

Park Board
July 12, 2018

A regular meeting of the City of Waxahachie Park Board was held on Thursday, July 12, 2018 at 3:00 p.m. in the City Council Conference Room at City Hall, 401 S. Rogers, Waxahachie, Texas.

Members Present: Chad Hicks, Chairman
Ginger Cole Vice Chairman
Coy B. Sevier
William Major

Members Absent: Betsy Engelbrechtsen
Byron Gibson

Others Present: John Smith, Director of Parks and Recreation
Albert Lawrence, Assistant City Manager
Amber Villarreal, Assistant City Secretary
Melissa Olson, Council Representative

1. Call to Order

Chairman Chad Hicks called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

2. Approval of minutes of Park Board meeting of June 14, 2018

Action:

Vice Chairman Ginger Cole moved to approve the minutes of the Park Board meeting of June 14, 2018. Mr. Coy Sevier seconded, All Ayes.

3. Discuss park projects and activities and take any necessary action

John Smith, Director of Parks and Recreation, updated the board on the following activities:

- Storm cleanup has occupied his department and they will resume mowing soon
- Pre-construction meeting for Penn Park Phase 2 was held
- Little Creek Trail is moving forward and Mr. Smith is working with staff on the trail realignment

4. Discuss lake activities and projects and take any necessary action

Mr. Smith reviewed his memo to the board regarding the Lake Park restrictions which allowed only city residents to enjoy the lake during the holiday. He explained the gating at the entrances of the lake parks worked well and the parks remained calm and usable. The area roads and intersections were also safer and quieter during this time. The car count was as follows:

July 4th Residents 115; Non-residents 147
July 7th Residents 84; Non-residents 25
July 8th Residents 79; Non-residents 45

Staff was debriefed after the holiday activities and overall there were less than ten issues of non-residents arguing or resisting the issue. Parks staff did offer alternate activities to non-residents who were turned away. The feedback from lake residents and citizens was positive.

Council Representative Melissa Olson asked about the NBC 5 news report. Assistant City Manager Albert Lawrence noted the report stated the facts about the restrictions. He explained the news reporter talked to the owner of the kayak business and she said her business was negatively affected because most of her rentals are from non-residents.

Councilmember Mary Lou Shipley noted the reporter never mentioned the restrictions were to be proactive as a safety measure.

Vice Chairman Ginger Cole noted there were other lakes in the Dallas/Fort Worth area that were restricted or closed during the holiday.

Ms. Olson commended the Police Department for keeping tempers down while enforcing the restrictions. Assistant Police Chief Dale Sigler noted the restrictions were successful. She explained she was not comfortable with the lake restrictions and would like to look at a more positive long-term solution such as permitting.

Ms. Shipley explained she doesn't want to put the burden on the tax payers of Waxahachie.

Mr. Lawrence explained permitting requires personnel and additional expenses that the city will never recoup.

Mr. Tim Bursleson, Lake Resident, commended the Parks Staff and the Police Department for their efforts during the holidays.

It was the consensus of the board that overall the restrictions were successful and the board needs to look at ways to continue to make the lake safe for patrons.

5. Request to appear by Dr. Jamal Rasheed to present the proposed 8/47 Memorial Project and take any necessary action

Dr. Jamal Rasheed, President and CEO of the Ellis County African American Hall of Fame, appeared before the board to discuss the proposed 8/47 Memorial. He described Ellis County's most tragic truck accident on August 5, 1947 that killed a total of twenty men, nineteen of which were African American who were riding together on their way to pick cotton. All nineteen men are buried in Prince Hall Fraternal Cemetery in Waxahachie. He reported there is a slab where a house once set that was used as an African American hospital that he would like to put a memorial to honor all twenty men killed. He presented the design for the memorial and requested the board's support to utilize an area of Freedman's Memorial Park. He explained the major costs for the project will include the concrete, flag poles, and stone columns.

Mr. Lawrence asked what the hands on the memorial are made of and Dr. Rasheed noted bronze.

Ms. Olson asked if the monument is lit and Dr. Rasheed explained it is not.

Ms. Cole inquired about the driver and Dr. Rasheed reported although difficult, he is still researching him.

Mr. Smith explained he would need to research the legalities of putting crosses on city property.

Action:

Vice Chairman Ginger Cole moved to approve the concept plan for the 8/47 Memorial project contingent upon it's compliance with city codes. Mr. Coy Sevier seconded, All Ayes.

6. Public Comments

None

7. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amber Villarreal
Assistant City Secretary