

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

June 9, 2009

4:15 P.M.

In the absence of Chairman Gilbert, Councilwoman Ladd called the meeting of the Parks and Recreation Committee to order, with Councilmen Benson, Rico, Scott, Robinson and McGary present. City Attorneys Michael McMahan and Phil Noblett and Shirley Crownover, Assistant Clerk to the Council, were also present.

Others present included Dan Johnson, Larry Zehnder, Daisy Madison, Solomon Hatch, Richard Beeland, Phillip Pugliese, and Stefanie DeOlloqui.

Adm. Zehnder stated that later on there would be a presentation on RiverPark Usage by Philip Pugliese and Stefanie DeOlloqui. First, however, he wanted to go over items on the Agenda, beginning with **Resolution (c)** on next week's agenda that authorizes an agreement with CSX Railway to conduct preliminary engineering services relative to a proposed trail under the South Chickamauga Bridge in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00, which is similar to the one last week for Norfolk.

Councilman McGary asked how often this happened? Adm. Zehnder responded anytime we have one that goes under their property.

Adm. Zehnder mentioned an outing on **June 23rd from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** when they will pick up Council members and take them to the Summit of Softball. He asked that each Councilmember RSVP to his office. He stated that they would probably be back by 11:00 a.m. that morning. Councilman Benson noted that some have already seen this and encouraged everyone to attend.

Also, there will be another outing for the Outdoor Chattanooga River Paddle on **June 18th at 4:30 p.m.** He stated that they would also be inviting the Mayor and would take everyone on an outdoor Chattanooga adventure. He stated that it would take about 45 minutes and asked that Councilmembers also RSVP for this. Councilwoman Robinson stated that she was accepting right now. Adm. Zehnder stated that it would be a very pleasant experience, and he promised that no one would get wet.

RIVERPARK USAGE PRESENTATION

Adm. Zehnder stated that this presentation would be given in conjunction with UTC, with Phillip Pugliese and Stefanie DeOlloqui, who is a professor at UTC. He stated that they had done a Study and would take everyone through this.

Mr. Pugliese stated that as the City and County moved forward on the Greenway, that they had created a network to gather data to learn how we use our active transportation. He turned the meeting over to Stefanie DeOllouqi, who is a professor, and her graduate students. Ms. DeOllouqi stated that they were very excited about this; that they had observed 6,000 people and had surveyed 250; that this was a five-month Study, and she thanked Dr. Heath for his study. She showed a map of the Riverpark, noting that people were observed at all locations but mostly at Chickamauga Dam and the Glass Bridge; that the month of September had more usage because September is a good weather month. She stated that it was nice to see people using the trails during the day—that the peak was at noon, and they were seeing more in the morning. She called on one of her students, Rachel, to continue the presentation.

Rachel stated that the next two slides would answer the questions “Who?” and “What?” as compared with census data. She noted that children and teens were under-represented. This compares gender data to the census data, and it is about equal. African-Americans were also under-represented. Most observed at the Riverpark were walking, biking and running, which are examples of ways to help multiple users. She stated that it was very interesting that people chose different activities at different locations; that the Riverpark is for planned activities and for socializing. She showed the percentage of location usage by time of day—during the early morning hours it is the road and at noon, the Glass Bridge—in the evening, it is the Chickamauga Dam location.

The next student was Stephanie, who used a list of zip codes to show where the people were coming from. She thought it was really interesting to see people coming from outside the downtown area. The dark green showed high density. She answered the question of “How” people are getting there, noting that to get to the Riverpark, 67% of the users were taking a car; downtown Chattanooga and UTC were a really low number of bikes. How Often were people coming? She stated that she was happy to see that through the week there were a lot of first-time users with a constant use of trails. She noted that first-time users were using the area for socializing and recreation; that if we get people socializing and using it for recreation it would translate into exercise.

Stephanie continued to talk about pets. Should people bring pets? 47% of the people said “yes”; 39% said “no”; and 10% had no opinion. People who walk and bike typically do not want pets. It was the runners who wanted pets. She stated that they would continue this Study into next year as a class project. Future research will show what activities are done in conjunction with Riverpark usage; Why people choose the Riverpark instead of locations closer to home; and do they know the locations that are close to home. They would also be exploring how the place of employment impacts Riverpark usage. She stated that if there were any questions that the Council would like addressed, that they would explore them next year.

Councilwoman Ladd asked if anyone had any questions?

Adm. Zehnder stated that they made this presentation to the Hamilton County Commission, and they suggested that they present this data to the Council; that it was student-based and worthwhile.

Councilman Benson noted that the County and City share on this, and he thought on this that the County was paying their share.

Mr. Pugliese noted that they captured this by zip code, with Councilman Benson stating that this could be counter-productive.

Councilwoman Scott noted that next week the Council would be voting on a Resolution for Summit Landfill Gas Extraction System Additions and questioned if when they were out there for the Summit of Softball Preview if this could be shown to them, too. Adm. Zehnder agreed to put this on the tour. Councilwoman Scott thanked him.

Adm. Zehnder stated that Councilman McGary might like to make a report on Saturday’s activity that he had attended.

Councilman McGary stated that the invitation was extended to all of the Council involving a Bike Trail at Enterprise South—that it was his chance to get on a bike, and he had a great time; that there was a nice turn-out; that if anyone had the opportunity to walk or bike, that this was a wonderful activity.

Adm. Zehnder stated that he would put the Bike Trail on for an outing in the future.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.