phase of what this area should look like. Noted that Mayor contacted some residents regarding tent situation. Advance renters being offered different sites or refunds. Some tent sites being converted to rustic camping. Tent removal is complex and detailed. Working on utilizing DPW to remove tents as well as putting it up for bid with an outside contractor.
  *Q*- will there be an upgrade in electric hook-ups?
  *A.* – Yes, but most likely in 2023.
The cement pads will stay in place. There will be an increase in charges for TV2 spaces. Currently six dollars per day. It will be a two-year phase in. Hoping to meet with Mayor’s office regarding how to approach renters about this. Issues with online registration system, which is managed through third party. Registrations have been very strong. Prime weekends already booked up.

**Project Updates – Roof Renovation** – working on getting solicitations for the roof renovation. Grant has time frame and an extension is likely to be applied for. Estimate is $1.25 million, which took place in 2021. Multiple roofs on building. Solar panels not being considered. Metal roofs do not require replacing at this time. Most of the roof is the original roof, which was installed in 1999 and had a twenty-year warranty.

**Theatre Curtain Wall** – leaks in theatre over the years. Separate solicitation going out. An engineering/architecture firm is being hired to provide a scope of work. This will need to occur before the roof project can be initiated.

There was a question regarding department restructuring. No specifics are known at this time. Concerns voiced by commissioners regarding the impact of losing experienced staff.

Concern voiced by commissioner regarding course maintenance at Dearborn Hills being below par. Discussion regarding impact of heavy rains. Concern about Davey Golf as course manager. Noted by Interim Director Plamondon that there is a strong grounds team at the Golf Course.

**Rec Dept Luncheon w/Mayor** – went well. Approximately sixty staff and Key City Administration attended. Discussion regarding Camp Dearborn and infrastructure issue.

COO McClanahan thanked commissioners and stated that Mayor is very committed to a strong Recreation and Parks program. Has worked diligently as a legislator in obtaining funding for Recreation and Parks. Noted that incoming director is very committed to having a great recreational experience for all residents.

There was a question regarding if there was a line item related to the pools. COO McClanahan stated the Mayor views the pools as a critical community resource and the support will be presented. Specifics will be available as the budget nears completion.

There was a question regarding the previous use of splash pads as a substitute for a pool. COO McClanahan said she would take the concern about splash pads back to the Mayor. Splash pads were stated as not being consistent with the Mayor’s vision.
Cultural Arts Committee

Commissioner Sczomak reported the committee met yesterday. It was well attended.

**Mayor’s Arts Awards** – Date for awards presentation is May 11\textsuperscript{th} at 7pm in Studio A. Working with Michael Berry Center Graphic Design class to develop a logo for promotional purposes. Committee is working on other components of the ceremony, including entertainment and reception. Nomination forms will be online, at organization websites on social media and at the Center. Seven categories, including a Mayor’s Selection.

**Padzieski Gallery** – “Resilience” exhibit went very well. Had only a closing reception due to Covid issues. Well attended. Noted that Devan Scillian attended and was very impressed with the exhibit and the Center.

New exhibit “The Collab Project”. Show opens Saturday from 5pm to 8pm. Expecting a good turnout.

Gearing for big school showing in April. School faculty will have their own show in the Centennial Library.

The Arab-American National Museum is reopening after being closed due to Covid for two years tomorrow February 10\textsuperscript{th}, at 9am.

Sports Banquet

Commissioner Abousaleh reported that there is another critical deadline of March 1\textsuperscript{st} approaching for the Hall of Fame nominations. There was discussion of social media blitz to publicize the banquet and nominations. Interim Director Plamondon said he would be in touch with staff regarding social media coverage. The next meeting for the Hall of Fame is March 9\textsuperscript{th}, time to be determined. Deadline for ads is June 1\textsuperscript{st}.

Concern noted that some previously paid ads did not get put into programs due to the cancellation of the onsite event. Interviews would be conducted in person if possible.

