

MINUTES
RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 3, 2023 6PM
CITY HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS
5 E. BUTLER ROAD
2nd committee meeting

Committee Members present: Frank Allgood (Chair), Taft Matney, and Michael Reynolds
Others present: Recreation Director Bart Cumalander and City Administrator Seth Duncan

1. Call to Order- Chairman Allgood

2. Public Comment- None

3. Reading and Approval of Minutes

a. Recreation Committee Meeting: December 5, 2022

Motion: Councilman Matney made a motion to approve the minutes with Councilman Reynolds seconding.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (3-0).

4. Reports or Communications from City Officers

a. Recreation Director Bart Cumalander

i. Budget Review

The budget is in good shape.

Mr. Cumalander thanked the Public Works Department for their help in repairing some equipment that was broken over the holidays.

The fencing project at Sunset Park has been started.

Prices are being obtained for cameras at the Sports Center and Senior Center.

Signups have started for spring sports.

Councilman Matney asked Mr. Cumalander if there are plans for cameras at the park facilities to monitor any vandalism that might be taking place. Mr. Cumalander said they will be talked about during the budget process this year. They were more expensive than anticipated.

Mr. Cumalander said new equipment for the Sports Center will also be asked for during the budget process. The equipment could be leased instead of purchased to keep it

updated.

Chairman Allgood asked about the basketball goal damage and if that was vandalism. Mr. Cumalander said it is people dunking over time. The goals are manually driven.

Councilman Matney asked if there would be a life cycle schedule in place for the new equipment so that it can be changed out as it gets older, so as to not have to replace everything all at once. Mr. Cumalander answered yes.

Chairman Allgood asked if some of the old equipment could be moved to the Senior Center. Mr. Cumalander said yes, but we have to be careful with what is put over there.

Councilman Reynolds asked how long the equipment lease would be for. Mr. Cumalander answered 3-5 years. Councilman Reynolds then asked how much of the equipment needed to be replaced. Mr. Cumalander answered about 80% of what the Sports Center currently has should be replaced.

5. Unfinished Business- There is no unfinished business.

6. New Business

a. Sports Center Free and Reduced Membership Fee Policy- This item is for discussion.

There has never been clear direction on who might receive free or reduced memberships to the Sports Center.

Motion: Chairman Allgood made a motion to open this item up for discussion with Councilman Matney seconding.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (3-0).

Chairman Allgood said he does not think free lifetime memberships should be implemented. Chairman Allgood said the Mayor made a comment about the active duty military and how it is hard to determine who is active and who is not. Mr. Cumalander said military members have to show an id in order to receive a free membership. Then when the membership is renewed in a year's time, the id must be shown again to continue the free membership.

Chairman Allgood asked Mr. Duncan if the question on whether free memberships for Council would be taxable has been answered. Mr. Duncan said this still needs to be determined. Chairman Allgood said commissioners were also brought up. Councilman Matney said the City does not offer many benefits for commission members and he would like the sports center membership used as a benefit for those commission members who are actively serving the City. Chairman Allgood asked if was fair to say if you are an active City employee, active elected official, or an active commissioner, you may have a free membership. Councilman Matney agreed.

Chairman Allgood said if the benefits of Council change, does this need to be part of the compensation ordinance, or is the current benefit grandfathered? Mr. Duncan said we want the compensation ordinance to correctly reflect the intention of Council and specify the benefits.

Councilman Matney asked that National Guard, State Guard and Reserve military members be added to the 50% membership tier.

Councilman Matney said the membership question has opened up other questions of compensation and benefits. Mr. Duncan said the compensation ordinance could be done this year and go into effect in 2024, after the next Council election.

Councilman Reynolds said he would have no problem looking at giving tenured , retired employees a discounted 50% rate.

City Administrator Duncan asked if there would be any consideration for in-city or out of City rates. Councilman Reynolds said we want to serve our residents. He would be in favor of the benefit being given to City residents since City taxes pay for the facility. Councilman Matney said then you will have a problem getting corporations to join with their employees who may not be City residents. There are a lot of questions to answer, but there are a few questions Mr. Cumalander is asking that could be answered now.

Staff will draft a policy based on this discussion to bring back to committee.

Motion: Chairman Allgood made a motion to close discussion on this item with Councilman Reynolds seconding.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (3-0).

- b. Sports Center Membership Fees- The fee schedule comes through the budget process. Chairman Allgood wants to make sure our facility is keeping up with rates of our competitors. Costs are going up.

Motion: Chairman Allgood made a motion to open this item up for discussion with Councilman Reynolds seconding.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (3-0).

Chairman Allgood said the YMCA that Prisma runs is more expensive than our facility. Mr. Cumalander said the Sports Center stays open now through Cultural Center events and has hired a marketing person to try and solicit new memberships. The Sports Center is a nice, clean facility.

Councilman Reynolds said he does not have a problem with looking at our rates and how they compare, but the facility is unique, and is also competing with newer facilities. Chairman Allgood agrees that our facility is different and there are many variables. We should look at what else is out there and if we should make any changes. Mr. Duncan said there should be a thorough analysis of what we offer at what price versus with others offer.

Motion: Chairman Allgood made a motion to close discussion on this item with Councilman Reynolds seconding.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (3-0).

7. Public Comment

Carol King: I live at 224 Devon Drive here in Mauldin. I was making notes and I typically don't comment in this environment. Prior to us being in the courtroom, we were upstairs, and it was more of a laid-back atmosphere where we would all chime in. We have gotten away from that and that may not necessarily be a good thing. A couple of points real quick. Thank you to Bart for all of his hard work. My first term 2016-2020, I was on Recreation with Mr. Matney and the current Mayor. Back then, 2016 or 17, we talked about, and Mr. Cumalander was not the Director then. We talked about leasing versus buying equipment. I will get on my soapbox. This is one of my soapbox issues. We were under the understanding for a long time that we were leasing equipment because that was a goal of Council, only to find out that we were not. That is my first soapbox issue.

Please urge your committee to look at this. I think it makes good sense to lease some equipment to keep the most modern equipment around. I know we are more of a family type Sports Center/ gym, but if you don't have adequate equipment, you won't get members in. What fits one does not fit all and I think that there is equipment that we could even add to our inventory. Bart knows what I am talking about.

Secondly, on the structure of the memberships, don't lose focus on what Mr. Cumalander is asking for, guidance and a policy perhaps. We have never had one in place. I don't think it is that difficult. There are no former Council members who have free memberships. It is kind of willy-nilly, I think those were the words used and I think that is a valid statement. We don't have to re-invent the wheel, but there needs to be policies and procedures you are working on. I urge staff to work with Mr. Putnam on the other questions. I could answer them, but I will spare you the details. The City is not technically paying the sport center for the memberships, so it is not a paid benefit, it is kind of given to you. Food for thought.

8. Committee Concerns- None

9. Adjournment- Chairman Allgood adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cindy Miller
Municipal Clerk