

Ad Hoc Parks, Recreation & Forestry Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, July 13, 2011  
7:00 a.m.

Meeting called to order at 7:00 a.m.

Present: Jane Lardahl, Brian Flynn, George Adrian, Beth Arneberg, and  
Audrey Stowell

Others: Rick Rubenzer and Dick Hebert

1. Discuss Park and Recreation organization options and staffing. Rick Rubenzer spoke about the merging of the street department with his department. He indicated that he felt his department could handle the supervision of additional employees. He did not know how any of the details would be handled, but he did feel the non-union supervisor position within the Street Department could supervise park employee if that was what was decided. He said that his department struggles at times to keep up, and some things are clearly not being done, but they are maintaining. He wasn't necessarily advocating for this change but felt it could work. Discussed issues between current contracts and need to have this resolved before those contracts expire. Also discussed how potential splitting off of recreation department from parks is a concern in terms of maintenance. Also discussed that even though the City may gain by the elimination of positions, it loses also as employees who take on additional duties have less time to do what they were already doing. For example, when Rob needs to go over and supervise in Mike's absence, the City is losing his services as an engineer. Rick indicates workload determines how much of a problem this is. The less projects in the works, the less of a problem it is.

Brian leaves at this time.

Discussion held regarding the current structure and how the departments cooperation and communicate. Discussed floating some of the park maintenance responsibilities to Mike Ruf and then sharing employees. Dick and Rick both indicated they could work together and cooperate in terms of having employees from each department work with the other during peak times. Discussed prioritizing of tasks. Rick stated lack of communication and lack of planning would be the biggest obstacle to departments working well together.

Rick left at this time.

Dick gave brief recap of past six weeks and expressed desire to have a decision made by our committee in time to avoid retraining individuals who are in temporary positions. Discussed structure options. Audrey indicated there seems to be a need for a parks supervisor and would be comfortable in a director and assistant director or parks & rec supervisor, hiring a seasonal rec person when needed, and eliminating the working foreman position. Dick recommended a director position, which would take on more of the park supervisor position

responsibilities and could be more efficiently done with technology and location changes, a recreation supervisor, and keep the working foreman position. He felt that an assistant director or Parks & Rec supervisor would require someone with some years of experience, and a recreation supervisor could be hired at an entry-level position to save money. He also indicated that the working foreman position has too many responsibilities and some of those should be shifted back to the director. He felt that time-wise this would mean that some of the director's items wouldn't be done; examples would be public speaking or acting as a project manager for construction projects. Discussion that project manager jobs will be contracted out, and look at having a "Friends" group for Parks & Rec (as there is for the Zoo) to help out with public speaking and fund-raising efforts.

Meeting scheduled for Monday, July 18, at 7:00 a.m. to discuss making recommendation.

2. Adjournment. **Motion by Beth Arneberg, seconded by George Adrian, all present voting aye, to adjourn at 9:10 a.m.**

Submitted by:

Audrey Stowell, Secretary