A question was raised regarding if there will be any restrictions on attendance. Not known at this time. There will be consultation with the Mayor's office prior the event.

It was noted that the schools are closed first week of May due to Eid.

Commissioner Abousaleh noted that commissioners have volunteered to be speakers at the event. He encouraged commissioners to consider a keynote speaker, and to consider musicians and student presenters of the physical awards.

New Business

**Homecoming** – preliminary meeting regarding Homecoming yesterday with a number of departments. Consensus is to not hold Homecoming at Ford Field but to hold it on the central campus of FCPAC. Doing a space study in the next couple of weeks. Entertainers, beer vendors, fireworks and carnival awaiting confirmation. Concerns regarding staffing and possibly scaling back this year.
Q- What was the objection to Ford Field?
A. Issues regarding flooding and damage to property. City is awaiting a response to state regarding an alternate site on Michigan Avenue. Closing a major roadway for a week would be a critical change in transportation within the city.

Vice Chair Platz welcomed back Commission Othman. Noted that Commissioner Sherman will not be renewing his appointment. Commissioners Bruce and Cialone will also not be renewing.

Samraa Luqman thanked Commissioner Woodyard for connecting with the schools for the Green School Yards initiative. Neighborhood Association is interested in doing a mural in the elementary school. Looking for grants that will assist in creating playscape or natural sculpting. Discussed Commissioner tour of South End that occurred this Fall and the viewing of the CSX property as a possible site for splash pad. Concern that the lot was not shown to the best of its potential and there was misinformation regarding the property presented to the commissioners. Ms. Luqman recommended purchasing the property with a contingency clause regarding any required clean up. She stated that the community is highly in favor of placing the splash pad at the CSX site.

A question was raised regarding CSX’s commitment to engaging in any clean-up or their willingness to sell. Ms. Luqman said that CSX has indicated a willingness to sell.

A question was raised regarding nearby homes and if they would need to be demolished. Ms. Luqman said this would not be required.

There was a general discussion regarding the YABA lot versus the CSX lot. It was noted that the YABA lot was not as family-friendly as the CSX lot.

A question was raised as to why CSX had asked for a hold-harmless agreement. Ms. Luqman said that the lot could be used for residential housing and the city would be conducting tests on any lot that was purchased. If a problem was found the closing would not occur.

A question was raised if the lot was being used for storage. Ms. Luqman said she had resided nearby for almost forty years and that the lot was not used for storage. She stated nothing has been on the property except a ballfield.

Vice-Chair Platz stated that the Commission has been long supportive of the Splash Pad and the Splash Pad installation was placed in the Five-Year Master Plan.

Chair Murray asked what specifically could the Commission do as a recommending body to assist in facilitating the Splash Pad installation. Ms. Luqman stated that the Commission has more power than might be thought and could even move to remove the director and her concern was of the misinformation that had been given to the commission. It was noted by commissioners that the former director had not been noted to be actively attempting to thwart the installation of the splash pad on the CSX site. It was noted that the next step would be to meet with the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Aljahmi thanked the commissioners for visiting the potential splash pad sites and visiting other parks in the South End.

Chair Murray noted that the Commission is a recommending body and that historically recommendations that have been made may or may not be accepted by City Council.
Ms. Luqman stated that there was nothing more that the commission could do and just wanted to make it clear that there was misinformation given about the CSX property.

Vice Chair Platz stated if there if there was anything else the commission could do that the commission is available.

Multiple commissioners noted the value of the South End tour and the benefit of seeing first-hand the neighborhood parks and an in-depth tour of Lapeer Pool. It was noted how active all the parks appeared to be. Ms. Luqman noted that 150 trees are going to be planted in the neighborhood parks as a result of a grant written by the Friends of the Rouge. Ms. Luqman offered assistance if any other parks needed assistance with obtaining trees.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47pm.

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION WILL BE WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2022 AT 7:00PM at FCPAC.

THE SPORTS BANQUET WILL BE HELD JUNE 12, 2022.
LOCATION AND TIME TBD.