

City of Montgomery  
Parks and Recreation Committee Minutes  
November 12, 2018

Present

Brian Riblet, City Manager  
Terry Willenbrink, Asst. Public Works Director  
Connie Gaylor, Clerk of Council

Committee Members Present

Lynda Roesch  
Gerri Harbison  
Mike Cappel

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The Parks and Recreation Committee of Council convened in Council Chambers at 3:30 p.m. with Ms. Roesch presiding.

**Old Business**

**Discussion of City Owned Athletic Fields**

Ms. Roesch stated to those in attendance that she was disappointed that at the conclusion of the October 15 Parks and Recreation Committee meeting that representatives from the GSSA and Premiere SC were not able to come to an agreement on the usage of the City's soccer fields. She stated that after discussing the matter with the City's Law Director she feels the only equitable method is to give one third of the field use to the Premiere League based on the number of participants in the organization. She stated that City staff will create a field map which will designate which fields will be granted to the individual organizations.

Mr. Cappel stated that the City fields are for the use of every family and that teams are to be reminded that they do not have ownership of the fields. Mr. Cappel stated that an alternative is to begin charging for the fields and requiring people to register for the use of them.

Mrs. Harbison stated that the City must be fair to all parties and if a family was to have reserved a shelter for a family reunion and were using the fields that the leagues would not have the right to ask them to leave.

Mr. Derek Scranton with the GSSA, stated that they offered four fields to Premiere SC, but they were not at Weller. He explained that approximately 800 players participate in their organization every fall. He stated that their organization started at Weller Park and is 100% Montgomery residents and Sycamore School students. He stated that he felt that Premiere SC only wanted Weller Park and wouldn't accept the use of other fields. He stated he is sorry that they could not come to a resolution.

Ms. Roesch stated that this situation is a measure of the success of the sport of soccer, however the fields belong to the City and the residents so one third of the fields will go for the use of the Premiere SC.

Mr. Riblet stated that Ms. Roesch has made it very clear where the Committee stands on this issue. He stated that he feels that it may be time for staff to conduct a comprehensive study to identify how the parks are being utilized and where other field space could be found. He stated that it's unfortunate that the teams could not work out a compromise.

Mr. Scranton explained that GSSA worked to consolidate as much as they could into one park, which was Weller. He stated they did this so that they wouldn't be splitting up families who may have more than one child playing in games at the same time. He stated that they offered Premiere SC more than what they requested, but they didn't want it because it wasn't Weller Park.

Mrs. Harbison stated that the City really doesn't want to make these decisions but will since they are unable to.

Ms. Roesch stated that staff will look at it in the most equitable way possible and that staff can only assign City owned parks so if there are school fields in use they will not be included.

Mr. Cappel stated that everyone is entitled to use all parks, the City will not choose a favorite park for the teams.

Ms. Roesch stated that staff will move forward with creating the map and assigning the fields. She stated her hope is that the organizations can work something out even after these assignments are made.

Mr. Riblet stated he hopes they can come together to work things out.

Mrs. Harbison asked the groups to notify the Committee if they reach a compromise.

Mr. John Mercurio of Premiere SC stated that they have no conflict with GSSA. He stated that Weller Park is available in both seasons and that is why both parties want it.

Mr. Scranton stated that GSSA currently works with the baseball association to schedule fields during the spring season and that they need to be involved in the process as well.

Ms. Roesch stated that this schedule may require some fields to be used interchangeably from day to day. She asked Mr. Willenbrink when a map can be produced.

Mr. Willenbrink replied that it could be done by the next Committee meeting to be held on December 10.

Ms. Roesch invited both parties to come to the December 10, 2018 Parks and Recreation Committee meeting for final field assignments.

### **Minutes**

Mrs. Harbison moved to approve the October 15, 2018 Committee minutes. Mr. Cappel seconded. The Committee unanimously approved the minutes.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Cappel moved for adjournment. Mrs. Harbison seconded. The Committee unanimously agreed.

The Parks and Recreation Committee of Council meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

  
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Chair