

**MEETING MINUTES ST. ALBANS CITY PARKS COMMISSION MEETING RECREATION DEPARTMENT, 39
BARLOW STREET, 2ND FLOOR 6:00 PM TUESDAY, APRIL 03, 2018**

Board Members Present:

Chair Tom Koldys, Vice-Chair Joanie McGinn, Stina Booth and Angie Sturm

Board Members Absent: Alec Kaeding and Barbara Weinstein

Public Present:

Staff Present: Andrew Gratton, Recreation Program Manager; Chip Sawyer, Director of Planning & Development; Wendy Coy, Minute Taker. Tim Smith – Mayor.

AGENDA

1. **Open Meeting – called to order at 6:03 p.m.**
 - a. **Discuss additions or deletions to agenda - None**
2. **Updates regarding Taylor Park Master Plan – Phasing and Next Steps:** Mr. Sawyer stated that the engineers are finally on board. In a couple of weeks, they should have the final plans and estimates. This Commission will only get one more look at the Master Plan during their regular meeting schedule before the project needs to start. The project needs to start by May 31st. Mr. Sawyer suggested a special meeting if the Commission wanted to see it more than once before the plans are finalized. Member Sturm suggested that the Commission look at the plans on the first and, at that point, decide if a special meeting is necessary. Next steps and immediate concerns are the deteriorated sidewalks. The sidewalks will be pulled and replaced with a hard pack. This is temporary. An engineer's grading plan is needed to know the parks final design. The City might need to live with the hard pack sidewalks until a grading plan can be done. Vice-Chair McGinn asked for an example of hard pack. Mr. Sawyer stated that the Rail Trail was a good example. He stated that it would be easier to fix hard pack sidewalks than the current sidewalks. Chair Koldys stated that the park master plan should have the sidewalks included. Vice-Chair McGinn stated that the Commission needs a tree plan before the permanent sidewalks were installed. Member Sturm stated that she was hoping that the consultants would help with this. Vice-Chair McGinn stated that we needed to complete the tree evaluation before works starts on the master plan as the trees shouldn't come down unless it is necessary. Chair Koldys stated that the evaluation would help as if there is one tree predicted to come down in five years versus twenty years it would change the decision-making process. The Commission will come back to the Taylor Park plans in May.
3. **Community Photo contest proposal from Mayor Tim Smith –** Mayor Smith proposed a community photo contest. This contest creates a potential for many different organizations to come together to be a part of this such as Parks, Downtown, Co-op. He stated that this is the Centennial celebration of the Co-op. He thinks that this provides an opportunity for an agricultural photo contest. They will put the request out for photos. They hope to get 50 – 100 photos. They would be displayed in

City Hall. Once the submission period has ended, the City will have a reception with hors d'oeuvres and drinks. At the reception, everyone votes on their favorite photo. They will have the top fifteen blown up and placed in Taylor park. They can be left up for four to six weeks. Once they are removed, they can be auctioned off like the chair affair. The money can go to whomever the City decides. They plan to leave them up in August and early September. Each photo will cost around \$1400. He is looking for sponsorships. The City is hoping some of the money could be recouped with the reception and silent auction. He wanted to make sure that they have a place to display with the art which is why he came to the Parks Commission. Chair Koldys asked if they would be double sided as he wanted to make sure that they would be visible from all places in the park. Mayor Smith stated no but that he envisioned it being a very spacious feel so he didn't think they would look as good clumped together. Member Sturm stated that having them in a circle would be a good way for people to wander through them. Vice-Chair McGinn asked Member Booth how many people she felt would participate. Member Booth stated that she believed that there would be a lot. Mayor Smith stated that he wanted the criteria that the pictures needed to be of Franklin County. Vice-Chair McGinn asked if there could be up-lighting so that they could be seen at night. The Commission thought that the lighting was a good idea. Vice-Chair McGinn made motion that the Commission accept the proposal of the Community Photo Contest. Mayor Smith stated that moving forward, he would like to think that this is not a one-time deal. You can change the theme from year to year. Chair Koldys stated that next year's theme could be part of the reception. The Mayor stated that he may be back to ask for park space to park the tractors after a tractor parade. Member Member Booth seconded the motion.

