

City of Wilmington
Parks Board Special Meeting
June 10, 2024, at 6:00 PM
WPD Sally Port
MINUTES

Call to Order: Mr. Early began the Special Parks Board meeting for June 10th, 2024, at 6 PM and completed the Roll Call: Carlos Roberts, Ned Thompson, and Jeff Early; all present.

1. Executive Session pursuant to R.C. 121.22(G)(1) to consider the appointment of a public employee

- Mr. Early advised that the first item on the agenda included an Executive Session and asked for such a motion as to enter into an executive session pursuant to RC121.22(G)(1) to consider the appointment of a public employee where the Board would like to invite Laura Loggains, Lori Williams, and Mayor Haley. Mr. Roberts made a motion to enter into Executive Session for this purpose, seconded by Mr. Thompson. Roll Call affirmed; motion passed unanimously.

Park Board entered the Executive Session.

Park Board voted unanimously to exit the Executive Session.

Mr. Early asked for a motion to consider the appointment of Kenny Upthegrove as Parks & Recreation Director. Mr. Thompson made a motion to appoint Kenny Upthegrove to the position of Director, and Mr. Roberts seconded the motion. Roll Call affirmed; motion passed unanimously.

2. Executive Session pursuant to R.C. 121.22(G)(1) to consider the compensation of a public employee

- Mr. Early asked if there was a motion to move into executive session, pursuant to RC121.22(G)(1) to consider the compensation of a public employee. Mr. Roberts made a motion to enter into Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Thompson. Roll Call affirmed; motion passed unanimously.

Park Board entered the Executive Session.

Park Board voted unanimously to exit the Executive Session.

Mr. Early asked for a motion to vote on the compensation for Kenny Upthegrove to go to range 19, Step A. Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve the compensation range 19, Step A, and Mr. Roberts seconded the motion. Roll Call affirmed; motion passed unanimously.

3. Projects

- A. Xidas Park:** Mr. Early provided an update on the renovation, noting that it is nearly complete. Ms. Williams mentioned that the lights installation, one rafter, and camera repairs are still pending. When asked about the completion timeline, Ms. Williams did not have a firm date.
- B. Denver Williams Front Entrance:** Mr. Early addressed the Denver Memorial Entrance project, noting that the landscaping had been installed. Mr. Early and Ms. Williams agreed on adding concrete with possible solar lights to highlight the plaques and discussed potential costs. Mr. Haley confirmed that the city's streets department could assess the situation. They agreed to gather estimates, finalize specifications, and determine the work division between the city and contractors.
- C. Southeast Community Park:** Ms. Williams mentioned that an application was submitted through the county for the grant but was unsure about the timeline, even though the project had been approved. She clarified that the project involves upgrading playground equipment and improving drainage. They discussed whether this might be part of the Dome Street project, but Ms. Williams was uncertain. She recalled that the grant amount was around \$140,000, with additional funds for tire removal. Some funds

had already been spent, and Ms. Williams advised the next step is to follow up on project details, including defining playground equipment specifications and deciding on the bid process.

