

PARK COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LEON VALLEY, TEXAS
September 14, 2017 MEETING MINUTES

The Park Commission of the City of Leon Valley, Texas met on the 14th day of September, 2017, at 7:00 p.m., at the Leon Valley Conference Center, 6425 Evers Road, Leon Valley, Texas, for the purpose of the following business, to-wit:

LEON VALLEY PARK COMMISSION MEETING, 7:00 P.M.

1. Call the Meeting to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, and Determine a Quorum is Present.

Chairman Roger Christensen called the Park Commission meeting to order at 7:05 p.m., with the following Park Commissioners in attendance: Roger Christensen, Danielle Bolton, Belinda Ealy, Carolyn Gabriel, David Smith, Geraldine Rodriguez-Smith, and Stephen Parker. Absent were Commissioners Linda Tarin and Benay Cacciatore. Also present were City Councilmember Monica Alcocer, City Manager Kelly Kuenstler, and City Staff member Melinda Moritz.

2. Review and Approval of the August 10, 2017 Regular Park Commission Meeting Minutes.

Commissioner Ealy noted a correction to the minutes on the second page, third paragraph, and then made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 10, 2017 Regular Park Commission meeting. Commissioner Hill seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Citizens to Be Heard

There were no citizens in the audience.

4. Reports on Activities that

A. Proposed Peachtree Pavilion

Staff member Moritz gave a presentation, stating that the site was originally part of the Leon Valley Community Pool property and had been deeded to the City by the developer of Grass Valley in the 1970's. She explained that it had been left vacant, except for parking for 4th of July event, and was mowed monthly by Public Works Crew. She further explained that the idea for a pavilion came about after the Forest Oaks pool property was purchased. She noted that the Forest Oaks Pool had a community room for pool parties, which was booked frequently during the summer and that the L.V. Community Pool did not have a community room, so pool parties are conducted on the grounds with other patrons, unless the pool was booked after hours. She stated that it was thought that constructing

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a pavilion would provide a venue for the pool parties during the summer, then it could be rented on weekends during the fall and winter.

Ms. Moritz stated that the subject was brought before the Park Commission and before City Council during the past summer and had been approved; however, the Mayor had since received concerns from neighboring property owners and requested staff to send out a survey to surrounding property owners, asking if a pavilion was acceptable.

Ms. Moritz stated that 21 surveys were sent to households within 200 ft. of the proposed site, and that she had received 11 surveys. She explained that ten of the surveys received were against the construction of a pavilion at this site and the reasons given for the opposition included noise, trash, blasting music, congestion of people parking along street, fear of inviting vandalism & loitering, bringing down neighborhood appearance, and an increase in traffic. She then explained that one survey had been received in favor with the stipulations that the pavilion be named to highlight the Poss family history, to install barriers to keep pedestrians from trampling adjacent residential property, and that the City adopt a clear and specific policy regarding city personnel to routinely collect trash on this and the adjacent properties.

Ms. Moritz noted that the survey also asked residents that if they did not want a pavilion, then what should be developed on this site. She stated that the answers on all opposing surveys were similar, including leaving the land as is and use it for event parking as before, plant some trees and native plants around the pool, but leave this area as open space for overflow parking, use for more parking only or just install benches, leave empty for the deer, and to plant some trees. She stated that she would be presenting the survey results to the City Council.

Chairman Christensen stated that he had been approached by some citizens while working in the Community Garden about the issue.

Commissioner Parker stated that according to the petitions received, approximately 50% were not in favor of building a pavilion at this site. He then noted that in light of the fact that there were none of these citizens in attendance, he wondered if they should proceed with the discussion.

Chairman Christensen stated that he was in agreement with Mr. Parker's indecision. He noted that he had spoken to several people regarding their concern that the pavilion may bring additional noise to the neighborhood, but that

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they had chosen to live near Raymond Rimkus Park and the pool, they should anticipate noise and congestion. He stated that the City has ordinances in place to deal with noise complaints. He further stated that the Park Commission was tasked with encouraging people to go outside and experience nature. He stated that he would entertain a motion to either rescind the decision made in the summer, a motion to reaffirm their approval of the pavilion, or a motion to defer any decision until further information was received.

