

MINUTES
WALKERSVILLE BURGESS & COMMISSIONERS & PARKS COMMISSION WORKSHOP
January 12, 2022

A joint workshop of the Walkersville Burgess & Commissioners and Parks Commission was called to order on Wednesday, January 12, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. Those in attendance included Burgess Chad Weddle, Commissioners Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis, Tom Gilbert, Michael McNiesh, Michael Bailey and Gary Baker, Parks Chairman Jay Lochner, Parks Commission Members Artie Fauble, Anna Newman, Patricia Rowley, and Kitty Baker, Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver, Public Works Director Joseph Birch, Town Manager Sean Williams, and a total of 4 citizens. Parks Commission members David Toohey and Kelly Woods were absent.

Burgess Chad Weddle briefly discussed the issues involved with the use of the Whitmore Zimmerman Building after hours, possible changes to park hours, and the need for lighting. Burgess Weddle proposed several suggestions after visiting Heritage Park earlier in the day with Public Works Director Joe Birch and Town Manager Sean Williams. Possible increases to pavilion rates, dropping the need for security deposits, no longer allowing alcohol permits, and changes to garden plot rentals were also suggested. Burgess Weddle's suggestions formed a framework for the workshop.

1. Installation of New Gates

Cattle gates would be installed at the entrance to the loop park entrance and the exit of the loop road. Closing these gates in the evening will prevent access to the park, but allow use of the Whitmore Zimmerman building after hours. Other types of gates were discussed, however there was general agreement to move forward with cattle gates. Existing park gates will not be removed.

2. Installation of Fence

Fencing will need to be installed to prevent individuals from driving across the grass and entering the park when the gates are closed. Chain link fencing was originally suggested. There was discussion about the use of chain link fencing verses something similar to the telephone pylons and chain barriers that are already used within the park. Chain link fencing could be installed fast, but the pylons would look more rustic and similar to the existing park. A green wall or shrubbery were also suggested as additional fencing. There was agreement that a barrier is needed, but the type of barrier will need to be further discussed.

3. New Parking Lot

A new millings parking lot will be installed across from the Whitmore Zimmerman building to allow for additional parking for events. There was general agreement for the need for the additional parking.

4. Lighting

New lighting would be installed from the entrance to the park down to the Whitmore Zimmerman parking lot. Solar lights were suggested with the understanding that more research is needed to determine the number of lights that would need to be installed to provide adequate lighting for safety. There was agreement to move forward with researching solar lighting options and the ability/need to put the lights on a timer.

Commissioner Tom Gilbert suggested that without the addition of new lighting, park hours should not be extended for use of the Whitmore Zimmerman building. There was a discussion for allowing GVAA to continue parking in the Manor House lot and walking to the building, Scouts getting priority parking at the Manor House parking lot some nights a week, parking at the elementary school, continued concerns with safety, and the need to install the new cattle gates before allowing changes to parking at the Whitmore Zimmerman Building after hours.

There was discussion to lock the inner gates of the park, allowing wrestling parents to park in the upper parking lot of Heritage and walk down to the Whitmore Zimmerman building. Michelle Doster of GVAA football agreed to allow lights to be used to illuminate the parking lot. Michelle Fyock of GVAA agreed

to notify wrestling parents that they would begin using the upper parking lot of Heritage and stop using the Manor House parking lot. This would only be needed until the new cattle gates could be installed.

5. Park Hours

The suggestion to leave the front section of Heritage Park open (with the installation of the discussed modifications) until 9 PM was generally agreed upon with no voiced opposition.

6. Pavilions Rentals

There was discussion over keeping the security deposit versus dropping security deposits, not charging in-town residents a fee for pavilion rentals, and changing fees to a staggered price for in-town versus out-of-town rentals. Removing security deposits may allow for online payment for pavilion rentals. No decision was made on fees or security deposits.

7. Additional Topics

Patricia Rowley expressed safety concerns caused by garden plot renters/GVAA parents parking along the entrance to Heritage Park and down the roadway towards the Whitmore Zimmerman Building.

Commissioner Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis discussed concerns with GVAA using the Whitmore Zimmerman building for indoor field hockey practice. The flooring company previously advised Manager Williams that use of the Whitmore Zimmerman building as a gymnasium would negate the warranty on the floor. Use of field hockey equipment inside the building was the main concern with causing potential damage to the floor. There was majority agreement to allow GVAA field hockey to continue using the facility for conditioning but no equipment would be allowed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:57 PM.

Sean Williams, Town Manager