- D. **Galvin:** Ms. Williams introduced the discussion on the pending capital budget. Mr. Early mentioned that a submission had been made, but there was uncertainty about the final details. Mr. Haley added that he had spoken with a state senator, who indicated that the House might consider additional items, so the current details might not be accurate. Ms. Williams clarified that the CDBG was separate from the budget bill and suggested taking a holistic approach to the park's development. They discussed a potential budget of around \$137,000 for Galvin Park, with some funds allocated to Denver Park. The group agreed to clarify the grants and budget specifics once more information became available.
- E. **Playground Inspections:** Mr. Early mentioned awaiting a report from Tiffany, who had conducted inspections. Ms. Williams suggested doing a site visit to evaluate the concerns firsthand, noting that some playground equipment might not meet current safety standards, even if they are not illegal. Mr. Haley raised a concern about potential conflicts of interest if the inspector has a financial stake in selling equipment and recommended considering an independent inspector. Ms. Williams agreed and emphasized the importance of seeing the issues firsthand before making decisions. Ms. Loggains mentioned that Kenny would be receiving playground inspection training and certification in September, which could save money on future inspections. The group agreed to set up a walkthrough once the full inspection report was received, with flexibility for scheduling based on availability.
- F. **Parking Lot Repairs:** Mr. Early introduced the status of parking lot repairs, mentioning that an estimate had been sent to the Board of Control. However, Ms. Williams clarified that it had not been submitted. She explained that the general fund allocated \$26,000 for repairs to two major parking lots and emphasized the need to obtain multiple estimates, especially if vendors are unfamiliar. She recommended checking references and having clear specifications for the work, particularly for crack repair and suggested waiting until the fall to avoid disrupting parking during busy periods. Ms. Loggains added that the bid had not been taken to the Board of Control because the second bid was incomplete, lacking details on the splash pad quote. Mr. Haley inquired about the budget, and Ms. Williams confirmed that \$26,000 was included in the general fund based on a preliminary estimate.
- G. **Banner Update:** Mr. Early introduced an update on the banner project, mentioning a cost of \$7,825 and inquiring about the latest artwork for the final banner. Ms. Williams confirmed that one more banner needed completion and noted that expectations for the banner were still unclear, as she hadn't seen any artwork. Mr. Early mentioned an email from Allison, which indicated no specific timeframe but confirmed that a banner was owed. Ms. Williams added that 25 banners were paid for, with an additional eight provided in-kind. The conversation concluded with Ms. Loggains offering to help with planting on the weekend and a brief acknowledgment of last year's successful collaboration with Moore's Garden Center.

4. Finances

- A. **Review Budget:** Mr. Early introduced the finance section of the meeting, acknowledging that it would be an in-depth discussion. Ms. Williams began by explaining the report format they've been using, which compiles information from the auditor's system into a two-year comparative view. She highlighted the transfer from the general fund intended to cover truck trail repair and parking lot maintenance and noted that some found the request aggressive, but it was justified and approved. Ms. Williams reviewed the revenue and expenses for 2024 and 2023, pointing out a discrepancy in the youth sports budget that needed further investigation.

Mr. Early inquired about a doubling error in the budget, which Ms. Williams explained was due to a clerical mistake where revenue was mistakenly reported twice. This error was being corrected, and she reassured the group that it didn't affect the numbers presented in the report.

Ms. Williams also provided an overview of open purchase orders (POs) and year-to-date expenses for informational purposes. The discussion then moved to budget transfers, where Ms. Williams explained how funds were transferred between line items. She also mentioned a reporting tool available for reviewing historical spending. The group had no further questions, and Ms. Williams concluded by stating that she would follow up on the minor discrepancy in the youth sports budget.

- B. Transfer between Line Items:** Mr. Early introduced the next agenda item, which involved a financial transfer. He initially stated that \$2,600 needed to be transferred from professional services to cover adult softball umpires. However, Ms. Williams clarified that the transfer should be from park maintenance and supplies back into professional services, as the adult softball umpires are paid a negotiated rate per game rather than an hourly rate, which falls under professional services. Mr. Early then corrected his request, asking for a motion to transfer \$2,600 from the park maintenance and supplies line item (540.430.533) to the professional services line item (540.430.5239). Mr. Thompson made a motion, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Roberts. Roll Call affirmed; motion passed unanimously. Following the motion, Kathy Collins provided historical context, explaining that the previous board focused on separating sport-specific costs. He noted that while funds are currently being moved out of park maintenance, they will likely need to be moved back in later in the year, suggesting that a rule or system could be established to manage these transfers more efficiently.
- C. Authorize Pickleball Expenses:** Mr. Early initiated the discussion by stating that they needed to authorize a pickleball expense line item for a supplemental appropriation, noting that the funds would come from the recreation fund. Ms. Williams offered to clarify, explaining that the pickleball community had previously raised funds to replace non-functional lights on the courts. Ms. Collins mentioned that a pickleball expense line item had already been requested in December, but it might not have been properly set up. Ms. Williams suggested verifying whether the line item was already in place and, if not, creating a new one to ensure the funds were correctly allocated. The discussion revealed that there was already a pickleball donation fund on the revenue side, but the corresponding expense line item might still need to be established. The group agreed to authorize the creation of a pickleball expense line item if it did not already exist, to properly manage the funds. Mr. Early called for a motion to create a pickleball expense line item. The motion was made by Mr. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Roberts. Roll Call affirmed; motion passed unanimously. Ms. Collins added that if any pickleball donations had been received before December, they would have been placed into the recreation fund, but going forward, the funds would be correctly allocated to the pickleball revenue and expense line items.
- D. Unbudgeted Expense for new Trail Camera Poles:** Mr. Early introduced the need to cover unbudgeted expenses of \$3,754 for trail camera poles, noting that the costs for the cameras were managed by the public service trail maintenance budget. Ms. Williams explained that the Luther-Warren Trail project, initially handled by the city administration, involved acquiring land from the Roberts family and using grant money for construction. Although the park wasn't initially involved, it later took on maintenance responsibilities, including mowing and railing repairs. The Roberts family's land donation required the city to install fencing, crossings, and security cameras along the trail. While the administration funded the cameras, the poles were deemed the park's responsibility, with the auditor's office suggesting these costs be covered by the general fund for trail maintenance. Ms. Loggains noted that the police department covered most of the camera costs, nearly \$30,000, and mentioned the challenges of using solar-powered cameras due to the lack of electrical power on the trail. Ms. Williams suggested that although this was an unbudgeted expense from a line item not originally intended for this purpose, it made sense to approve the expenditure. Mr. Early [1:00:05] acknowledged that the funds were already available in the designated line item and agreed with the proposed use. Mr. Early called for a motion to authorize the expenditure of \$3,754 from the park service's trail maintenance budget. Mr. Thompson made the motion, and it was seconded by Mr. Roberts. Roll Call affirmed; motion passed unanimously.
- E. General Fund allocations to Park:** Mr. Early introduced the next agenda item on council updates regarding general fund allocations to the park. Ms. Williams suggested that the board should notify the

