



**CITY OF ANN ARBOR – PARKS ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
October 16, 2007**

The regular meeting of the Park Advisory Commission was held on Tuesday, October 16, 2007 at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers located in City Hall, 100 N. Fifth Avenue, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

I. The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. by Chair, L. Berauer.

II. Roll Call:

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|-----------------------------|-----|---|
| Members Present: | (9) | L. Berauer, B. Macomber, D. Barrett T. Berla J. Lawter, S. Offen, G. Nystuen, S. Rosencrans, J. Grand |
| Ex-Officio Members Present: | (2) | S. Kunselman, R. Johnson (arrived at 4:17 p.m.) |
| Ex- Officio Members Absent: | (0) | None. |
| Members Absent: | (0) | None. |
| Staff Present: | (7) | J. Miller, Christen Smith, T. Crawford, D. Borneman, K.C. Bemish, J. Black, L. Bowen |
| Guests: | (7) | Joe O’Neal, Jonathan Buckley, Wayne Say, Margaret Wong, Hank Byma, Eli Cooper, Karen Sydney |

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Commissioner Berauer stated there would be a discussion added to the agenda regarding the Golf Course issues.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY - AGENDA ITEMS (3 Minutes per Speaker)

Karen Sidney (100 Longman Lane) spoke on the Golf Course issue expressing concern about the article pertaining to item B-2.

Mayor John Heiftje spoke on the Budget Resolution for Parks that was passed by City Council stating there will be \$287,000.00 placed in the Parks budget for the next fiscal year.

RESOLUTION AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2008 BUDGET AND AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2009 FISCAL PLAN TO ADJUST FUNDING FOR THE GENERAL FUND BUDGET SUPPORTING THE PARKS SYSTEM

Whereas in the spring of 2007, while developing the City’s Budget for fiscal years 2008 and 2009, City Financial staff used approved budgeting methods consistent with practices from previous years which resulted in a decrease in the General Fund allocation to the overall budget supporting the City’s Parks System and;

Whereas on Oct. 3, 2006, City Council passed a resolution that, upon approval of the November 2006 Parks Millage ballot initiative, the General Fund portion of the overall budget supporting the City’s Park System Budget would not be reduced more than the average of other General Fund operations of the City in the next 6 years of the millage and;

61 Whereas this resolution lacked specific information on the accounting methods that would be utilized; the
62 resolution could not anticipate the fact that park revenues could fall short of estimates, and these oversights
63 led some residents and even some Council Members to believe the City had not lived up to its Oct. 3, 2006
64 promise in regard to the Parks System Budget and;

65
66 Whereas the approved FY2007 General Fund allocation to the Parks System was \$6,711,562 and the
67 approved FY08 allocation was \$6,175,976, which is a difference of \$535,586 and;

68
69 Whereas when compared to FY 2007 there was a \$426,739 drop in estimated revenues to the General
70 Fund Parks System in the FY08 budget and;

71
72 Whereas this drop in Park System budgeted FY 08 revenues reflected the fact that certain FY 07 fee
73 revenue in the amount of \$248,000 did not materialize and could not be expected in the new fiscal year,
74 and;

75
76 Whereas, it is the desire of the Ann Arbor City Council to increase the FY 08 Parks System General Fund
77 allocation by \$287,586 to \$6,463,562 and therefore, the difference between the FY 07 and FY 08 General
78 Fund allocations is \$248,000 rather than \$535,586 and;

79
80 Whereas sufficient funds exist in the General Fund Reserve to adjust the approved FY08 General Fund
81 Parks System Budget without negatively impacting other City operations or the City's bond rating, and;

82
83 Whereas this adjustment should be reflected in the second year of the two-year fiscal plan and reconciled
84 when the FY 09 Budget is reviewed in May 2008.

85
86 Resolved that \$287,586 be transferred from the General Fund Balance to the FY 08 General Fund Budget
87 and be allocated as follows: Public Services Park Operations Maintenance expenditures be increased by
88 \$191,820 (two-thirds 2/3 of the adjustment) and Community Services Parks and Recreation Services
89 expenditures be increased by \$95,766 (one-third 1/3 of the adjustment) thus restoring the overall Parks
90 System Budget allocation to its adjusted FY 07 level and increasing the General Fund Subsidy to the Parks
91 System by 4.3% over FY 07.

92
93 Resolved that the FY 09 Fiscal Plan is amended to increase expenditures by \$287,586, prorated to Public
94 Services Park Operations Maintenance \$191,820 (two-thirds (2/3) of the adjustment) and to Community
95 Services Parks and Recreation Services \$95,766 (one-third (1/3) of the adjustment) thus amending the
96 FY09 Fiscal Plan to reflect increases in overall Parks System funding by 3.2% over the adjusted FY07
97 budget and the General Fund Subsidy to the Parks System by 8.7% over FY07.

