

Bryant Parks Committee Meeting

April 8, 2025 - 6:00 PM

Bishop Park Administration Building

6401 Boone Rd. Bryant, Arkansas

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Call to Order - Amanda Jolly at 6:00 PM

Committee Members Present - Amanda Jolly, Renee Curtis, Lynn Farmer, Drew Martin, Chera Moore, Jason Whittington and Tony Williams.

Others Present - Parks Director Keith Cox, Parks Assistant Director Matt Martin, Parks Center Superintendent Ebonee Scott, Parks Program Coordinator Hunter Bolin, IT Support Technician Philip Plouch and City Councilman Jon Martin.

Approval of Minutes

1. March 11 Parks Committee Meeting

Motion to approve by D. Martin, seconded by Farmer. Motion carried.

Associations/Club Reports

There were no Associations/Club Reports

Director's Report

2. Parks Department Monthly Summary

Cox presents the summary of actions and activities since the last Committee meeting and then gives an update on the status of the Parks Department after the flooding on Saturday, April 5.

Cox says that the flood waters were the worst he has seen since at least 2016, but the damage is not as bad as the flood of 2017. He thanked the Grounds crew for coming in first thing Sunday to get started on cleanup efforts and volunteers from partner organizations, as well as, support from the Department of Corrections for help with the cleanup.

M. Martin says that up to 8 fields have already been repaired and are playable and moving forward that the goal is to repair enough fields to reopen for league ball on Thursday, April 10 and to have all fields repaired in the next two weeks.

Cox credits the Ground Division for building the fields in a way to handle the flood waters much better than in 2017, when some fields were not able to be repaired until the following season.

D. Martin asked about the status of other Parks and the estimated cost for repairs that was not budgeted. M. Martin said that any damage was minimal at other Parks and have already been repaired and Cox said that most fencing repairs and other maintenance issues will be handled internally but the field dirt is the major cost. He said that they don't have an exact cost at this time but assures the Committee that it will be much less than in 2017.

3. Bryant Parks Programming Annual Report

Cox introduces Center Superintendent Ebonee Scott and she gives a report on the youth volleyball league and youth basketball league. She informs that both leagues increased in participation from the previous year and also updates the Committee on the success of the Code of Conduct that was passed by the Parks Committee last Fall. She then introduces Program Coordinator Hunter Bolin. Bolin hands out a list of new programming that he has established since starting last Summer, as well as, what the plan is for new programming coming up this Spring and Summer; including pickleball and archery. He then asks for any questions or feedback from the Committee.

Whittington asks about the possibility of expanding flag football to adult; which will be under consideration.

4. Bryant Parks Advertising Plan

Cox informs the Committee that the Advertising Plan is completed and for them to expect to see that out very soon. He reiterates that the plan has multiple options for cost as well as time commitment so that they can have an offering for all types of businesses.

Moore asks if the funds from this will go into the general fund. Cox informs that currently all sponsorships go into the general fund but that he is working to have all sponsorships and new advertising funds going into a capital fund that will go directly to the facility that is sponsored.

Williams asked if there are any current agreements in place that would conflict with any new advertisers to which Cox informed that there are current sponsors that have exclusivity agreements in place but they are not for all parks so there should be an option for anyone.

Public Comments

There were no Public Comments

Old Business

There was no Old Business

New Business

5. ArDOT TAP Grant

Cox asks for support to apply for the ArDOT TAP Grant to provide parking lot lighting for Bishop Park. Cox says that the design and budget estimate is fully completed but the grant is a 80-20 match so most that the City of Bryant would be responsible for is \$100,000.

Farmer asks for the timeframe and Cox said that the grant is due at the end of the month but that it will be the end of the Summer at the earliest before we know if we have received the grant.

Motion to recommend to Council to apply for the grant by Curtis, seconded by Moore. Motion passes.

6. Request to add Pledge of Allegiance to the beginning of future Committee meetings

D. Martin requests that we follow suit of our City Council, Quorum Court and State Legislature and implement the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance before future meetings. He states that he believes that it is something that we can all come together on and he would like to see all Bryant Committees and Commissions implement it as well.

Discussion follows regarding the differences in volunteer committees and elected officials, as well as, whether or not this would need to be amended in the bylaws, which were just approved in February. Cox informs the Committee that if the Pledge of Allegiance is added as an informal option before the Call to Order, then it does not have to be stated in the bylaws.

Motion to add the Pledge of Allegiance to future meetings by Martin, seconded by Whittington. Cox asks for a Roll Call Vote. Motion Fails with 3 votes for and 5 against.

Committee Comments

Farmer commends Cox for the news story that ran Tuesday morning for the positive spotlight that was put on Bryant for the flood recovery efforts. D. Martin gives credit to the entire Department for the efforts to recover from the extreme flooding so quickly. Cox again thanks the entire staff and all the volunteers that helped with cleanup efforts.

Discussion followed regarding the meeting with all Committees and Commissions on April 24.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Moore, seconded by Farmer. Motion carried.