

GERMANTOWN PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
February 24, 2011

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Germantown Parks and Recreation Commission for February 24, 2011 took place at Germantown Parks and Recreation, 2276 West Street.

PRESENT:

Kevin Young
Bill Lansden
William Kenley
Jerry Gee
Mary Anne Gibson
Rodney Strop
Angela Sorensen
Jim Wilson

ABSENT:

Mike Palazzolo, Alderman
Shelby Glass, Youth Liaison
Lisa Parker, Planning Commission Liaison

Pam Beasley, Director of Parks and Recreation

GUESTS:

Kevin Roedel, Germantown Rugby Club coach
Mark Holley, Germantown Rugby Club coach
John Sullivan, Houston High School Rugby coach

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 27, 2011

The following corrections were noted:

- Jim Wilson was absent.

It was moved by Mr. Gee, seconded by Mr. Strop to approve the January 27, 2011 minutes as corrected.

Young – yes; Gee – yes; Gibson – yes; Kenley – abstain; Lansden – yes; Sorensen – yes; Strop – yes; Wilson – abstain. Motion approved.

APPROVAL OF THE 2011 ACTION AGENDA

To create the action agenda, Ms. Beasley takes recommendations from the Commission and puts them in a format that mirrors Germantown Vision 2020. The City has 26 goals and several directly relate to the parks and recreation department.

- Goal 16 – Vibrant Community
 - Objective: Strong Community Foundation – align with mission and goals
 - Update and increase Germantown Volunteer Corps database

- Prepare for CAPRA Reaccreditation
- Goal 17 – Lifelong Learning
 - Objective: Expand choices for leisure and lifelong learning
 - Develop and implement a Challenger basketball program for children with special needs.
 - Work with the Senior Commission on implementation of the “Summit” ideas.
 - Develop policies and usage guidelines disc golf tournaments.
 - Continue to enhance the REACH program (afterschool activities) and community enrichment classes at Union and outdoor programming.
- Goal 18 – Parks, Greenspaces and Natural Areas throughout Germantown
 - Objective: Safe, accessible greenway system
 - Coordinate trail use, safety and security with Safety Cabinet and other external agencies.
 - Install more security cameras at various park and trail locations; continue to address safety and security on trails
 - Re-launch Park Ambassadors program
- Goal 18 – Parks, Greenspaces and Natural Areas throughout Germantown
 - Objective: Improve/enhance park facilities
 - Complete and reopen skatepark
 - Implement master planning process for the new park area
 - Complete Riverdale playground project Phase II
 - Renovations to Dogwood Park playground
 - Complete CIP request for Tennis court improvements to Municipal
 - Coordinate with the Veteran’s Committee to determine best location along the Wolf River greenway for a public memorial.
- Goal 19 – Recreation and Entertainment Opportunities for an Active Lifestyle
 - Objective: Top quality recreation and athletic programs
 - Establish guidelines for scholarship program for participants in need.
 - Create a school tennis intramural program.
 - Work with sports providers to determine tournament opportunities.
- Goal 20 – Cultural and Arts Enrichment
 - Objective: Partnering to support arts and culture
 - Grow and enhance programming for special needs individuals and their families in partnership with the Library.
- Goal 21 – Personal Wellness of our Residents
 - Objective: Recognition as a healthy community
 - Update trail maps and other park user information to include “web based” format.
 - Include “healthy lifestyle” messages on all parks and recreation public information.
- Goal 23 – Service Excellence
 - Objective: Retain top quality workforce
 - Continue professional involvement in TRPA and NRPA.
- Goal 25 – Services Delivered in the most Cost Effective Manner
 - Objective: Enhance exceptional services and customer services
 - Conduct another Ranger Reserve course.
 - Update Policy Letter 30 – Tennis Operations.

- Complete the Park Ordinance approval process with BMA.
- Develop survey methodology and guidelines for participant feedback using technology.
- Initiate the use of a “Google” calendar.
- Goal TBD
 - Objective: Become a “Green” City; Enhance stewardship
 - Continue to support and expand Arbor Day and the “Living Green in Germantown” Expo.
 - Promote stewardship and recycling in programs and special events.

It was moved by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mrs. Gibson to approve the 2011 Action Agenda as submitted.

Young – yes; Gee – yes; Gibson – yes; Kenley – yes; Lansden – yes; Sorensen – yes; Strop – yes; Wilson – yes. Motion approved.

DOGWOOD PARK PLAYGROUND PROJECT

Ms. Beasley reported that she met with faculty members, representatives of the Dogwood Neighborhood Association, and some of the Shelby County Board of Education representatives to go over the timeline for the Dogwood Park Playground project. The department has received a grant from the state for the amount of \$150,000 and PlayCorp is matching the grant with \$150,000 in equipment. The goal is to get the playground design approved, equipment ordered and delivered, and have the build and installation date on Saturday, April 9. Some professional installers will come from the company and spend four to five days working with the city public service crews to put in the posts, concrete, edging and all of the heavy part of the install. The community would attach railing, mulch, etc. The rain date for the community build will be Sunday, April 10.