98
99 Sponsored by: Mayor Hieftje and Council Member Johnson

100
101 **Mayor Heiftje** also spoke on the diligent job done by Councilmember Robert Johnson in his capacity for the
102 City of Ann Arbor.

103
104 **Councilmember Johnson** expressed his thanks and gratitude to everyone.

105
106 **A - APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

107
108 **A-1 T. Berla** moved, supported by **J. Grand** to approve the minutes of September 18, 2007 as
109 written. The minutes of September 18, 2007 were approved unanimously.

110
111 **L. Berauer** stated **Jayne Miller** and **Tom Crawford** was in attendance of the meeting to specifically
112 respond to questions asked by the Park Advisory Commission relative to the Golf Course.

113
114 **J. Miller** and **L. Berauer** agreed the questions from the Park Advisory Commission would be read, and
115 then answered. The first question being the current balance of the Golf Enterprise Fund.

116
117 **J. Miller** stated just over \$1.1 million dollar net loss as of June 30, 2007.

118
119 **T. Crawford** explained the Golf Fund has a net asset of approximately \$600,000.00 and net capital of
120 approximately \$1.1 million. Stating the net assets are decreasing with the net losses.

122 **J. Miller** read the second question, what impact the City would have with a negative fund balance in
123 the Golf enterprise Fund.

124
125 **J. Miller** stated if there is a negative operation Golf Fund at the end of the Fiscal Year, the City will
126 borrow from the General Fund to keep the Golf Enterprise Fund in a positive.

127
128 **B. Macomber** asked if the monies will be taken fro the Parks General Fund.

129
130 **T. Crawford** stated the monies would come from the City's General Fund.

131
132 **J. Miller** read the next question, if a decision was reached to terminate the Golf Enterprise Fund, what
133 would be become of the negative Fund balance, would there be a need to find money to pay off that
134 Fund balance, what possible sources would be available.

135
136 **J. Miller** stated there would be a recommendation for City Council to wipe that debt to the General
137 Fund away.

138
139 **J. Miller** read the next question, if the Greenbelt Millage Fund can buy land from Golf Enterprise
140 Fund?

141
142 **J. Miller** stated under the Michigan Real Property Law the sale of real property transfers titles from
143 one individual to another (one agency to another) due to the City owning the property it cannot be sold
144 or transferred.

145
146 **T. Crawford** stated the Golf Course loss over \$200,000.00 last year, if the Golf Course continues to
147 operate as is a strategic decision made have to be made in approximately 2 years.

148 **SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

149 **Allen Creek Land Conservancy**

150
151 **Joe O'Neal, Jonathan Buckley, Wayne Say, Margaret Wong, Carl Reny, Hank Byma, Eli Cooper**

152
153 **Joe O'Neal** spoke on the Allen Creek issue stating the purpose is to help the Park Advisory
154 Commission and the City of Ann Arbor realize the dream of the Greenway. Mr. O'Neal read a letter
155 that was composed regarding the importance of the Allen Creek Greenway.

156
157 **Mr. O'Neal** stating there are 3 specific goals in attending this meeting, stating there a Resolution
158 passed that the City would not sell City owned property, Begin discussion with Ann Arbor Railroad,
159 and to discuss 415 W Washington and envision this as the beginning of the Greenway....

160
161 **Margaret Wong** spoke on issues regarding the Allen Creek Greenway, discussing the 2004 – 2005
162 energetic efforts that brought the Allen Creek Greenway to the forefront. Ms. Wong also discussed the
163 City Council created the Allen Creek Greenway Task Force to study the issues of the Allen Creek
164 Greenway, the report being available on line.

165
166 **Hank Byma** spoke on the Allen Creek Greenway explaining the poster diagram presented to the
167 Commission explaining the difference between the flood plain and the floodway.

168
169 **Jonathan Buckley** spoke on the water resource issues and activities, stating the Washtenaw County
170 Drain Commission study is currently focusing a way to reduce the peak flows to minimize flooding.
171 The second major study is currently through the City of Ann Arbor that consists of a storm water
172 geographic information system data collection and hydraulic development for all of the sub basins
173 within the City of Ann Arbor.

174
175 **Eli Cooper** spoke on the issue of The Rails to Trails, also explaining Rails to Trails conversancy
176 including a plan for a non- motorized active transportation. Explaining the healthy ways of
177 transportation and a reason to believe the City of Ann Arbor can be identified as one of the
178 communities that would benefit from this program.