finance chair whenever general fund allocations are used for purposes other than originally planned, to maintain transparency and trust with the finance committee.

Ms. Williams provided an example, noting that there is currently a balance of \$5,615 remaining from the general fund allocation that was initially intended for the purchase of a truck. Since the truck cost less than estimated, these funds are now available for other uses. She suggested that if the board decides to spend this money on other park improvements, such as enhancing the park entrance, they should inform the finance chair to avoid any misunderstandings.

Ms. Loggains agreed, noting that transparency with the finance chair, especially regarding unused funds, could build goodwill for future budget requests. Ms. Williams emphasized that this policy would demonstrate fiscal responsibility and help secure support for additional projects.

5. Programs and Events

A. Movies in the Park: Mr. Early introduced the next item, discussing the details of the "Movies in the Park" event. He mentioned that the event was supported by sponsors, including the Clinton County Foundation and Coldwell Banker Heritage. Ms. Williams clarified that \$1,580 was the cost specifically for the park's involvement, particularly the payment to Swank for movie rights. Mr. Early added that although the Clinton County Foundation originally committed \$2,000 for the event, there were some logistical challenges due to delays in getting purchase orders signed. As a result, Coldwell Banker Heritage and the Clinton County Foundation were sending funds directly to Sunset, covering most of the additional costs.

Mr. Early asked about arrangements for introducing the movies and recognizing sponsors at the event.

Ms. Williams mentioned that plans were still being finalized and suggested a board member handle the introductions. Ms. Loggains proposed that Mr. Early, but he would be out of town. The group agreed to find an alternative, and Ms. Williams stated that sponsors would be acknowledged, and a press release was in progress to promote the event.

B. Fourth of July: Mr. Early asked about communication with the city regarding the upcoming July 4th event and whether the park board's involvement was expected. Ms. Loggains shared information from Mike Cluxton, stating that event planning was going well, with most vendors secured. When Mr. Early inquired about the park restrooms, Ms. Loggains confirmed they would be open, and that trash management was planned due to the expected crowds.

Ms. Loggains suggested that more detailed information would come closer to the event and offered to contact Annen Vance, the city's code enforcement official, to see if she could organize volunteers for a cleanup effort on July 5th to assist park staff. Ms. Loggains clarified that the July 4th festivities had been moved back to the park from the fairgrounds.

