

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE**

September 25, 2019

6:00 P.M.

Councilman James King called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following present: City Manager, Charles Anderson, Director of Economic Development and Community Relations, Trisha Newcomer, Recreation Coordinator, Tina Hurley, Parks Coordinator, Bobby Holston and Parks and Recreation Committee Member, Deborah Buttridge.

Councilman King presented New Business Item #1: 1. Bringing a Dog Park to Seaford

Councilman King explained that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss the feasibility of the creation of a dog park in the City of Seaford where residents may exercise their dogs in a secure and friendly environment. The need for a formal dog park was raised as a community desire and requires further evaluation. Part of evaluating the feasibility of creating a dog park is to identify one or more sites where a dog park could be located. He noted that making this available to the public would encourage new residents and neighbors to stay connected; while not interfering with other public lands such as playgrounds or public parks. Parks Coordinator Bobby Holston noted that the front lot of the Jay's Nest would be ideal for such a park as it currently has running water and electricity.

General discussion continued regarding locations and need.

Councilman King presented New Business Item #2: Idea of having a "Friends of the Dog Park"

Councilman King stated that the creation of the secondary committee, or "Friends of the Seaford Dog Park", is to assist the Dog Park Feasibility Study Committee. The following would be the duties and responsibilities for this secondary committee.

1. Consider whether there is interest and/or a need for a place designated and reserved for use specifically by dogs and dog owners. If a need exists, to also consider whether there is need for more than one dog park for the convenient access and use by all interested residents of the City .
2. Determine key elements that would be desirable in a dog park; including, parking, fencing, waste removal, a water supply, and other amenities.
3. Consider whether the need exists for a larger, unfenced area of land designated for use by dogs and dog-owners; which would allow for long, off-leash walks. Ideally, in a wooded or natural area that won't conflict with other users.
4. Review the list of City -owned land for possible use as a dog park and to consider whether there are privately owned parcels which the owners may be interested in allowing to be used for a dog park.
5. To hold a public hearing at the outset of the study process to solicit comments from the community on the need for a dog park, as well as the desired elements and locations.

6. To develop a draft report, including the Committee's preliminary findings and recommendations and to hold a second public hearing at which the draft report is publicly discussed and public comments are solicited.

Councilman King asked City Manager Anderson for clarification on the next step after committee is formed. City Manager Anderson explained that in order for the volunteers to be a sanctioned committee in the City of Seaford, the list of volunteers and an outline of the committee responsibilities would need to be submitted to the Mayor. From there, a recommendation must be made to Council in order to vote and confirm the members of that committee.

Conversation continued in regards to possible, interested committee members.

Councilman King asked if there were any questions. City Manager Anderson asked if Councilman King would reach out to the possible committee members once a list is compiled. Councilman King confirmed that he would.

Councilman King noted that it may be difficult to gauge the interest of the community just within the city limits. Director of Economic Development and Community Relations, Trisha Newcomer agreed, stating that social media would gather information from residents and those who live in surrounding areas. She noted that visiting residents' door to door would probably be the best way to truly measure resident interest.

Councilman King also noted that there is currently no zoning or ordinance regulations for a dog park. City Manager Anderson confirmed and noted that there were a few options including obtaining a variance or modifying the existing Seaford City Code.

The committee then reviewed pictures, the current layout and features of the existing dog park in Milford and continued general conversation about possible committee members and possible volunteers to maintain the park.

Councilman King ask for any questions or comments from the committee. Director of Economic Development and Community Relations, Trisha Newcomer reminded that if the Committee was looking for approval at the next Council Meeting, it would need to be submitted by October 1st in order to appear on the agenda.

Councilman King asked for a list of the names suggested for the subcommittee; City Manager Anderson listed the following names:

Alan Cranston
Renee Adkins
Mark Belote
Alice Messick
Nancy Dorman
Bill Watt
Maggie Rippon
A Seaford Animal Hospital Representative

Matt MacCoy

Councilman King presented New Business Item #3: Visions for the Oyster House Property.

Director of Economic Development and Community Relations, Trisha Newcomer began by explaining that Chesapeake Conservancy, an organization out of Annapolis, Maryland, owned property at the end of Cannon Street, near the Nanticoke River. The Chesapeake Conservancy then donated that property back to the City of Seaford and in collaboration with the Nanticoke River Watershed Alliance and the Seaford Historical Society, the land will be developed into the Oyster House Park.

Mrs. Newcomer went on to explain the layout of the current master plan for the site; including, a pavilion, an extension of the existing Riverwalk and a replica structure of the original J.B. Robinson Oyster House. This space, with its living shoreline, is expected to be a source of educational opportunities and overall greenspace for the community. Mrs. Newcomer went on to explain that the site will also include a new canoe and kayak launch area. She noted that the final plan is due back to the City by the end of November and the hope is that this will become a destination point for the City of Seaford and will encourage visitors to explore the downtown businesses.

Councilman King called for a motion to close the Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting. Ms. Deborah Buttridge made a motion to close the Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting. Recreation Coordinator, Tina Hurley seconded the motion; motion so passed with all voting in favor. The Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting closed at 6:51 p.m.

Charles D. Anderson, City Manager

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