Commissioner Smith stated that, in his opinion, if the construction of a pavilion was so offensive to the neighborhood, they would have come to the meeting to express their concerns. He reiterated the fact that the neighborhood had a pool and a park in close proximity and that both created noise. He noted that the Police Department would enforce any violations of a noise ordinance. He then made a motion to maintain their previous recommendation and move forward with the pavilion. He noted that the Park Commission had made recommendations for the planting of trees and to install trash cans at this site.

Council member Alcocer stated that she concurred with the recommendations. She then stated that her husband had wanted to speak at the meeting for the citizens – not the neighborhood, but was unable to attend. She then asked if she could read her husband's statement. After being granted permission, she stated that her husband Mr. Al Alcocer had said he felt the citizens needed to accept improvements that were good for the City as a whole. He then wrote that he and his wife had traveled around the United States during the past summer to 35 states and Canada, and they had actively looked for parks and pavilions. He then wrote that the parks and pavilions were being heavily used by people and that having these types of improvements encouraged people to get outside. He stated that the more the City could do to get people to go outside, the better off the citizens would be. He finished by asking that the Park Commission please accept his opinion on the subject.

Chairman Christensen then asked the City Manager her opinion. Ms. Kuentler stated that that installation of a pavilion was a policy decision and that she would respect the decision of the policy makers. She did note that the land belonged to the citizens and that the two pavilions already constructed at Raymond Rimkus Park were continuously rented out and she thought a third pavilion would also be heavily used.

Commissioner Ealy stated that the Commission had visited the Huebner Park site and that the persons visiting that park would also be causing noise to the

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surrounding neighborhood. She noted that this would be the same for a pavilion on the subject site. She stated that the subject site was zoned B-1 Small Business and if sold, would most probably be used as such, which would also cause noise, even though she knew the neighbors would hope it would be rezoned at some point. She stated that the City could use any revenue from the pavilion to off-set the expense of the pool operations. She explained that a decision needed to be made now in order to make this pool more comparable to the Forest Oaks Pool, and also to keep the Leon Valley pool safer by offering extra space outside of the pool grounds.

A general discussion was held about the zoning, floodplain, and the type of pavilion to be built.

Commissioner Parker then stated that there was a motion on the floor, that he was willing to send the motion, and that he didn't want to completely ignore the residents who were against the pavilion, but that to use the site for parking only was not an efficient use. He stated that the City should make this site usable by all residents. He stated that the City could limit the hours of use to the same as the other parks as a compromise.

Chairman Christensen stated that he understood Commissioner Parker's unwillingness to ignore the surrounding resident's concerns, but that the pavilion site would be under the same rules as the rest of the park areas.

Commissioner Parker then stated that he would vote to move forward with a recommendation and then consider amendments as time went on. Chairman Christensen then asked Commissioner Smith if he would accept some amendments to his motion, including the provision that the rules of the parks applying to this pavilion. Mr. Smith stated that he would accept a sunup to sundown use, but not to put a set time. He then stated that this would be for regular use of the pavilion and not the pool parties.

Chairman Christensen then stated that the Park Ordinance did have a provision for variances and that anyone wanting to hold a pool party past the park hours of operation could ask for a variance. Ms. Moritz stated that there were too many pool parties to have all the applicants apply for variances. Chairman Christensen then asked if Mr. Smith would withdraw his motion, which he did and Commissioner Parker withdrew his send to the motion.

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After more discussion, Commissioner Bolton made a motion to approve the construction of a pavilion at this site, with the usage and other site amenity details to be worked out at a later date. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Walton. The motion passed with eight Commissions in favor and one Commissioner against.

B. Presentation, Discussion, and Possible Action – Park Rental Fees

Staff member Moritz gave a presentation on the current park fees and the fees being charged by other cities for park pavilion and athletic field usage, noting that Leon Valley's fees were considerably lower than the rest.

Commissioner Bolton asked if we have a fee differential for residents versus nonresidents. Ms. Moritz stated that there was not.

Commissioner Smith asked why there was an application fee separate from the rental fee. He noted that it should just be included in the rental fees. He then stated that persons renting the pavilions had them all day, which was a long time for such a low rate. Councilmember Alcocer agreed and stated that she noticed several large church groups holding what she thought were sermons on Sundays and that there should be some restrictions regarding the use of loud speakers. She noted that it didn't seem right to have a sermon being preached to the entire neighborhood. She further noted that if the fees were higher, the City might be able to hire more staff for the parks. She stated that the City needed stricter rules and much higher fees.