C. Friends of Galvin Park Program Schedule: Mr. Early inquired about the program schedule for Friends of Galvin Park. Ms. Williams provided an update, sharing that the park's wellness schedule for June and July included a variety of activities such as yoga, dance, and kids' music sessions. She noted that the organization running these programs was quite proactive and well-organized. Ms. Williams mentioned that the schedule and event details were available on Facebook, though not everyone in the meeting had seen it. She suggested that anyone interested in the programs could follow the relevant Facebook page for updates.

D. Chess in the Park: Ms. Williams continued the discussion on the Friends of Galvin Park programs, mentioning that in addition to the wellness activities, they were also organizing a chess round-robin tournament. She noted that this was a simple event requiring minimal support, as the organization was allowed to use Shelter C, which is typically not booked for other events. Ms. Williams assured the group that the chess event was low maintenance, and no special arrangements, such as a police presence, were necessary. Ms. Williams also discussed the "Rods" project event from the past Saturday, noting challenges due to unclear expectations regarding access to electricity and water. She suggested

conducting a post-mortem to document lessons learned for better preparation and communication in future events.

6. Community Park Usage

- A. **Shelter House Updates:** Mr. Early introduced the discussion regarding the usage of Shelter House 153 at the community park. He mentioned that there were some duplicate requests for the shelter's usage and inquired if Jody was addressing these issues. Ms. Williams confirmed that Jody had taken over the management of these requests and had successfully caught up with resolving the duplicates earlier that day.

7. Grant Info

- A. **Recreational Trail Program:** Mr. Early introduced the topic of the grant application for the Recreational Trail Program, specifically for repairs to the Peace Trail. He mentioned that the announcements regarding this grant would be made in the fall and inquired if this was the grant previously discussed. Ms. Williams clarified that this is a different grant program administered by the ODNR and is solely focused on trail projects. She noted that it is a highly competitive program, but if successful, the grant would alleviate the need to use all the available funds for trail repairs.
- B. **State Capital Budget Bill:** Mr. Early brought up the state capital budget bill requests that were made through the city administration, noting that they are currently waiting for word on these requests. Ms. Williams clarified that the state capital budget bill is funding secured by state representatives for their districts, often seen as "free money" since it doesn't require matching funds. She highlighted that this differs from the CDBG, which is designated for low to moderate-income areas, like Southeast Community Park, and comes with more restrictive criteria. The state capital budget bill, in contrast, is more flexible and politically motivated. Mr. Early acknowledged the explanation, noting that he had not been fully aware of the distinctions between these funding sources when discussions were previously held with city officials.
- C. **Clinton County Foundation Legacy Grant:** Mr. Early discussed the Clinton County Foundation Legacy Grant that was submitted for the pickleball project, noting that a decision is expected in August.
- D. **ODNR NatureWorks:** Mr. Early mentioned the NatureWorks grant, which requires a 25% match, and stated that he was aware of a council resolution related to this grant but was unsure if Ivy had completed the grant submission. Ms. Williams explained that the NatureWorks grant is tied to the state budget bill process. The allocation of funds for this program depends on the finalization of the state budget. Historically, the county has received around \$150,000 from this grant, and no other entities in the county are currently planning to apply for it. However, she noted that nothing could be done until the state budget passes, as the deadline for the grant submission was extended due to delays in the budget process.

8. Admin/Transition Support

- A. **Maintenance Manpower:** Mr. Early introduced the topic of administration and maintenance manpower. Ms. Williams reported that they were currently down one seasonal worker due to a no-call, no-show incident involving a 17-year-old employee who likely found another job. She was uncertain if the employee had shown up that day and mentioned that Jody had not yet communicated about the necessary paperwork to resolve the issue. Ms. Loggains inquired about Mikey, a worker eager for more hours. Ms. Williams praised Mikey's efficiency despite his limited 4–5-hour shift. She expressed confidence in the team's current manpower and mentioned asking Jody to consider using other officials already on the payroll for upcoming events like July 4th and movie nights to help with cleanup and avoid additional paperwork.
- B. **Scheduling and Time/Payroll Submission Plan:** Ms. Williams suggested that the board should consider how they want to manage this process, noting that Jody has been handling payroll for the current staff.

