

**MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE
MEETING DESTIN CITY HALL BOARDROOM
AUGUST 2, 2022 MEETING - 4:00 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairwoman Trammell called the Special Parks & Recreation meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 2, 2022, in the Destin City Hall Annex Chambers with the Pledge of Allegiance immediately following.

2. ROLL CALL:

Members Present

Sandy Trammell
Nikki Johnson
Danielle Piper
Leslie Schmidt

Member Absent

Brian Liesveld
Matthew Sweetser

Staff Present

Kim Montgomery Deputy City Clerk
Lisa Firth Recreation Director
Ryan Reed Dep. Recreation Director
Michael Baird Parks & Rec Supervisor
Bryan Keller, Recreation Dept.

3. DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Firth informed the members the city's intentions of partnering with the County (TDD) to purchase additional property next to the Tarpon Beach Trail, which is the location of the old Sea Oats Motel, with the ½ cent sales tax funds. Explaining that staff wanted to call the special meeting so they'd be aware this subject would be discussed at the August 15, 2022 City Council meeting. She also informed the members that the Deputy City Manager sends his regrets that he could not attend the meeting to present them with the information because of being out sick.

There was an inquiry if there are any preliminary plans yet. According to Mrs. Firth there are not any at this time, and staff should know more by their next meeting on the 23rd.

4. OLD BUSINESS: None

5. NEW BUSINESS:

➤ **Park Inspections:**

The members discussed the need to inspect their parks this Fall and to turn in items they notice that needs to be repaired or replaced this winter before the busy spring season starts.

There was a brief discussion regarding the Harborview Park and what needs to be done to it to get it in better shape, such as trimming branches and removing invasive Popcorn Trees and other plants as well as making some much needed repairs.

Regarding past Committee member Telford's responsibilities for her inspections, Committee member Johnson stated that she would take on the Dog Park inspections. Chairwoman Trammell stated that she would inspect the Children's Park at Morgan Sports Center. Committee member Piper volunteered to inspect the Barracuda Beach Trail and Committee member Schmidt agreed to inspect the playground and courtyard at the Destin Community Center.

➤ **Destin High School Baseball Field**

Mrs. Firth spoke of the request by the staffing members of the Destin High School to use either one of the Morgan Sports Center's softball fields and turn it into a regulated baseball field or continue to use the one at the Destin Elementary School with the city agreeing to bring it up to the necessary standards. She asked Mr. Reed to explain what it would take to bring the softball field up to those standards and how it would impact the programs if the decision was made to do that.

Mr. Reed explained they are still waiting for the school's final design for the field but as of now, none of the fences will be moved, and minor conversions of the field would be necessary. He also mentioned how the underground pipes that Destin Water Users have would have to be considered if the softball field is chosen.

Mrs. Firth stated that as of now, staff has only provided Council with the information and cost that it would take to convert the only baseball field in the city, which is located at the Destin Elementary School, to the regulation standards. She spoke of how she feels that this is the perfect location since its already in place; however, it would take about \$40k to for the necessary repairs. Additionally, this may all impacted in the future when the school removes the portable buildings and builds the addition.

For informational purposes, Mr. Keller explained the how the youth soccer leagues use at both the Morgan Sports Center and the Destin Elementary School.

Chairwoman Trammell spoke of how Destin Water Users is aware of the impact this request will be to them and currently, they are in a fact finding position with no decisions to determine which location would have the least impact for all involved. Especially since no

matter which location is chosen, they still would not be able to play an official game at either location.

Committee member Piper asked how this plan would impact the city of Destin Parks & Recreation and their budget, if any.

Mrs. Firth explained the cost for what they are requesting is unbudgeted funds and the city would have to come up with the expense.

According to Chairwoman Trammell, with her educational career experience, she knows the County gives charter schools all their necessary funds to start up. She also spoke of how the city has already forfeited four tap fees so the school would not have to pay them.

Committee member Johnson asked how this request would impact the city's sports programs that are already scheduled. According to Mrs. Firth, they already are fully scheduled and have had to turn tournaments away. She asked Mr. Keller to explain the spring and summer programs and how the fields are used.

Mr. Keller provided the extensive use of the fields to the members.

Committee member Johnson spoke of how the impact of their request would be to the use of the community property this is what concerns her the most, since the fields are meant to be used by the public and not the charter school, adding she cannot support their request to take the use away from the community.

Committee member Piper asked if the responsibility of keeping the field in shape would be the school's or the city's. According to Mr. Reed, it would be city staff's responsibility.

Mrs. Firth added that potentially, the same time they would be using a field at Morgan's, there would be small children present for soccer, and how there would be no way they could accommodate both at the same time. Additionally, there is impact on the public's use of the walking paths and their safety when a baseball game is being played that must be considered. Since netting would need to be purchased to try to prevent injury to anyone from being hit by a pop up baseball. Then, there is the need for staffing schedule changes from what they are normally scheduled to work to accommodate for the needs of the use between the times the students are finished practicing and getting them ready for regularly scheduled programs that typically start at 5 p.m.

According to Committee member Johnson, the most logical solution to this problem would be for the Elementary School to go upward for their expansion and not outward so that the baseball fields would not be impacted by the addition.

At the end of the discussion, Chairwoman Trammell stated that at this point, they still do not have enough information to provide a recommendation. However, she does feel that there should be something in writing so that the city does not continue to take on the maintenance past the timeline of when the school said they needed to use the field.

Motion by Chairwoman Trammell to recommend City Council have an agreement in writing with specification of a date certain when the agreement ends to revert the fields back to what they were prior with that cost being paid by the school. Committee member Piper providing the second. The motion passed 4-0.

➤ **Capt. Royal Melvin Park Update**

Chairwoman Trammell informed the members of the preliminary plans for the holiday decorations in the Harbor District explaining that since at the time of the decision, there was not any certainty that the park would be completed by Christmas; therefore, the decision was made to wrap the 4 large oak trees in the park with lights. Mrs. Firth explained that the contractor is now back on site and staff is present daily.

Mrs. Firth explained that staff is also working with the Capt. Royal Melvin's sons to help with the educational signs of their father's history for the park.

➤ **Member Comments**

Committee member Piper inquired about the status of the prefabricated restrooms for Buck Destin Park. Mr. Reed informed the members that he would bring this item to them at their regular meeting on the August 23rd.

Chairwoman Trammell briefly verified with staff the items that will be discussed at their next meeting.

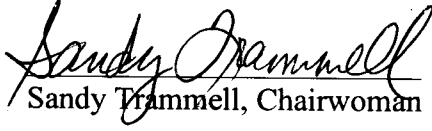
Mrs. Firth also informed the members that if they think of any other items they want to add to the agenda to please contact her prior to the meeting so she can add them to discuss.

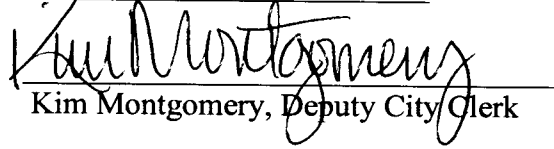
➤ **Next meeting: August 23, 2022**

ADJOURNMENT:

Having no further discussions, the meeting adjourned at 5:25 PM.

Adopted and approved this 23rd day of August 2022


Sandy Trammell, Chairwoman


Kim Montgomery, Deputy City Clerk