



WILDWOOD®

## Parks Action Plan Update Committee Minutes from the Monday, November 29, 2017 Meeting

### I. Welcome to Committee Members and Opening Remarks by Chair Garrett

The meeting was called to order by Chair Garrett at 6:30 p.m.

### II. Roll Call of Members

A roll call of members was taken, with the following results:

*Committee Members Present:* Broyles, Napoli, Coverdell, Gillman, Strand, McCune, Meinert, Commission Liaison Beattie, Council Liaison Alexander, Council Liaison Bertolino, and Chair Garrett

*Committee Members Absent:* None

#### *Other Officials*

*and Staff in Attendance:* Director of Planning and Parks Vujnich, Assistant Director of Planning and Parks Arnett, and Superintendent of Parks and Recreation Crews

### III. Review and Action on the Meeting Minutes from October 30, 2017

A motion was made by Committee Member McCune, seconded by Committee Member Meinert, to approve the October 30, 2017 minutes. A voice vote was taken, with no opposition, and the motion was declared approved by Chair Garrett.

### IV. Review of Tonight's Agenda

The agenda was reviewed by Chair Garrett. There were no questions.

### V. Department of Planning and Parks Budget Information

- a. Revenue Sources – General and Specific
- b. Operating Budget – Parks
- c. Capital Improvements
  1. Capital Improvement Program – 2018
  2. 5-Year Capital Improvements Plan

Director of Planning Vujnich provided an overview of the Department's two (2) revenue sources: 1. General Revenue (City operating budget, used for day-to-day activities); and 2. Capital Improvements

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Sales Tax (used for large projects). He then introduced City Administrator Thomas to provide an overview of the entire City budget, including the parks component.

City Administrator Thomas noted the Fiscal Year 2018 budget process is in review. A public hearing was held a week ago and the City Council should issue final approval in December. He then noted the following:

3. The projected operating expenditures for the entire City for 2018 are \$12,383,465.00;
4. The projected operating revenues are \$13,570,000.00;
5. The projected capital expenditures are \$14,496,410.00;
6. The projected capital revenues are \$7,825,064.00, plus a beginning fund balance of \$9,290,598.00; and
7. The total budget for expenditures in 2018 is \$26,879,875.00.

Discussion was then held among the Committee Members regarding the following: the possible fluctuations in revenue numbers; the issues with the sales tax distribution, but anticipation of the change being minimal; how revenues are received by the City; the expenditures by Department; the recently approved public safety tax (Prop. P), which will allow the City to hire an officer for parks and trails; the Community Park Phase 4 Project, which could be either the woodland amphitheater or a chain of lakes in the southeast portion of the park; the types of grants and how to access them, including the Municipal Parks Grant Commission, Missouri Department of Natural Resource, Missouri Department of Conservation, federal transportation funds for trails, Great Rivers Greenway funding, etc.; the deadlines for particular grants and timelines for availability; the proposal for a 1/2 cent sales tax, which was defeated in 2008; the potential for adding a sales tax for parks and stormwater on a future ballot; the cost of flooding on trails; and the potential use of an aquifer system for trail planning. It was noted the City generally avoids utilizing the aquifer recharge areas because of the amount of Wildwood population that need groundwater for potable purposes from private wells. Although, public space is utilized within floodplain and the Glencoe Area is a good example of this use.

Director of Planning Vujnich then reviewed the Parks Accomplishments for 2017 and noted the next meeting will include an overview of the Department's proposed 2018 events.

## VI. Survey Results and Preliminary Analysis of Them

Assistant Director of Planning and Parks Arnett reviewed the results and analysis of the survey. She noted the survey was conducted from mid-August until October 23, 2017. The survey was intended to gauge opinions on the City's current efforts and future goals for parks and recreation for the Committee to use in its deliberations and plan revisions. The survey had been mailed to each household as part of *The Gazette*, was available online, advertised on social media, and in the City's weekly e-mail newsletter. The total number of responses was four hundred forty-four (444), which represents 3.2% of all households and 1.2% of all residents within the City. Assistant Director Arnett noted this response rate provides a 95% confidence level and a margin of error between four (4) and five (5) percent. These levels are acceptable in calculating the survey responses; however, a higher return would have provided a greater confidence level and less error. She then reviewed the highlights of the responses:

- Question 1. Within the City of Wildwood, there are many options for park use and trail activities. Both State, County, and Wildwood parks and trails are available for residents of this community. What is your favorite park facility and trail corridor (it can be a State, County, or Wildwood facility)?

