Huxley Parks and Recreation Board Meeting
February 13, 2008

Meeting started at 6:05 p.m. with Chairperson John Ronca calling roll.

Roll Call:

John Ronca	City Staff: Josh Larsen, Director of Parks & Recreation
Stacey Noe	Cory Shearer, Public Works
Russ Jones	
Bill Whisler	
Traci Carney	

Regrets: Veronica McGee

Public: Karen Hadaway, Irene McCormick
Guests: Jane Larkin, Story County Tobacco, Youth & Shelter Services Ames
Craig Erickson, Shive Hattery

Minutes from December 12, 2007 and January 16, 2008 meetings were reviewed by the board and approved.

Karen Hadaway commented on the Lighten Up Iowa teams from Huxley and we need more participation. Some are participating but not logging their hours of activity online.

Jane Larkin from Story County Tobacco Control/YSS presented and answered questions from the board regarding a tobacco free policy for our city parks. She pointed out that Slater is now tobacco free as well as Colo-Nesco's youth sports facilities. A simple policy that is less confusing is desirable. Questions from the board included the enforcement issues that other communities have regarding their policy. If it is a policy, it is enforced more by the public where as a ordinance would need council and city attorney approval in order to be enforced by law enforcement. Russ Jones pointed out that Little League International has been tobacco free for many years but there are no teeth to the policy and its enforcement. The board agreed that additional signage in the parks and other means available could help encourage and support this effort. The board agreed to draft a policy for presentation at the March board meeting for review in hopes to have signage up this spring.

Craig Erickson from Shive Hattery gave a review of the Centennial Park project over the last three years including community input and the initial general concept being approved by city council on October 5, 2005. After a design development process of the entire park and after a determination to scale back the project, a six year phasing plan totaling $1.6 million was agreed upon and work began early 2007 on Phase I. There are 3-4 items still needing to be completed in Phase I and representatives from Shive Hatter, the city, and Construct will address those as the first opportunity with cooperation from the weather this spring. It was noted, that to this point only 6.5% of the project has been completed. Craig pointed out that this project is much like building a home where the foundation is built before the actual house. After the foundation is in place there are optional pieces that you can choose over one another – ball fields, activity fields, tennis courts, playground, etc.

Craig also pointed out the project did not call for dirt to be moved from the potential pond area to the west end of the project in Phase I due to utilities not being in place and funding. That is part of Phase II.

The board discussed looking ahead to Phase II at the next meeting, including the impact on the existing little league fields to minimize impact for the upcoming season should Phase II construction begin later this spring or summer. Russ Jones noted Huxley is hosting the State Little League Softball Tournament in mid to late July and use of those fields would be desirable. With the current timing, construction may be divided into a Fall 2008 and Spring 2009 timeline. The board agreed to move forward and begin discussion at the March meeting regarding Phase II and what it will entail.

A proposal for additional 3C's winter weekend hours was presented and discussed. Due to increased usage and scheduled activities, most notably, youth basketball on Saturdays, and men's league on Sundays there is minimal time for open gym for public use on the weekends. Additional hours would help support that. Stacey Noe moved that additional winter hours begin March 1, Traci Carney seconded the motion and the board approved the motion. Josh will discuss with City for possible presentation at next council meeting.

Discussion was had regarding the invoice for cardio equipment maintenance from Fitness Techs. The items needing to be replaced include a rocker arm for one of the elliptical machines and control links and pedal covers that are cracked and fall off from time to time on the Life Fitness 93X elliptical. Total costs for parts, shipping, and installation will total approximately $600. Bill Whisler motioned to approved the maintenance and Stacey Noe seconded. The board approved the motion.

The board reviewed a proposal for changes to the existing corporate membership program. The new proposal would benefit all employees from a business versus the existing in which only a few benefit from others paying the full rate. The proposal would also provide a link from memberships to the parks and recreation area in that corporations would now pay a flat annual fee based on their total number of employees that would be used to assist with costs for program t-shirts and other materials. In return the corporation will receive their name & company logo on the program t-shirt and be recognized as a corporate partner. Stacey Noe noted that it also becomes a great marketing tool for companies and it also benefits their employees through lower insurance premiums and better productivity. The Parks and Recreation staff will gather specific information about Huxley and area businesses and their number of employees to determine appropriate Tiers for the annual fee so a final proposal can be presented to the board and the March meeting.

A Cans for Kids program was discussed and approved by the board. The program will separate funds from the existing concessions and vending accounts that are received from pop can redemption and from the toy machine. These revenues amount to $500-700 annually and will be used strictly for youth programming supplies or at the discretion of the Director for other program supplies. In the future we could add can drop sites in our city parks and use these funds as well. Russ Jones moved to approve the program and Stacey Noe seconded. The board approved the motion.

A proposal regarding the chemical application for the spring for our city parks was reviewed and discussed. Due to inaccurate figures, the board tabled the proposal to get better information such as square footage and number of applications for the quoted prices to bring back at the March meeting.

Josh presented and discussed an indoor group cycling class proposal that would include purchasing ten new bikes. Stacey Noe asked about leasing options versus buying. The board agreed with the concept and would like additional information at a later board meeting including updated costs, times of the class, and the specific interest in the class.

Josh presented and gave an update on the weight room equipment and some items that are in need of repair. Photos were included and additional contingencies for repair were noted such as replacing the padding on some of the weight benches versus buying new. John Ronca noted that perhaps with the new corporate program a business would be interested in purchasing new equipment and then having a nameplate with recognition nearby. Josh will update information and bring a concentrated proposal with member support to a future meeting.

Discussion and comments from board members included Russ Jones noting that he would like to see 3 year olds not play bam bam baseball because then they want to play little league at age 4 and they cannot due to league rules. Bill Whisler made note that the weight room is seeing increasing wearing on the floor by the mirrors due to users dropping weights. He thought some mats in that area would help to alleviate the issue. He also noted the amount of youth in the facility and lack of supervision from parents on-site. Josh also noted there are issues on early out days and Traci Carney supported having additional staff on-hand for those times to monitor the gym and cardio areas for horseplay. Cory Shearer spoke about needs the Public Works area has for a new mower and other equipment as some of the equipment becomes outdated and in need of replacement. Cory will prepare additional information for the board at the next meeting. Josh gave an update on the Summer Camp program and discussion with Youth and Shelter Services regarding a collaborative program due to construction at West in Slater and needing to move their program. A collaborative program with YSS, the Library, and VERB would create an exciting summer experience for all youth and one we can be proud and known around our area for. Additional information will be presented at the next meeting.

Russ Jones moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:17pm. Traci Carney seconded. The board approved the motion and the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes respectively submitted by,

Joshua Larsen
Director of Parks & Recreation