184 **L. Berauer** asked as far as the linkage, how many parcels may be needed.

185

186 **Hank Byma** stated approximately 25 parcels may be needed for the linkage that would help with the
187 water quality and the connection with a park.

188

189 **B. Macomber** asked if the City parcels were included.

190

191 **Hank** stated, yes.

192

193 **L. Berauer** asked if the name Rails to Trails, and Rails and Trails would be clarified.

194

195 **Eli Cooper** stated the name of the organization is named Rails to Trails Conservancy, initially they
196 were the recipients of abandon rail corridors and converted them to trails.

197

198 **S. Kunselman** asked if buying 415 W. Washington is an option.

199

200 **Hank Byman** stated there had not been any discussion on purchasing that parcel of property.

201

202 **T. Berla** stated any decision should support the Allen Creek Greenway but also remembering there
203 could be an offer for development.

204

205 **Hank** stated there will be many challenges and many locations very complex

206

207 **PUBLIC HEARING**

208

209 Recommendation to Establish Preserve Areas within the City Park System

210

211 **G. Nystuen** read a letter from Bill Mayer who is President of the Michigan Mountain Biking
212 Association to the Commission.

Bill Mayer
President - Michigan Mountain Biking Association

The MMBA would like to support the Preserve area designation for the relevant AA Parks.

However, in paragraph 4 - last sentence, we would like to request the NAP be changed with the role of determining what is and is not a negative impact on an ecological resource.

The MMBA's primary focus is on trail maintenance and development, so this would make us feel comfortable in our future efforts.

Thanks you for this outreach.

Bill Mayer
1606 Pontiac Trail
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
President@mmba.org

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S. Rosencrans spoke on the Resolution to Recommend to Establish Preserve Areas within the City Park System. Also mentioning the committee has spoken with the Attorney's office, Park Planners, Christen Smith, Jayne Miller as well as one on one with the Park Advisory Commission sharing all information. S. Rosencrans also mentioned this Resolution will not cost the tax papers any monies.

222 **D. Borneman** spoke on the Preserve Areas including presenting a power point presentation and
223 explaining the areas to the Commission, stating there are approximately 460 proposed to be
224 Preserved Areas.

225
226 **G. Nystuen** read the paragraph of the second Resolve of the Resolution to the Commission. This
227 paragraph was discussed, Councilmember Robert Johnson suggested an amendment.

228
229 **L. Berauer** moved, supported by **B. Macomber** to discuss the language the Resolution to
230 Recommend to Establish Preserve Areas within the City Park System.

231
232 **R Johnson** suggested the wording change in the second Resolve....amendment
233

234 RECOMMENDATION TO ESTABLISH *PRESERVE* AREAS WITHIN THE CITY PARK
235 SYSTEM

236 Whereas, the goals of the City of Ann Arbor Natural Features Master Plan 2004 call for preserving high-
237 quality woodlands and prairies, and protecting native forest and savanna fragments, and habitats rich in
238 native flora and fauna. The disturbance of such areas can cause the introduction of invasive and destructive
239 species along with erosion and other detrimental effects on plant and wildlife habitat;

240 Whereas, the 2006-2010 PROS plan states that “the Nature Preserve designation signifies that these are the
241 highest quality natural areas within the City and thus deserve the highest level of protection.”;

242
243 Whereas, the City of Ann Arbor recognizes that the preservation of nature’s diversity is an important goal;

244
245 Whereas, for many urban residents, an opportunity to experience an environment where non-human forces
246 define the landscape is a valued respite from everyday life and a recreational and visual resource;

247
248 Whereas, the City has extensive ‘natural areas’ in our parklands that contribute to these goals;

249
250 Whereas, the Natural Area Preservation program (NAP) has undertaken an extensive analysis of the
251 ecological status of natural areas within the city parklands, and classified them, based on floristic quality, as
252 either Conservation Areas (higher quality, restorable sites) or Greenspace (lower quality disturbed sites);

253
254 Whereas, the Natural Area Preservation program has designated as Wildlife Sanctuaries those Conservation
255 Areas or Greenspace that meet one or more of these criteria: A) part of a contiguous block of 20+ acres of
256 Natural Area or other undeveloped habitat, or B) part of a contiguous block of 5+ acres of Natural Area or
257 other undeveloped habitat and adjacent to the Huron River or one of its tributaries, or C) known to contain
258 useable habitat for note-worthy species of wildlife;

259
260 Whereas, at the present time there are no development restrictions on the use of our natural area parklands;

261
262 Resolved, the Parks Advisory Commission recommends that Council designate certain parklands as
263 *Preserves*, as described in the 2006-2011 PROS Plan, in order to protect the ecological integrity and
264 character of the *Preserve* for present and future generations. *Preserve* sites are designated based on floristic
265 quality, biodiversity of native plant and animal species and habitat, sensitivity to disturbance, and
266 ecological integrity, and proximity to the Huron River;

267
268 Resolved, the City will not build on, develop, or grade parkland as *Preserve* for any purpose, including
269 athletic fields or facilities, or off-trail uses. Trail maintenance, trail development, and recreational and
270 educational activities that NAP finds do not negatively affect the ecological resources of the *Preserve* are
271 allowed. Maintenance to existing underground infrastructure is permitted in *Preserves*, provided that the
272 disturbed area is restored to its original state.