She questioned whether it was acceptable to continue this arrangement without a sitting director. Ms. Loggains explained that typically when a director is absent for more than three days or the position is vacant, someone is appointed in an interim role. She noted that when Ivy went on vacation during the week of June 3rd, no official officer in charge (OIC) was appointed for the parks, but the administration recognized Jody as the de facto OIC due to his extensive experience. She recommended keeping Jody in this role until Kenny is onboarded, as Jody is already familiar with payroll, timesheets, and scheduling. She assured the group that Jody has a solid track record, and that both she and the auditor would oversee the process. Mr. Early agreed, noting that the arrangement would be temporary until Kenny takes over.

- C. Event Listing:** Ms. Williams explained that the team is working on consolidating the list of events to better understand the commitments that have been made. She mentioned that even events at locations like Sugartree might not seem impactful, but it would be helpful for the weekend staff to be aware of what's happening to ensure proper cleanup and preparation. Ms. Williams also brought up a question about the park's involvement in events like block parties. She clarified that the CVB is responsible for those events, and the park staff is not required to manage cleanup for them, although there was some initial confusion regarding responsibilities. Ms. Williams noted that the landfill has been very cooperative in providing totes.
- D. Training Certified Playground Safety Inspector:** Mr. Early confirmed that this had been taken care of.
- E. Cell Phone Reassignment:** Mr. Early confirmed the cell phone previously assigned has been reassigned to Jody and will be passed on to Kenny when he starts.
- F. Plan for Payables:** Mr. Early discussed a workable process for handling payables, which involves him coordinating with the staff to get signatures and manage the documentation.
- G. Website Maintenance:** Ms. Williams mentioned that they would handle the website maintenance until Kenny is onboarded.
- H. New Board Member Orientation:** Ms. Williams suggested scheduling individual tours for new board members to familiarize them with the park facilities. Ms. Loggains advised the board members to take Ms. Williams up on the offer of individual tours to avoid any potential violations of the OMA. She emphasized that one-on-one tours would be more appropriate to prevent accidental group discussions that could be construed as making plans outside of a public meeting.
- I. Surplus Items:** The board discussed the need to surplus various old equipment, such as an old Ford tractor and a truck, through the council process. Mr. Early offered to check with Kirby about including a dump truck in the surplus list.
- J. New Signage Plan:** Ms. Williams recommended holding off on the new signage plan until fall, allowing the new director to take ownership of the process.
- K. Park Legacy Fund:** Ms. Williams provided an overview of the Park Legacy Fund, established through the Clinton County Foundation to benefit Wilmington parks exclusively. The fund, structured as a 501(c)(3), allows for tax-deductible donations and is particularly appealing to organizations like the Eagles, which require a standing nonprofit for their contributions.

According to Ms. Williams, the fund currently holds approximately \$15,000, with regular donations and contributions from programs like Kroger's community rewards. Managed by the foundation, the fund incurs administrative fees for financial tasks such as check writing.

Ms. Williams emphasized that the fund is meant to be actively used to support park initiatives, not left idle. It was originally set up to be leveraged for grants, volunteer projects, and other capacity-building efforts. She offered to serve as the interim fund advisor until Kenny is onboarded, ensuring proper management and reporting.

Ms. Williams also noted that, while the fund was previously used for stipends for interns, current policies prevent direct payments to individuals. She encouraged the board to use the fund effectively and involve the identified advisors for transparency.

The board agreed to leverage the fund for future park initiatives and to have Ms. Williams manage it temporarily.

- L. **Password Access Transition:** Ms. Williams and Ms. Loggains confirmed that they are managing the password transition for all park-related applications and will ensure that Kenny receives the necessary information.

9. Athletic Coordinator Update

- A. Ms. Williams provided an update on summer sports, including the number of players and teams, upcoming expenses, and registration plans. She also mentioned that Jody is managing schedules and ensuring all maintenance tasks are completed.

10. Volunteer Project – Alchemy

- A. Ms. Williams shared that the Alchemy group is sending up to 50 volunteers on June 26th to assist with park projects. She expressed gratitude for their support and mentioned preparations to accommodate the volunteers.

11. Final Comments

- A. Ms. Loggains informed the board that the Mayor has requested all public meetings, including board and commission meetings, be held in the council chambers on the second floor. She advised the goal is to make all public meetings more accessible by recording them and making the recordings available for download, starting with audio and potentially adding video later.

12. Adjournment

Mr. Early called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Thompson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Roberts. Roll Call affirmed; the motion passed by affirmation.