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Most popular answers were: Al Foster Memorial Trail, Community Park, Bluff View Trail, and Rock Hollow Trail. Bluff View and Rock Hollow Trails, and the single-track trail that connects them, are popular places for mountain bikers and hikers. The Bluff View Trail is one of the few in the area that allows equestrian use, increasing its appeal to a variety of users.

- Question 2. What is your favorite activity to enjoy when at these facilities or trail corridors?

It is apparent from the responses that approximately twenty percent (20%) of respondents noted mountain biking as one of their favorite activities. This sport is definitely popular in Wildwood and a favorite activity of a fair amount of residents and visitors, but this number may be slightly elevated due to the volume of survey responses from that interest group. It is reaffirming the top six (6) responses include walking, running, hiking, and some type of bicycle riding, since much of the City's focus has been on trail development and linkages.

- Question 3. Acknowledging the number of parks and trail corridors located within the City of Wildwood, what facilities or play venues are missing that you would support additional funding towards in the next ten (10) years?

These results show twenty-two percent (22%) of respondents are interested in some type of municipal swimming pool, water park, or sprayground. Additionally, another twenty-two percent (22%) would like to see additional trails built and added to the current network. Respondents mentioned the importance of providing key connections within the system to close gaps and connect regional parks and trail systems. These two (2) responses were by far the most requested 'missing' facility in the survey.

- Question 4. As the City considers strategic purchases of property for specific needs, both active and passive uses of them are being considered. What percentage of any new parkland areas should be active or passive (assuming a total of one hundred (100) percent)? a. % Active (athletic fields, courts, playgrounds, multiple-use trails, skate parks, band shells, and horse arenas) b. Passive (picnic areas, pavilions, gardens, and open grass and native/wild flower plantings)

The largest response was a 50/50 split of monies to be spent on both active and passive areas, with over twenty percent (20%) of respondents noting the budget should be spent equally on both types of facilities.

- Question 5. How important is it for the city to develop the amenities of an all-inclusive environment in all of our playgrounds, such as the one in Community Park?

These results show nearly half of all respondents believe having City facilities accessible to people of all abilities is very important. With fifteen percent (15%) of the population having some type of special need, the support of inclusion is essential to making sure all of Wildwood's residents have access to its facilities.

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- Question 6. The City of Wildwood has always capitalized on partnering with other providers of parks and recreational opportunities in meeting residents' needs. The Summer Swimming Pool Pass Program with the Cities of Ballwin and Ellisville is an example. Should the City of Wildwood:

These results will pose a challenge for the Committee to determine an approach within the revised Action Plan, since the results were so close between those that believe partnerships should be continued and those that believe the City should build its own facilities.

- Question 7. What should future Wildwood park facilities include that is currently missing within them (athletic fields, equestrian facilities and trails, boat ramps, fishing lakes, skate parks, tennis and other hard court areas, ice rinks, outdoor swimming pools, etc.)?

This question is very similar to Question #3. Each of these questions were asked in a slightly different manner, and reflective of this approach, with the responses varying slightly. These responses do, however, again provide insight to the desire for some type of swimming facility, with twenty-three percent (23%) noting this as a missing amenity. Trails did not rank quite as high in this response, while athletic fields and a lake both had significantly more responses with the question worded this way, versus its format in Question #3.

- Question 8. If it were up to you, and assuming each cost were the same, how would you spend \$100.00 among each of the following park and recreation facilities in the City of Wildwood?
  - a. Acquisition of additional properties for parkland, trail, and open space purposes;
  - b. Development of active indoor recreational facilities;
  - c. Development of parks and outdoor recreational facilities and fields;
  - d. Implementation on new programming utilizing existing and nearby facilities;
  - e. \$100.00 total

The responses to this question show the highest amount of votes for the following:

- \$50 of every \$100 to be spent on acquisition (14%);
- \$0 of every \$100 to be spent on indoor facilities (33%);
- (tie) \$0 of every \$100 and \$20 of every \$100 to be spent on outdoor facilities (13%); and
- \$0 of every \$100 to be spent on programming (27%)

These responses again provide a challenge for the Committee on how to balance the need for parks, trails, and programming requested by respondents, yet satisfying their desire on how the money is spent. If the highest selected dollar amount to be used in acquisition (\$50 of every \$100) is a guideline, how does the plan balance the use of these acquired facilities with the remaining fifty percent (50%) of the budget amount?

