



Expanding Horizons

CITY OF CONVERSE
CITY ADMINISTRATION

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Minutes
PARKS AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
December 14, 2015
6:00 P.M.

Be It Known That the Converse Parks and Environmental Commission Will Meet For A Regular Meeting on Monday, December 14, 2015 at 6:00 P.M. in the City Hall Conference Room located at 405 South Seguin Street to Discuss and Act On The Following Agenda:

A quorum of the following commissions may be present: Building & Standards Commission, City Council, Economic Development Corporation, and/or Planning & Zoning Commission.

1. Call To Order. (Chairman)
Called to order at 6 p.m.
2. Opening Ceremonies. (Chairman)
 - a. Invocation.
 - b. Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Roll Call, Establishment of Quorum & Recognition of Visitors. (Chairman)
 - a. Introduction of Councilwoman Nancy Droneburg

Present:

Rick Smith, Chairman
Wenceslao Santiago, Member
Sam Perez Jr., Vice-Chairman
Anthony Woods, Member
Alovyia Freelon, Member
Irvin Hollowell, Member
Manuel Longoria, Public Works Director
Vanessa Limones, Secretary
Nancy Droneburg, City Council Liaison

Absent:

Roger Dennes, Member

4. Citizens to be heard: This time is provided for Citizens to address the Parks and Environmental Commission on any issues and concerns under the commission's purview. No Parks and Environmental Commission Discussion or Action can be taken if an item is not on the Agenda. Please state your name and address for the record. Remarks should be limited to three minutes (3 min.).

Ms. Ronda Payne talked about an idea she had to develop a piece of land into a community garden and an art center.

Chairman Smith asked that Ms. Payne provide a report on the suggested activities for the commission to review, but something of this nature, he suggested, would rise to the City Council level; but also stated it would be good to have this commission's support.

5. Discussion and Appropriate Action of consent agenda. (Chairman)
 - a. November 9, 2015 minutes
 - b. October 19, 2015 minutes, amendment:
 - Amendment to item 6, changing "Mr. Rick Smith has been appointed Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission" to "Mr. Rick Smith has been nominated by the Parks and Environmental Commission to be chairman of the commission, pending approval by the City Council."

Motion to approve: Howell. **Second:** Santiago.

Motion passes.

6. Presentation and Discussion of parks vision plan. (Mr. Moyer, consultant; Public Works Director; Chairman).

Mr. Moyer answered questions that were raised at last meeting and discussed the future of the vision plan.

- An extension of contract length has been requested as a no-cost extension through January to provide for a final report to be given to the commission and the City Council. This will also allow time for a public hearing.
- Mr. Moyer discussed the radius of how far citizens have to drive to a park facility and provide a map in regards to ball fields. This is something to consider with any future development.
- Mr. Moyer showed a table comparing local cities and how much of their budget is spent on parks per 1000 citizens. They include:
 - Converse, \$18.79
 - Live Oak, \$35.73
 - Schertz, \$36.78
 - Selma, \$3.83
 - Universal City, n/a
 - San Antonio, \$74.27The drop in budget for parks between last year and this year in Converse is minimal, but Mr. Longoria mentioned that it has remained flat and not so much gone up or down like some other cities cited on the table provided.
- Mr. Moyer suggested an assessment of the swimming pool should be done and possibly a new pool added to North Park or East Park in the future. The pool could be 40 years old.
- Mr. Moyer discussed some possible renovations/ideas for the lake at North Park, and discussed the importance of having a water quality level acceptable for swimming, if that's what the lake should be intended for. Some other ideas included using North Park for fishing and maybe swimming for certain hours, City Park Lake used for swimming, and maybe having swimming only at swimming pools.
- There is a market for softball leagues in the city, and Mr. Moyer outlined those softball leagues that rent facilities. He mentioned that renovations would need to be done for Converse to host any of these leagues.
- The dog park idea was discussed and should be included in a survey of the community. There was mention made that this is part of the animal shelter bond.

- The parks commission decided that at their next monthly meeting, a public hearing will be held for citizens to review and provide feedback on the vision plan. Ms. Brown and Mr. Longoria believes this will fulfill requirements for possible grants.
7. Report from the Public Works Director (M. Longoria)
 - Ms. Liz Brown was hired as grants administrator for the city.
 - The grant is based on Census data from 2010, so Converse's population is recorded at under 20,000, so the \$500,000 grant is not possible, but the \$75,000 may be possible. The grant is for trail enhancements and other improvements.
 - Mr. Longoria invited the commission members to the appreciation dinner hosted by the city staff on Thursday, December 17.
 8. Report from City Council Liaison (Councilwoman N. Droneburg)
 - City Council is waiting for the vision plan from this commission
 9. Commission's Financial Report (M. Longoria and Chairman)
 - Financial report was enclosed. The \$148 expense that came out of the "Events-Other" budget line, which is what the commission uses for events, was an error and the money will be reverted back into the account.
 10. Discussion on any new updates or details for potential future events. (Chairman)
 - a. 25 Mile Bike Ride benefiting Veterans (R. Dennes)
 - No report.
 - b. Fitness in The Park (R. Smith, M. Longoria)
 - No report.
 11. Discussion and Appropriate Action To Plan and Execute Movie in the Park Night event(s), including expenditures of up to \$3,000.00 to include licensing fee, marketing expenses, food/beverage expenses, audio/visual equipment rental, and other event-associated expenses. (Chairman)

The commission discussed the Movie in the Park event in great detail, including:

