

**MEETING
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
January 14, 2008
6:30 PM**

The Parks and Recreation Commission of the City of Converse Met for a Regular Meeting at the City Hall Conference Room #1, Located at 405 South Seguin Street, Monday, January 14, 2008 at 6:30 PM and Discussed the Following Agenda Items:

1. Call Meeting to Order.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tonya Drake at approximately 6:32 pm. The following members were present:

Ms. Tonya Drake, Chairman	Mr. Jim Neeley, Member
Ms. Sandy Laskowski, Member	Mr. Sam Perez, Jr., Member
Mr. Jeff Beehler, Member	Mr. Glenn Laskowski, Member
Ms. Pam Kraemer, Member	Mr. Rex Brien, Member
Ms. Brenda Swanson, Alternate Member	Ms. Nancy Bazany, Council Liaison
Mr. Sam Hughes, City Manager	Ms. Leigh Ann Rogers, Secretary

Commission Member, Ms. Angie Martinez, arrived at approximately 6:45 p.m.

Members, Mr. Richard Schobinger and Ms. Jennifer White, and Alternate Members, Mr. Jorge Topete and Mr. Lance Byrd were not present.

2. Recognition of Visitors.

Ms. Laura Beehler, Mr. Chris Drake, and Mr. Chris Bazany were recognized.

3. Action to Approve Minutes of Meeting Conducted December 10, 2007.

Ms. Sandy Laskowski requested corrections to the minutes. Corrections are as follows:

- Page 3, Agenda Item # 8, Line 2 – “There was an inquiry regarding plans for restroom facilities in the future.” Ms. Laskowski requested that the individual who made this inquiry (Mr. Sam Perez, Jr.) be mentioned by name.
- Page 3, Agenda Item # 8, Line 3 – “A member of the Park Relocation Committee verified plans for restroom facilities.” Ms. Laskowski requested that the individual who responded to the inquiry (Ms. Tonya Drake) also be mentioned by name.

Motion to approve minutes of meeting conducted December 10, 2007 with the above mentioned corrections was made by Mr. Jeff Beehler. Seconded by Mr. Jim Neeley. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Action to Elect a Vice-Chairperson for the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Motion to table this item until next month's meeting (Feb 11) by Mr. Sam Perez, Jr. Seconded by Mr. Jeff Beehler. Motion passed unanimously.

5. 2007 Christmas Decorating Contest Follow-Up Discussion.

Discussion included:

- Mr. Jeff Beehler commented that the method of driving the route and executing the viewing and voting should be modified in some aspect to create a more time effective course of action.
- Chairman Drake suggested bringing in "outside judges" from surrounding cities.
- Ms. Brenda Swanson suggested eliminating the commercial/business category.
- City Manager, Mr. Sam Hughes, questioned the purpose/objective of this particular event. Mr. Hughes then reported a brief itemization of the expenses involved which equated to approximately \$800.00 to \$1000.00 invested in organizing the event. Mr. Hughes suggested that if the Commission's goal is to encourage the community to decorate, then the Decorating Contest announcements need to be released much earlier. Mr. Hughes also questioned, "If you cancelled this, would the Christmas decorations of the City of Converse be any different?" Mr. Hughes offered other ideas such as eliminating the application process and to simply recognize and award well-decorated locations and forgo the expensive advertisements and apply those savings towards higher prize amounts if the Commission wishes to continue hosting this event.
- Chairman Drake stated that she would rather spend the money decorating along South Seguin in front of City Hall to show off our thoroughfare.
- Mr. Jeff Beehler agreed with Chairman Drake in that the money would be better spent on decorations for the City.
- Chairman Drake also suggested possibly seeking "sponsorship" from local businesses to help fund the purchasing of the decorations.

- Chairman Drake requested bringing back a discussion and action item on next month's agenda to determine if this (Christmas Decorating Contest) is an event that needs to occur or whether it should be replaced with an alternate suggestion.

6. Easter Egg Hunt at the City Park Discussion.

Discussion included:

- Chairman Drake explained that this proposed event would be a collaborative effort with the Fire and EMS Commission and the local churches and the idea stems from the recent Breakfast with Santa event hosted by the Fire and EMS Commission.
- City Manager, Sam Hughes, advised that based on the number of people who participated in the Breakfast with Santa event, a substantial budget should be expected. Mr. Hughes also suggested preparing the local businesses for potential mass quantity purchases. As a final point, Mr. Hughes cautioned that the Commission members should be ready to make a definite commitment by next month's meeting otherwise there won't be adequate time to organize this event.
- Chairman Drake reported that she and Ms. Brenda Swanson will be working together to prepare for next month's meeting and will invite the Fire and EMS Commission to attend the meeting as well.
- Ms. Sandy Laskowski reminded Chairman Drake that all of the ball fields at the City Park are reserved for baseball tryouts on March 1st and will be in use for practice for the rest of the month.