- Question 9. Many communities adjoining the City of Wildwood have been successful in having their residents support a sales tax increase to support park and trail development, along with maintenance. Would you support a park sales tax, if presented to the voters of Wildwood within the next ten (10) years?

These results show substantial support of a majority of respondents for a park/trail dedicated sales tax within the next decade.

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- Question 10. This sales tax for park, trail, and recreational purposes can range from one-eighth of a percent to one-half of a (1) percent, with the potential to raise up to \$750,000.00 per year for these purposes. Assuming you support a park sales tax, what level do you believe is appropriate:

These results indicate the majority of those respondents that answered this question selected 1/8 of a percent. The online version of the survey did not include an option of 'none', so some respondents were upset that a selection had to be made. However, noting that over eighty percent (80%) of those individuals responding did support some type of tax, this data is still reasonably accurate.

- Question 11. Of the City of Wildwood's eight (8) wards some do not have a park facility located within them. How important is it to you that every ward have a park?

The vast majority of respondents believe it would be nice if each of the City's wards contained a park, but they believed it was not necessary. It should be noted, the following wards are currently without a City, County, or State park facility within their boundaries: Two, Three, Five, Seven, and Eight. It should also be noted that, following the 2020 census, the City's ward boundaries will be redistricted to ensure the population is nearly equal among them.

- Question 12. Over the years, the City of Wildwood has offered a range of recreational opportunities, from races and hikes to concerts and classes. Assuming you have participated in one (1) or more of these activities, which were your favorites and, in your opinion, what opportunities should the City be considering for the next ten (10) years for its residents from a recreation programming standpoint?

These results indicate that one (1) in every five (5) of the survey respondents noted concerts were their favorite program and/or they would like to see more live music offerings. Additionally, over one-quarter (1/4) of respondents have participated and/or would like to see more active outdoor events, such as runs (5K and half-marathon), walks, hikes, and bicycling events. There is a desire from respondents for activities for teens and the continuation/addition of family/community events, as well as programming of classes and events for senior citizens.

## VII. Selection of Meeting Dates for 2018

The Committee held a discussion on the desire to pick a set day/time each month for their remaining meetings. After the City Hall calendar was reviewed for availability, consensus was reached among the members to schedule their meetings on the fourth Wednesday of each month, at 6:30 p.m.

## VIII. Public Comments

Kelley Woerther, 539 Nantucket Pointe Drive, requested the Department's report from August 19, 2014 regarding Belleview Farms be forwarded to the Committee for its review. She stated this property's connection to Al Foster Memorial Trail is important and it has the ability to host programming not provided elsewhere in the City, included guided hikes, bird watching, hay rides, etc.

Tammy Shea, Council Member Ward Three, noted the Belleview Farms property was bequeathed to St. Louis County and is to stay undeveloped forever, so it would not become housing, and it is a great asset and opportunity for the City to develop a park there and utilize this property. She believes the money spent

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each year on park maintenance is a great investment. She emphasized the importance of a Village Green, but noted this Action Plan, once revised by the Committee, should not be an economic driver, but instead provide community stability and what retain residents in the City appreciated.

IX. Other Items of Interest

Committee Member Gillman requested the Committee begin talking broadly about creating connections between parks. He is urging the Committee to create a Master Plan of park connections in a spoke pattern that could be used for federal funding of trails and the development of a Village Green. Discussion was held among the Committee Members, who stated they agree with moving toward the planning process quickly, but need to have more base information, before they were comfortable discussing specific items.

X. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

A motion was made by Commission Liaison Beattie, seconded by Committee Member Gillman, to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken, with unanimous approval, and Chair Garrett declared the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.