273
274 Resolved, the Parks Advisory Commission recommends that the following Conservation Areas and
275 Wildlife Sanctuaries as shown on the attached Natural Area Preservation maps be designated as
276 “*Preserves*”: Furstenberg Nature Area, Gallup Park Wet Prairie, Barton Nature Area, Bird Hills Nature
277 Area, Cedar Bend Nature Area Woods, Dolph Nature Area, Mary Beth Doyle Nature Area Woods, Scarlett

278 Mitchell Nature Area, and Black Ponds Woods Nature Area. Excluded from the *Preserves* are the existing
279 parking, picnic, garden, mowed, or otherwise developed areas.

280
281 Resolved, that PAC will hold a public hearing on designating the above parkland areas as “*Preserves*”;

282
283 Resolved, the Parks Advisory Commission recommends that designation of additional *Preserves* or
284 modification of boundaries of existing *Preserves* shall be by Resolution of the Parks Advisory Commission
285 and approval by City Council.

286
287 Resolution submitted by Gwen Nystuen and Scott Rosencrans October 2007

288
289 The Commission voted on the amendment to change to language in the paragraph located in the
290 second Resolve of the Resolution. Changes to the language are indicated. The vote was as follows:

291
292 **Ayes: (9) L. Berauer, B. Macomber, S. Offen, G. Nystuen, T. Berla, J. Lawter D. Barrett,**
293 **S. Rosencrans, J. Grand**

294
295 **Nays: (0) None.**

296
297 **Absent: (0) None.**

298
299 *On a voice vote – **Motion Passed – Unanimous***

300
301 **L. Berauer** asked the Commission to vote on the actual Resolution.

302
303 **S. Offen** asked the purpose of the designating Preserve Areas.

304
305 **D. Borneman** stated the states of Minnesota and Iowa are doing similar programs designating natural
306 areas being disturbed and needing to be protected.

307
308 The Commission voted on Resolution as follows:

309
310 **Ayes: (9) L. Berauer, B. Macomber, S. Offen, G. Nystuen, T. Berla, J. Lawter D. Barrett,**
311 **S. Rosencrans, J. Grand**

312
313 **Nays: (0) None.**

314
315 **Absent: (0) None**

316
317 *On a voice vote – **Motion Passed – Unanimous***

318
319 **B - UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

320
321 B-1 Park Security Pilot Report

322
323 B-2 Preliminary Discussion of input to the Golf Consultant

324
325 Christen stated the Golf will be back for a meeting Thursday, November 8, 2007. The Commission
326 agreed on 5:00 p.m.

327
328 **C - NEW BUSINESS**

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330 **D - COMMISSION PROPOSED BUSINESS**

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332 **D-1** Natural Area Task Force
333 Recommendation to Establish Preserve Areas within the City Park System

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335 **D-2** Allen Creek Greenway Task Force Discussion

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337 **D-3** Commission Work Session Planning

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E - REPORT FROM PARKS AND RECREATION MANAGER

E-1 Market Business Plan

F - REPORT FROM MANAGER OF FIELD OPERATIONS

G - REPORT FROM RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

H - REPORTS FROM RELEVANT COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND/OR TASK FORCES

H-1 Update on the Active Field Issues

I - PUBLIC COMMENTARY – GENERAL (3 Minutes per Speaker)

The audience thanked Councilmember Robert Johnson for all his contribution and hard work regarding the City of Ann Arbor.

J - CLOSED SESSION TO DEAL WITH LAND ACQUISITION ISSUES (If Applicable)

K - TRANSMITTALS

K-1 City Council Items Update – (Information in Packet)

K-2 Parks Project Update (Information in Packet)

K-3 Parks and Recreation Events for August - September 2007

K-4 PAC Work Session Summary

There being no further business to come before the Commission, **Commissioner Berla** moved supported by **Commissioner Rosencrans** that the meeting be adjourned. The regular meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Bowen

Lynn Bowen

Administrative Support Specialist V