7. Future Planning for Night in Ole Converse 2008 Discussion.

Discussion included:

- Chairman Drake asked for voluntary sign-up for each of the categories (advertising, auction, etc.) for Night in Ole Converse. The tentative assignments are as follows:

Auction/Sponsorship	-	Jim Neeley	* Rex Brien to assist
Arts and Crafts	-	Pam Kraemer	
Food Vendors	-	Sandy Laskowski	
Parade	-	Sam Perez, Jr.	* Brenda Swanson to assist
Extreme Night	-	Brenda Swanson	
Community Service	-	Rex Brien	* Angie Martinez to assist
Entertainment	-	Sam Perez, Jr.	* Jim Neeley to assist
Car Show	-	Jeff Beehler	* Sam Perez, Jr. to assist
Dunking Booth/Cake Walk		Glenn Laskowski	* Sandy Laskowski to assist

- Mr. Jeff Beehler suggested a chili-cook off. Mr. Jim Neeley stated that this has been done in the past with negative results. City Manager, Mr. Sam Hughes added that past experience proved no substantial increase in attendance with this event. Ms. Sandy Laskowski was in agreement with Mr. Neeley and Mr. Hughes.
- Chairman Drake suggested a car show on Saturday in the area of ball fields 3 & 4. Mr. Sam Perez, Jr. gave his support to the suggestion. Ms. Brenda Swanson added perhaps the cars entered in the car show would participate in the parade as well. Mr. Hughes reported Saturday afternoon attendance has been weak and agreed that the car show may be a good opportunity to increase attendance. Mr. Glenn Laskowski thought the car show may increase auction attendance as well.
- Ms. Brenda Swanson reported that she would like to add a “Rock, Paper, Scissors” contest to the line-up for Extreme Night. Ms. Swanson then elaborated on the recent popularity of the game in a “competition-style” setting and received positive feedback from the majority of the Commission.
- Ms. Brenda Swanson made several suggestions for Sunday which included surrounding the day with a “Family Fun Day” atmosphere, a kiddie parade with bicycles, wagons, pets, and children participants, kids korner again but with more carnival-type games rather than the activities offered last year, charging a nominal entry fee into the park, a coloring contest, and bands or live music geared towards children.
- Chairman Drake suggested having a “theme” for Night in Ole Converse every year. Examples given were: colors, foreign countries, rodeo, Hawaiian, Mardi gras, etc. and she asked for the Commission members to give this idea some thought and to bring their ideas to next month’s meeting.
- Ms. Brenda Swanson suggested a hidden coin contest.
- City Manager, Mr. Sam Hughes mentioned a few vacancies in the volunteer assignments such as advertising, Chairman Drake responded by pointing out that not all of the members were present for the meeting and hopefully those missing will fill in the vacant areas. A small discussion ensued. Chairman Drake ended the discussion by stating that she would be sending an “event plan” to the Secretary, Ms. Rogers, who will forward that information to all of the members with hopes of “streamlining” future meetings. As a final point, Mr. Jim Neeley reiterated the key to success in this event is to receive help from **all** of the Commission members otherwise it’s always the same people doing all of the work.

8. Pavilion Relocation Discussion.

City Manager, Mr. Sam Hughes reported:

- City Council approved the agreement for trading the land where the pavilion is currently located in exchange for moving the pavilion to North Park. Part of the agreement was for the City to prepare that location by putting down and compacting the base, which has been completed.
- Mr. Hughes and the EDC Executive Director, Mr. Mark Luft, met with CPS representatives and reached an agreement with CPS to bore the holes for the piers at no cost.
- The pavilion has been cleared and electricity has been disconnected. Now it is ready to be taken down and moved to North Park where it will be painted, set up on new piers, a new floor will be poured, and it will have a new roof and insulation.
- In an estimated six weeks, North Park will have an operable pavilion but without electricity immediately. Electricity will need to be run from the gate entrance down to the pavilion at a cost of approximately \$8000 to \$8500.

Following the City Manager's report, Mr. Jim Neeley inquired, "Will the pavilion still be named the Red Schumann Memorial Pavilion?" Mr. Hughes responded by explaining that, yes it will, and the sign has been taken down and will be re-installed at the pavilion once the move is complete.

Chairman Drake asked what color the pavilion will be painted. Mr. Hughes asked for the opinion of the Commission members. Red was the agreed color.

9. Briefing by City Council Liaison.

See attached report.

10. Discuss Agenda Items for Next Meeting.

Discussion included:

- Action to elect a Vice-Chairperson.
- Discuss theme ideas and job assignments for Night in Ole Converse.
- Action on Christmas Decorating Contest.
- Action on Easter Egg Hunt.

11. Set Date and Time for Next Meeting – February 11, 2008, at 6:30 pm in the City Hall Conference Room.

10. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:43 pm by Chairman Drake.