

-1-

Recreation Board Minutes
September 6, 2023

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to open the meeting.
Clare Ceballos - So moved
Ann Brennan - Second
All in favor - The Motion carried.

Roll Call

Eric Acton - present
Ann Brennan - present
Roger Carroll - present
Clare Ceballos - present
Aly DeAngelo - absent
Joanne Pickrell - present
School Board Representative
Tyler Stanley - present
Jessica Saad - present
City Council Representative

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to approve the August minutes
Clare Celballos - So moved
Ann Brennan - Second
All in favor - The motion carried.

Introduction of Board Member

Tyler Stanley was introduced as the newest Recreation Board member.

Jeffrey Mansion Preschool - Year End Report

Postponed to the October meeting.

Pool Management Discussion

Mike Price - this is a discussion about the evaluation of pool management going into next year. Are two focuses in evaluating next year is to look at Swim Safe and to look at whether we want to with a third party or to take it back on ourselves. Those are the two options we are focusing on. We don't think at this time it makes sense to start the process over with another third party. There is only one other viable option: Columbus Pool Management. Starting over with another third party management invites a starting over approach that we don't think is wise at this point.

This is the end of a three year contract with Swim Safe. We have the option to add two more years. After five years we will have to bid it out again. We Have the flexibility to continue with Swim Safe in 2024.

-2-

From an evaluation standpoint we sent out a survey which is similar to the one we sent out in 2022. We want to provide you with information and go over with you some of the hard data from the survey. We are actually still digesting the information ourselves. We will make a recommendation to the board and ask for a vote at the October 4th meeting. As in the past any recommendation for the board would have to be approved from a budgetary standpoint from the City Council.

Natalie Mullin - In 2022 we had 252 participants in the survey, in 2023 we had 209 participants.

Natalie Mullin - Overall response to Swim Safe was positive. We felt like this was the best year of management under Swim Safe. Going into the summer, we felt the most confident from facility prep through staffing levels/training.

Natalie Mullin - The greatest point of interest was open swim. Followed by group lessons, then lap swim and private lessons. In 2022 we had an increase of new members of 13.9% and in 2023 we had an increase of 23%. The increase in 2023 was due to the new structure of individual memberships only. The number of total members increased by 15.4%.

We had 3165 total in 2022 and in 2023 we had 3654 total.

In 2022 86.9% had a returning interest and in 2023 96.1% had a returning interest. That is a 10% increase of those who want to come back.

We had an almost 6% increase in positive responses.

The cleanliness of the restrooms was the lowest one, but did increase in positivity. There is room for improvement with both the restrooms and the pool bottom.

This is our second year with the Dive Concession stand. They had a 2.54 % increase in positive response. I think some are still comparing it to two years ago where the concession stand was run more restaurant style and the concession stand is a true concession stand operator.

JoAnn Pickrell - I felt that the concession staff were young students often overwhelmed and often looked like they were lost and left to their own devices.

Natalie Mullin - To my knowledge they were supposed to have an on duty manager. That is something that I can bring up.

Ann Brennan - I wonder if there could be full cleaning of the pool.

Natalie Mullin - We did get a larger vacuum last year. It is more of a process to use and takes more time. They need to schedule time when there is no programming going on. They need to make sure that is a scheduled cleaning. There is room for improvement.

Roger Carroll - Was the Splash Pad on?

Natalie Mullin - I was intermittent. It was closed for the last three weeks. Historically we have had trouble with the pump that operates the Splash Pad.

Natalie Mullin - This year the contract with Swim Safe was \$291,650. The projected price for 2024 is projected to be the same. There will be a 3% increase for 2025 of \$300,399.

-3-

Mike Price - In talking with the CEO two reasons the cost has increased is the cost of chemicals and staffing. He did indicate that both have stabilized.

Director's Report

Natural Play Area

Mike Price presented a overhead site map to identify possible locations. We continue to have discussions for a natural play area on the north end of the park. To the west of the palyground the is an area that has a lot of trees, not a formal woodlands. Another area is behind the northeast corner of the shelterhouse there is an elevation change that allows for a natural slide built into the side of the hill. We are not proposing formalized structures but natural areas of play.