Commissioner Hill stated that she thought Leon Valley residents should be able to rent the pavilions at a lower rate than non-residents and that the usage should be split into a morning session and an afternoon session, and then have staff clean the pavilions in between usages. Ms. Moritz stated that she was not sure the Public Works Crew would be able to get to the pavilions or have enough time to clean them in between uses.

Commissioner Smith stated that they could split the times, but also offer all day rental at a higher price. Commissioner Ealy agreed, stating that the Community and Conference Centers are also operated in that manner.

Chairman Christensen stated that he agreed the current fee structure was too low and recommended that staff come back to the Commission with a recommendation for a fee increase.

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Commissioner Smith agreed, stating that, in his opinion, \$100 for each four hour block was reasonable. Commissioner Hill agreed, but asked if the fees could be lowered for Leon Valley residents. She also stated that the City could offer half days at one price and then a full day with a higher price, but with a slight discount. Commissioner Parker stated that he was fine with a two tier system, with fees being lower for Leon Valley residents.

Chairman Christensen stated that he thought the fees should be raised but not implemented until January 1st, in order to give enough time to advertise the increase.

A general discussion was held regarding increasing the fees, how the cleaning would be handled, absorbing the application fee into the reservation fee, on-line rental applications, and including all fees in one to make on-line reservations easier.

Commissioner Bolton stated that the Commission could agree to a fee increase and then work out the details at a later date. Commissioner Smith made a motion to consider increasing the fees at the park for both pavilion and athletic field rentals, which was seconded by Commissioner Parker. The vote was unanimously in favor. Commissioner Smith then asked if the proposed fee schedule could be presented to the Commission at the October meeting, so that it could be presented to City Council and then advertised by January. Ms. Moritz stated that she thought it could.

5. Commissioner and Staff Comments

Commissioner Ealy stated that she was glad to see so many people enjoying the park. She then noted that the Community Garden was looking a little ragged and that the City needed more plot tenders. She stated that she was thankful Hurricane Harvey had not hit the City and was also thankful for the readiness of the staff during the emergency.

Commissioner Parker stated that he had sent some deer pictures to City Council in a presentation given by Chairman Christensen and that his Google view was now over 4000.

Commissioner Walton stated that she was a Grandmother again and that she was glad to be back.

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Commissioner Gabriel stated that the Library was going to hold a 40th birthday celebration and that she hoped everyone would attend the festivities.

Commissioner Bolton stated that she was excited that the Somerset Police Explorers were to start participating in the Leon Valley program during the next year.

Commissioner Hill stated that she was grateful for the beautiful weather and that she was inviting everyone to the Leon Valley Historical Society General Membership meeting. She noted that the guest speaker would be the developers of the Selma Stage Coach Stop and that they would be discussing all that they had accomplished. She noted that they would be serving cookies and lemonade at the event.

Commissioner Smith stated that the Old Mill Park was coming along nicely. He then asked if the Park Commission packet could be emailed to him ahead of time. He then informed the Commissioners that the Home Rule packet would be in citizen's mailboxes soon.

Commissioner Geraldine Rodriguez – Smith stated that she thought the Commissioners had engaged in some great discussion during the evening.

Chairman Christensen stated that the Commissioner had received a request to allow dogs in the Huebner-Onion Natural Area Park. He noted that he thought they should delay any action on the request for now. Commissioner Hill asked if this was because of the recent attack on a person in Hardberger Park. Mr. Christensen stated that he was not sure, but that pets were not allowed in the Huebner-Onion Natural Area Park. He noted that this subject would be brought to the Park Commissioner's attention at a later date.

Commissioner Parker stated that this was one of the questions he had brought to the Commission when he was appointed Commissioner. He stated that dogs were most probably prohibited due the fear they would defecate along the trail, but he noted the deer defecated along the trail now. He also noted that the prohibition couldn't be enforced and that he wouldn't want the Police Department to have to try to enforce it.

Chairman Christensen stated that staff would be bringing the next fiscal year's park budget to the October Park Commission meeting for their review and would also be bringing a schedule of when the new improvements would be installed at

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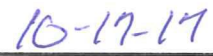
the various parks. He noted that he was not in favor of limiting the sizes or types of groups that use the park pavilions. He then asked if everyone was comfortable staying on the Park Commission. They stated that they were. He noted that the Peachtree Pavilion discussion would be brought before the City Council at their next regular meeting. He then asked for a motion to adjourn.

7. Adjourn.

Commissioner Gabriel made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Hill. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.



Roger Christensen - Chairman



Date