



CITY COUNCIL

Standards of Living Committee

Monday, September 15, 2014
Meeting Report

Committee Members Attending: D. Sterner (Co-Chair), S. Marmarou

Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer, F. Acosta, T. Coleman, F. Denbowski

The meeting was called to order at 6:23 pm by Mr. Sterner.

I. Agreements with Playground Associations & Other Organizations

Mr. Denbowski explained that playground associations are created by the City. He stated that the Recreation Commission is reviewing the current playground associations. He stated that at one time there were so many playground associations that the City had a federation of associations. He stated that the last time the playground associations were reviewed was in 1998.

Mr. Denbowski distributed a draft agreement between the City and the Recreation Commission giving the Recreation Commission the authority to oversee the playground associations.

Mr. Denbowski stated that there are currently three active playground associations – Hillside, Keffer Park, and 6th & Amity. He noted his hope that others can be reinstated.

Mr. Sterner questioned if the playground associations would be overseen by the Recreation Commission or by the City Administration. Mr. Denbowski recommended that they be overseen by the Recreation Commission. He noted the need for playground association members to have background checks to protect the children.

He stated that playground associations collect funds and there must be oversight to ensure that these funds are used for recreation or on capital needs of the playground itself.

Mr. Sterner stated that Hillside is struggling. He stated that the current treasurer is wondering what to do with its funds. Mr. Denbowski stated that the funds should be used to benefit Hillside or a recreation program. He noted the need for playground associations to submit financial statements annually for review by the City Auditor.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if Rotary would fall within this agreement. Mr. Denbowski stated that Rotary is not a playground association. He stated that current agreements with the City will not be grandfathered into the agreement with the Recreation Commission for oversight.

Mr. Acosta questioned why residents would become active for their playgrounds if they did not control how their funds were spent. Mr. Denbowski stated that there needs to be some accountability of how the funds are spent.

Mr. Acosta agreed with the need to oversee funds. However he expressed concern that the Recreation Commission not have too much power. He stated that residents will not be motivated to make a change if they are told how that change must be made. He noted his agreement with oversight of the funds but not with the Recreation Commission controlling how those funds are spent.

Mr. Sterner stated that there have been issues between the Hillside members and Ms. Klahr. He noted that there are personality conflicts.

Mr. Acosta stated that Ms. Klahr has a goal and vision for City recreation.

Mr. Sterner suggested that the agreement also include a level of City oversight. Mr. Denbowski suggested that it be a representative of Public Works.

Mr. Marmarou agreed and stated that there is also friction between Ms. Klahr and Public Works.

Mr. Coleman stated that the agreement between the City and the Recreation Commission would give management to the Recreation Commission for programs, audits, and background checks.

Mr. Sterner stated that there is an active concession stand at Hillside. He stated that during the summer program, the playground leader used their supplies without permission. The costs were not reimbursed.

Mr. Coleman stated that he has been working with Public Works on several issues. He stated that residents approach him and describe work that needs to be done. He expressed the belief that residents are motivated to make improvements.

Mr. Marmarou stated that he personally knows of two associations in the past who used association money for personal expenses. He noted the need to know the character of those who will be leaders.

Mr. Denbowski expressed the belief that the playground associations that exist must be maintained and that more associations are needed.

Mr. Sterner agreed with the need for annual audits.

II. Review Revision of Naming Policy

Ms. Katzenmoyer reviewed the proposed changes. She stated that the need for change was discovered when a recent application to dedicate the baseball field at Schlegel Park was processed.

Mr. Acosta requested additional time to review the changes to the naming policy and also requested a copy of the application to rename the baseball field at Schlegel Park.

III. UGI Gas Meters

Mr. Coleman stated that the PUC put out its new regulations very recently. He noted the need to review the new regulations and give a further update at a future meeting.

Mr. Coleman reviewed how residents can make complaints to the PUC about utilities.

Mr. Marmarou described the destruction done at his home by UGI. Mr. Coleman suggested that Mr. Marmarou follow the complaint process.

Mr. Coleman stated that City residents are very transient. He stated that mailings will be sent to "Resident" in the future to avoid undeliverable mail. He stated that the City will be creating a complaint form and that there will be a message in a future bill to

explain to residents how to have their external meters repainted. He stated that there has been some improvement in the process and that all this information will be placed on the City website.

Mr. Coleman described the difference between federal historic places and local historic districts. He stated that they are treated differently by the PUC. He noted the need to review the new regulations to determine if their position on historic districts has changed.

IV. Inclusion of RAWA in the Street Cut Permit Process

Mr. Acosta questioned if RAWA is being billed for their street cuts. Mr. Coleman stated that it is.

V. Updates

Mr. Acosta recommended that the list of updates be reviewed and items removed that are completed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Shelly Katzenmoyer
Deputy City Clerk