SS&D Youth Triathlon

Mike Price - Many kudos to Natalie Mullin who puts the entire event together. There were 330 participants and supported by over 80 volunteers. I want to give a special thanks to Paramount Church, the Bexley High School Cross Country and the Boys Soccer Teams. Maryland Ave School won the school challenge with 245 of the student body participating.

Skatepark Update

Mike Price - We have signed a contract with Hunger SkateParks. They will provide the design for the Skatepark. We will have to go out to bid for construction. That is separate on the completion of the design. The process will include a public survey and meetings with the skatepark committee as well as the public.

Jo Ann PPickrell - Where is the park going to be located?

Natalie Mullin - As you come down the Astor entrance it would be located to the left towards the athletic fields. Basically between the athletic fields and the sledding hill.

Preservation and Enhancement Committee Update

Mike Price - We had our first meeting with the OHM Advisors on August 29th. We discussed the process and reviewed a presentation from OHM with ideas fro the park. It was very preliminary and intended to spur discussion, not to set a starting point for the plan.

As part of our discussion we made some changes to the process to include two public workshops and an additional committee meeting. The first public workshop will be on the front end to gather information on ideas and concepts and get feedback from the public. We will add another committee meeting to digest the information and then go back to a public workshop with a formalized concept and plan.

-4-

The discussion will be around the experts and what the experts want to bring in to support the process, obviously preservation of the woodlands is the priority. Having a Woodland manager involved is something we have had a discussion about. They talked about reaching out to potential experts in between this last meeting and our next meeting so we can decide how we want to move forward.

There was a lot of discussion about the physical lay out of the park and what opportunities are there with the concept of preservation. What we really didn't get into is how we care for the woods for future best practices and how we can care for the woodlands for generations to come. There are a lot of challenges. We talked about securing the necessary experts, woodland manager and possibly a wildlife expert.

Budget Season Discussion

Mike Price - Natalie has started to reach out to staff to set up meetings to discuss program budgets.

We continue to have philosophical discussions with the staff to include what our goals are. Included in our staff discussions are Capital improvements. We have a staff retreat on November 3rd.

I encourage the board to reach out with any thoughts you may have that would impact the budget.

Roger Carroll - How is the Splash Pad at Schneider Park doing?

Mike Price - The Splash Pad has been a huge hit. I was told today that a family from Upper Arlington traveled over to see and use it. We adjusted the settings. The feedback has been tremendous. It's another amenity of that park that has made it a jewel of our community from a park standpoint, along with the Dog Park, increased programming there, and the South Gardens, which are amazing.

When you think about what that area looked like ten years ago, it was just a dump. Now it is one of the nicest amenities.

Roger Carroll - The Dog Park is working out well?

Mike Price - I was skeptical, at first, about the location and how well it would drain. The way it was built the drainage was addressed. It is also unique because it is built in the woods and it has shade.

Roger Carroll - Do you have an update on Commonwealth Park?

Mike Price - We have been told by the end of September it should be finished. They are also working on the path. This came up in City Council and there is some discussion of reevaluating the Columbia portion of the project. Some of the design of the Columbia project has caused a lot of difficulty with the design process of how to deal with safety components. signage, traffic and pedestrians. We are finding out that we are going to put so many signs for vehicle traffic. Council has said yes to the Mayor to see what kind of feedback we get.

-5-

Ann Brennan - There is also a parking issue.

Roger Carroll - How did the Middle School Pool party go?

Mike Price - It went great. We had 180 attendees. The energy was great. It was very successful and we plan to do it every year.

We are still trying to see if we can get another trip to Kings Island this Fall for their Halloween event.

We are having a Halloween Bash for Middle schoolers on Friday the day before the adult party which is on Saturday. Decorated Mansion music food costumes.

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to adjourn the meeting

Ann Brennan - So moved

Clare Ceballos - Second

All in favor - The motion carried.