

Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting
November 7, 2016

Present: Committee Members LeJeune, Fleck and Buxton; Council Members Clausen, Sovinski, Scott, and Larmore; Mayor Hazel; Parks & Recreation Director Strable; Bill Kincaid, The Daily Standard; and citizens, coaches, and parents.

Committee Chairman LeJeune called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm for further discussion of the proposed volunteer recreation advisory board. As a result of previous comments regarding the inclusion of coaches representing each sport he is recommending a nine member group consisting of the Parks Director, Mayor, a Council member, four coaches, (considering parents, sports and gender representation); and two parents who are not coaches. The meetings should be limited to one hour in length, with seven meetings scheduled in 2017. The committee members would need to commit to a one year term with reassessment to be pursued for a 2018 board. Interested individuals in serving on the board should contact the Parks Director by Thanksgiving. By last week of November, he will then have the board set. The Parks Director, Mr. Strable, will be the leader of the group.

CM Clausen asked if the coaching representatives would be high school or recreation sport coaches. CM LeJeune replied he would like to let that up to the volunteers. CM Scott asked Mr. Strable what he thinks of the proposal. Darl replied he likes it. He has been working on asking people's opinions and getting ideas. CM Scott further asked what response he has gotten from people he has been in contact with. Darl replied most everyone he has talked to has expressed interest in participating. CM Scott further asked how he sees his role in the board. Darl responded he is a difference maker and knows that others will bring ideas to the table and his goal is to make a difference.

CM LeJeune stated in the past week three high sports groups have made it to regionals. This did not just happen overnight and we are grateful for the starting point of where we are.

CM Larmore suggested the members serve a two year term to get a better continuity. CM Buxton recommended the terms be staggered with four one-year terms and four two-year terms. CM Sovinski stated he thinks it should be a minimum of two years or a maximum of three. He stated it may be difficult to find coaches to fulfill the positions annually.

CM Sovinski asked if the positions cannot be filled, if there will be provisions to allow for fewer members. Mayor Hazel responded he has asked the Law Director if Roberts Rules still apply since it is just an advisory board. The Law Director is looking into it.

Gale Smith, 1307 Queensbury stated she does not believe it will be difficult to get volunteers if we show that we are making a difference.

JT Irmischer, 1905 Knapke Court stated he is for coaches' involvement. He recommended three members from the community and asked Darl if he has members already committed. Darl replied nothing is set in stone yet.

Amanda Hart, 4004 Mud Pike asked if the coaches who will be on the board will be middle and high school coaches. Mayor Hazel explained it can be both school coaches and recreation coaches. Amanda Harter further asked if the advisory board meetings will be open to the public. Mayor Hazel stated they will not be official meetings, but they will not be closed meetings. CM Scott asked if the meetings would be announced to the public. Mayor Hazel stated the meetings can be advertised. CM LeJeune stated there should not be open discussion for the public during the meeting. However, at the end of the meeting, they could talk to the advisory members about their concerns.

Amanda Hart asked how the projects that the board is working on be communicated to the public. CM LeJeune responded items will be discussed in this focus group, then they can come to a Council Committee meeting to become more public. CM Sovinski stated the Parks Director needs to get the communication out. If there are changes being presented, the Recreation Director would need to put out news releases so he or the board members can get feed backs before they make any recommendations.

Todd Steinbrunner, 1149 Jefferson Avenue asked if the members would have decision making power. For example, if a decision of drafting every sport can be made by the committee members. Mayor Hazel responded the recreational operations of the programs is able to be decided by the Recreation Direction and board members. CM Larmore further explained funding of any recommendations needs to be approved by Council.

Amanda Hart asked if equipment has been evaluated to know what needs updated next year. Darl responded he has not had enough time to go through all of the equipment. Amanda stated she knows there us equipment that needs replaced and would like to be sure it is in the budget.

Chairman LeJeune adjourned the meeting at 6:37 pm.

Submitted by Joan S. Wurster, Clerk of Council