4. Houghton Park

- a. **Josh's Garden** – Chair Koldys invited Josh to come today but Josh couldn't make it. Josh had read the minutes from February and realized that the Commission wasn't happy with the current state of the garden. He sent an email stating that we would be glad to improve the garden in the ways the Commission mentioned. Chair Koldys stated that the Commission should come up with more specific guidelines to give Josh. Vice-Chair McGinn stated that the signage needed improvement as well as the overall aesthetic impact. It needs to be more appealing and eye catching to accomplish his original goal of community garden. Mr. Gratton stated that there needed to be more signage stating the purpose of the garden. The garden looked very random and looked like personal project. Vice-Chair McGinn suggested that even a border would help. Member Booth suggested that the Commission look at the space so that they can see the issues. Vice-Chair McGinn stated that she had no problem with giving him more space. Mr. Gratton showed examples of edible / permaculture gardens. Member Sturm stated that this is public park so there will be more definition than there would be on a farm. Vice-Chair McGinn asked what would happen if we gave him another trial year with a little more space. The Commission could go and view the garden in September. Member Booth stated that the idea of being an urban garden was more important than the idea of it being a permaculture garden. Chair Koldys stated that could offer more space, suggestions around signage, aesthetics and a more defined border. Mr. Gratton stated that the Parks Department would be willing to help with the signage. The Commission discussed the size of the lot. Mr. Sawyer suggested that thinner would be better so that people when they went to grab a plant wouldn't walk in the garden. Mr.

Gratton suggested that they open this up to be a community project so that more people would be involved and have a stake in the garden.

- b. Trees in Houghton Park** – Mr. Young stated that some of the trees that were planted last year are dead. Mr. Sawyer stated that they didn't want to replant any trees in July or August. Chair Koldys asked if there were warranties on the trees. Mr. Sawyer stated that there wasn't. Chair Koldys asked if all of the cottonwood stumps were gone. Mr. Gratton stated that all the stumps had been removed correctly and were gone.
- c. Water Fountain** – The Commission reviewed the material that Mr. Gratton prepared presenting different options for a fountain and a water-bottle filling station. Member Sturm stated that it needed to include a fountain, filling station and a hose attachment. Mr. Sawyer suggested getting the Steelers to sponsor the fountain as they would be using it quite a bit. Vice-Chair McGinn stated that she couldn't see them sponsoring the fountain in its current location. They might want to add their own water fountain. Member Booth asked what the timeline was to have the fountain installed. Mr. Gratton stated that the fiscal year is coming to a close and that, if the budget has the flexibility, it could be done this year. If there is no room in the budget, it could be put in the budget for next fiscal year. Member Booth made a motion to a water fountain that includes the water filling station, the ADA water fountain and a hose attachment model # LK4420BF1UFRK be submitted for approval with Mr. Gratton choosing the color. Member Sturm seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

5. Updates from March Meeting – None

6. Continued Brainstorm and discussion – None

7. Barlow Park – Updates from March Meeting – Mr. Gratton measured the area behind the baseball diamond. It is 45x90 feet. The benches need to be removed as they are broken and hazardous. It is a quiet space that can fit just about anything. He would like to see the area repurposed so that it would be a more positive space. Chair Koldys suggested that a Facebook post be put up asking for ideas as to what to do with the space. The Commission liked the idea and Mr. Gratton will post it next week.

8. Other business – Chair Koldys stated that Mr. Young would like to take the Parks Commission or anyone else who would care to come on a tour of the trees in Taylor Park. He would review each tree and show which ones have issues and the history of them. Member Booth asked if the Commission would still be hiring a tree specialist to review the park. Chair Koldys stated that there would still be a professional to do a tree inventory. Member Sturm suggested that the history be sent to the Commission before the tour.

9. Approval of March 06, 2018 meeting minutes – Member Sturm made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Vice-Chair Booth seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Other Business - None

Member Booth made a motion to adjourn. Member Sturm seconded. It passed unanimously.