

City of La Vista  
Park & Recreation Advisory Committee Minutes  
December 15, 2010

A meeting of the Park and Recreation Advisory Committee for the City of LaVista convened in open and public session at 7:00 p.m. on December 15, 2010. Present were Recreation Director Scott Stopak, Vice-Chairman Pat Lodes and Members George Forst III, Corey Jeffus, Jeff Kupfer and Shannon Wiig. Recreation staff members present were Assistant Recreation Director David Karlson, Program Coordinator Richard Carstensen, and Program Coordinator Eddie Burns.

A notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Papillion Times on December 9, 2010. Simultaneously given to the members of the Park and Recreation Advisory Committee and a copy of their acknowledgment of receipt of the notice are attached to the minutes. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice to the members of the Park and Recreation Advisory Committee of this meeting. All proceedings hereafter were taken while the convened meeting was open to attendance of the public. Further, all the subjects included in said proceedings were contained in the agenda for inspection within ten working days after said meeting, prior to the convened meeting of said body.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Recreation Director Stopak called the meeting to order.

Seconded by Vice-Chairman Lodes.

Recreation Director Stopak led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Director Stopak made an announcement of the location of the posted copy of the Open Meetings Act for public reference and read the Emergency Procedures Statement.

**A. CONSENT AGENDA**

Director Stopak made the motion to approve the consent agenda. Seconded by Member Forst. Motion carried.

Vice-Chairman Lodes made the motion to approve the minutes from the November 17, 2010 Advisory Board meeting. Seconded by Member Jeffus. Motion carried.

**REPORTS FROM RECREATION DIRECTOR AND STAFF**

Assistant Director David Karlson reported on the Holiday Tree Lighting Celebration held on Monday, November 29. It began at 5:45 p.m. with La Vista Junior High carolers and the public singing by the outdoor Christmas tree. Santa came at 6:00, and after being raised to the top with the Fire Dept.'s ladder truck, he lit the star on the tree. Inside, chili and chicken noodle soup was served by volunteers of the La Vista Fire Dept., entertainment was held in the gym, and Santa was in the "Christmas Village" set up in the game room. The Christmas Village was new this year, and was very popular with the white tent surrounded by decorated Christmas trees and filled with "snow" and sparkling stars. Santa visited with approximately 100 children, and approximately 300+ people attended.

An additional event this month was the annual "Santa's Calling" program. This year, Santa called 80 children to see what they would like for Christmas this year, and to give tips on how to be good for Mom & Dad!

Program Coordinator Eddie Burns reported that Football/Cheerleading held their football banquet on November 21, and also handed out trophies to the participants. Registrations are now being taken for Men's basketball and women's winter league volleyball (which will begin February 2). Youth basketball is beginning with group practice this week. The Nebraska Seniors Softball Association (NSSA) will be playing on our fields this Spring, with games on Monday and Wednesday each week. There is also talk

of a tournament in July with seniors from surrounding states, however, this has not been finalized. Most of the NSSA teams are established, and prior to this year played in Omaha.

Program Coordinator Rich Carstensen reported on activities from the Senior Center. The senior's have been busy this month, taking two light tours, one on the 14<sup>th</sup> & the other on the 21<sup>st</sup>. We saw Christmas lights throughout this area and Omaha. We also toured the Mormon Trail Center's Gingerbread House display and played "Christmas Bingo". Phyllis Karschner, one of our senior's, was very gracious in making and donating gift bags to be given out for prizes. There was enough for everyone! December 15<sup>th</sup> was a very busy day. We had a cookie exchange, the La Vista Junior High Swing Choir performed (and had pizza for lunch), then we went to the movies in the afternoon. On Friday the 17<sup>th</sup> the La Vista West and Portal Elementary School bands are performing and also having pizza and pop for lunch. December 22 is a secret gift exchange and a luncheon with the Mayor, then singing carols after lunch. December 29 will be our New Years luncheon. In January, we are planning to go to the movies and a couple restaurants for lunch. We will know more at a later date, but usually try to stay close due to the weather.

Director Stopak announced that there have been meetings for organizing La Vista Daze, and there are several events to volunteer and assist with, including the Urban Adventure Race and the Splash Bash, both during the summer. Stopak also thanked Rich Carstensen for getting the memorial plaque and organizing a luncheon dedicated to Shorty and Dorothy Robb, who started the Senior Center. The Robb's family members were also able to attend. Stopak also thanked the city staff involved in the tree lighting celebration, saying it has gotten better every year, and this was the best.

## B. REVIEW PARK PLANS

Rita Ramirez, Assistant City Administrator addressed the Advisory Board Members and public, describing the background of the review of the city parks in La Vista; and that this meeting is the third of three meetings scheduled to gather input from the Board Members and the Public of the conceptual plans that have been drafted for that purpose. The City would like comments and suggestions from the Board and the Public on the drafted plans, plus any other input they would like to give. The committee will meet again in February or March of 2011 to approve the park plans to be forwarded on to the City Council for final approval.

Ramirez discussed the parks for this week's meetings, which are in the western 1/3 of the City. Jaycee, Southwind, Val Verde (Centennial) and Camezind parks are all included.

Some ideas that have been included in the park plans: Jaycee Park plans have included a pavilion, a gazebo, a sliding hill, and off-street parking. Camezind would have a retro theme and would include a shelter, re-doing the basketball court and add additional parking. Southwind Park does not have any design changes other than new surfacing for the playground. Val Verde (or sometimes referred to as Centennial park), would include a dog park and additional parking.

## COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR

Ken Kendall, a resident of La Vista who resides near Camezind park, asked if there would be any restrooms, permanent or satellite at Camezind. Stopak said there are no plans for that, and satellites are used if there is a lot of use at a park.

Bill Hempel, a resident residing near Val Verde park, does not think a dog park is needed. He said there are a lot of children playing, flying kites, etc. in that park. It would also decrease the value of their homes. He did want to commend the city for taking good care of the park.

Member Kupfer also said he thought there was a lot of room allotted towards a dog park.

Vice-Chairman Lodes said he is concerned whether La Vista needs 2 dog parks. Assistant City Administrator Ramirez said that many residents have requested a dog park, but they will need to look at the plans again.

A discussion continued on dog park locations, lighting in the parks (which Ramirez said lighting was being considered for all the parks), whether an ice skating rink for one park would be feasible, and the parking situation at Val Verde Park.

#### COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Member Kupfer wondered if the ground would have to be reworked for a sledding hill at Jaycee park? Director Stopak answered yes, because the park has a very small hill right now. Member Kupfer wondered if it wouldn't serve better to have skateboarding or skating instead, and could possibly be used as sledding during the winter months.

Public Works Director Joe Soucie offered the suggestion that the city needs to name the Val Verde park either "Val Verde" or "Centennial", as currently it is called both names. It can be confusing to public works and law enforcement.

Member Forst asked if research could be done on whether the city could donate the used park equipment to smaller towns in Nebraska when the city purchases new equipment.

A discussion was held on whether it was a better idea to redo one entire park at a time, or a little in each park. Ramirez said that sometimes funding & grants might dictate which route you can take. In addition, construction fees can also dictate what route is taken, because it is sometimes cheaper to get more things done at one time.

Director Soucie said there are many small grants you can apply for. Smaller parks may get enough funding for the entire project, while larger parks may only get partial.

A discussion was held between the Board Members on what each member thought about re-doing a little at each park, or do an entire park at once. It was agreed it would be nice to do each park in its entirety, but would have to see all the numbers first.

Vice-chairperson Lodes made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Member Wiig. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.