Tom Norquist sent images of the park to show the footprint. The unit does not have a unique fabricated piece like Riverdale Park. Ms. Beasley pointed out that she does not like what is known as the “kitty litter box”. She wants the playground to have more of a natural feel. A picnic area will be put in where the existing playground unit is located. The old playground unit at Riverdale Park was donated to the Shelby County Conservation Board. There is a park in Wilmington that was flooded and the unit was put in that area. She would like to refurbish the Dogwood playground as well.

The neighbors of the park are concerned with the parking issues but it is not something the commission wants to get involved in. It is strictly a safety issue that the police department has had to address. The only parking or traffic problems are during school arrival and dismissal. The city could not spend money to expand the parking lot when the pique use of the park would be during after school hours and the weekend when the school parking is available.

It was moved by Mrs. Gibson, seconded by Mr. Sorensen to approve the Dogwood Park Playground project.

Young – yes; Gee – yes; Gibson – yes; Kenley – yes; Lansden – yes; Sorensen – yes; Strop – yes; Wilson – yes. Motion approved.

FIELD USAGE REQUEST FROM THE GERMANTOWN RUGBY CLUB

Kevin Roedel, Mark Holley and John Sullivan presented information regarding the status of the Germantown Rugby Club.

The mission of the rugby club is to provide a sports alternative to boys and girls of all skill levels in the areas served by Germantown High School, Germantown Middle School, Houston Middle School, Riverdale Elementary, Farmington Elementary, Dogwood Elementary and residents of the Germantown area. There is a no cut, everyone plays policy and it is run more like a recreational program.

Rugby is a full contact team sport from which football originated. There are fifteen players per team. It is a continuous game so it keeps kids very active. It is played in over one hundred countries by 3.5 million registered players. The Rugby World Cup is the third largest sporting event in the world and it was watched by over four billion people. It is the third fastest growing sport in America and Tennessee is the fifth largest Youth Rugby Association in the United States.

Germantown started the program in 2009 and it doubled in size by adding a middle school program in 2010. A girls team was added this year which increased the numbers as well. There are about 130 kids playing Rugby in Germantown area. In the fall of 2010, the program was double the size of the U19, U14 and U12 recreational soccer program. 85% of the players are Germantown residents including those enrolled in private and home schools.

The Germantown Rugby Club is a professionally run organization. The coaches are certified thru the Tennessee Rugby Association. The club is covered with liability insurance and EMTs are present at every game in case of injury. There is less of a chance to have injuries in rugby than cheerleading or football. They submitted Policy 33 Letter in 2009 and the status is still pending. The staff has been unable to complete this request because there is not a field available.

The club is requesting field space. They are currently using a space at C.O. Franklin Park. It is an unmanaged field, does not have lights, and is half the width it needs to be. There is no game space available within the city of Germantown. All games have to be played in Millington, Brighton and Bartlett and it is about a forty-five minute drive one-way.

The rugby season runs from January to Mother's Day weekend. With the time change not happening until March, lights are an issue. They limit practices to two practices per week and on Saturdays and Tuesday/Thursday practices once games start due to students having busy schedules. Unlike lacrosse or soccer, there is not a concentration of play around a specific goal or area so there is lower impact than other sports on the field.

The club is asking for continued use of C.O. Franklin Park for the high school boys and girls, to have the Houston versus Germantown game within Germantown, and additional use of some

lighted multipurpose field for eight to ten hours per week until May 31. They would like to partner with Parks and Recreation and offer a summer camp as well. They would take care of the equipment, making sure trash is picked up and other things. They have not approached the county because the club is made up of Germantown students and they would like to stay in Germantown. They have tried to use the Germantown High School football field and practice football field but have been turned down. They have also asked about having an indoor practice in the gym but there are so many activities that there is no room.

City of Germantown maintenance staff is concerned with sharing the fields between two different sports due to wear and tear on the field. The Town of Collierville is in the process of installing two synthetic fields which cuts down on the issue of the field getting torn up or pot holes. There is some maintenance but sports can play all season, all day.

Ms. Beasley stated that she is on the Shelby County Conservation Board and there is a small park off of Whitten Road that is not being used at all. Mrs. Gibson said she would like to see if there is a field available and allow the group to use it since it is made up of Germantown Residents. She wants the Commission to consider that it is a growing sport and they specifically asked about a game in April between Houston High School and Germantown High School.

UPDATE FROM THE GERMANTOWN BASEBALL LEAGUE

Scott Rosenberger, president of the Germantown Baseball League, provided an update of the baseball league. There are eight groups in the t-ball division, fifteen in 9-10 year olds, fifteen in coach pitch, fifteen in 11-12 year olds, seven in 13-14 year olds, and six in 15-16 year olds. Last year they had four competitive/tournament teams and this year have eight. All eight are Policy 33 compliant. They have about 750 registered players and expect to take about twenty-five in the next week. They will have completed the audit in the next two weeks and will provide findings for that. No parent issues have been found or noted. Approximately 150 coaches have volunteered but GBL will take about 75 of them and process them through a draft on Saturday. GBL will provide statistically balanced teams based on tryouts conducted last week. At the draft on Saturday, they will do background checks, rules and training and each coach will have two trades based off the teams built for them. Equipment will be given out as well.

Mr. Rosenberger mentioned that he believed it would be beneficial for the community to televise some of the games. Discussion took place regarding who he should talk to in order to make that happen.

In lieu of the approaching storm, the meeting was adjourned and all other items deferred until the March 24th meeting.