- Mr. Smith went through the licensing fee, audio/visual expenses, and other event-associated expenses, and explained the research and associated quotes.
 - The licensing covers the "rental" of the movie from Swank Films, and the audio/visual rental will come from Slab Cinema (local company with experience in outdoor movie viewings).
 - Each movie night costs about \$800, not including marketing expenses or other food/beverage expenses.
 - The commission decided not to move forward with putting flyers/inserts in the water bills (expense-related), and instead will do advertising on the city-provide/city-owned assets, including Facebook, website, blurb on water bill, city newsletter, other community-related email lists/newsletters, and billboards.
- The blackout dates for licensing are with Disney movies only.
- Audio/visual will be rented for this year, but these items could be requested in next year's budget request to satisfy the needs of the city council, commission, etc.
- Selecting dates for one movie in April and one movie in June
 - April first choice – April 9
 - April second choice – April 30
 - April third choice – April 23
 - June first choice – June 4
 - June second choice – June 11

- Selecting movies
 - The movies should be G or PG, but PG should be done with caution depending on content. The movies selected by the commission are:
 - First choice: Inside Out (preferably April)
 - Second choice: Minions (preferable June, backup for April)
 - Third choice: Big Hero 6 (alternative to either of the above if not available)
- There was some discussion on having theme nights with each movie, such as a “dive-in” utilizing the swimming pool for June.
- We could sell sno-cones or invite food trucks, but most people bring their own food and beverage.

Motion to approve: Hollowell. **Second:** Woods.

Motion passes.

12. Discussion on parks contracts. (Chairman)

- The commission talked about park facilities rental contracts and the process where a client/group requests to use the facilities at the parks.
- The code says that the commission is supposed to review the contracts before the city staff signs off on it. Mr. Perez gave a historical perspective on the contracts, where the organization and the city staff negotiate and agree to terms, and then the contract comes to the committee to recommend approval or revisions. The larger topic is whether or not the commission should review the contracts or not. It would provide better customer service to not have the back-and-forth and instead suggest a policy for the city staff to consider, and then leave the contracts and negotiations (and approval) to city staff and city council only.
- The commission agreed there should be set fees (which are outlined in Ch. 30).
- At the next meeting, the commission will review whether or not the commission should be ‘approving’ the contracts, or rather providing guidance and advice to the city staff and have only the city staff review and approve the contracts.

13. Discussion on parks rental fees. (Chairman)

- The commission had a discussion on the fees of parks rentals, ball field rentals, swimming pool rates, electricity charges, etc.
- Mr. Smith made the suggestion to not change any fees for this fiscal year and wait until the vision plan is finalized.
- A discussion took place on where the revenue from the rentals go. Right now, the rental fees go into the general fund instead of going back into the parks budget line to provide maintenance.
- Mr. Longoria said that the parks program is not an Enterprise Fund, which is a budget that generates revenue. Instead, the general fund assists in the maintenance of the park fees, even though the rental fees from the parks contracts do not directly go into the parks budget. Mr. Santiago believes the revenue from park contracts should go back into the parks budget for staff, maintenance, etc.

14. Discussion on Chapter 30. (Chairman)

- The ordinance committee in January is going to review the Parks and Environmental Commission suggestions for any revisions.
- Mostly Ch. 30 needs some small updates such as grammar or commission name updates.
- The biggest thing to look at is the fee schedule or any amendments or changes to the code.

- Mr. Woods thinks the intention is good but it may not be the correct route to go.
- Mr. Santiago said that the meetings are open and that's when citizens can bring suggestions to the commission.
- Mr. Smith agrees with the ideas and said that the commission members should be more involved than coming to meetings and approving things.
- Some commission members talked about such a change or amendment taking affect after the current commission members' terms expire.
- Mr. Woods talked about that if a member is part of a commission, it's understood to mean that the member is committed to attending events. Mr. Santiago agreed that anything above providing advice as a commission member should have been brought forward before joining the commission. He agreed that an "as-of" date or grandfathered in clause should be included.
- Mr. Hollowell said the intent was to help the parks staff and improving communication. If there are events, the commission members should be at the events, within some parameters, including excused absences.
- Mr. Woods does not see the point of adding it to the statutes unless it's added with an as-of clause. He agrees with the basic idea.
- Ms. Freelon agreed to have the amendment adjusted to be effective with next terms of the members.
- Mr. Hollowell restated that if the commission plans and event, the commission members should be there to assist with the execution of the event.
- Mr. Smith said he would work with Mr. Hollowell to develop an amendment for review at next meeting that could consider an event within the meeting absence policy.
- Councilwoman Droneburg cautioned the commission that adding responsibilities may have people fall of the board in the future if the work is not clearly outlined.
- Mr. Longoria clarified that two board members can work on creating/writing an amendment together without giving public notice.

b. Standing dates of future meetings (R. Smith)

- The commission talked about the future meeting dates, which are the second Monday of every month.

c. Review of chapter 30 in advance of appropriate action in January

- This will be discussed next meeting, with appropriate action expected.

15. Review of 2016 calendar (January – September) (R. Smith)

- The calendar included in the agenda showed the commission meetings through end of fiscal year (September).

16. Discussion of Agenda Items for next meeting.

- Calendar of rentals
- Financial report
- Chapter 30, including amendment of events/meetings attendance
- Update on bike ride event
- Public hearing on vision plan and appropriate action
- Update on movie on the park events
- Instead of doing an invocation, do a moment of silence for neutrality

17. Set date and time for next meeting.

- January 11, 2016, 6 p.m., City Hall Conference Room

18. Adjournment. **Motion to adjourn by Freelon, second by Santiago. Motion passes.**
Adjournment at 7:44.

Passed and approved by the Parks and Environmental Commission this 11 day of January 2016.

Attest:



Rick Smith