



## ***Recreation & Parks Department Report February 2012***

- Eight (8) groups used the Hughes Center during January for a total of 178 hours. Events included the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, AARP tax training and the Russellville Area Chamber of Commerce annual meeting.
- The Parks Commission met on January 10. The minutes are attached.
- The department had two incidents of vandalism in the month of January. The incidents included the breaking of the lens on the light tubes in the restrooms at Sequoyah Park and a fence was cut on Field Five at Hickey Park.
- The large room in the Hughes Center was painted and the baseboards were replaced. The chalk board was removed; the projector screen and dry erase board were moved to make using them more convenient for meetings.
- Concrete was poured in front of the bleachers and around the dugout on the first base side on Field Four at Hickey Park. This matches the concrete on the third base side of the field that was installed at the end of the season last year. We are hoping to complete this project before the baseball season begins this year.
- New eight foot infield fences were replaced on Fields Three and Four at Hickey Park. We hope to install "no soft toss" signs on the new fences to help keep them in good condition before teams begin practicing this year.
- The Russellville High School baseball and softball teams began practice on January 5 at Hickey Park.
- The Russellville School District maintenance department is assisting us in the maintenance and development of Fields One & Six at Hickey Park. Their help is greatly appreciated.
- Quarterly safety inspections were conducted on all park buildings and vehicles. All fire extinguishers, emergency lights, exit lights, weather radios, eyewash stations and grinders were inspected. One emergency light was re-aimed and two exit signs were replaced. In other safety matters, a fire drill was conducted at the Hughes Center and the offices and jobsites were inspected.
- A new sidewalk was poured by Pavilion Two at Hickey Park. We are looking at renovating the rest of the pavilion in the upcoming months.
- New tables and benches were installed at Fields Six & Seven in Hickey Park. A new bench with pad was installed in the middle of the park by the umpire's room replacing the old wooden bench. With the new pads poured under the benches, it is easier to maintain and looks more appealing.
- The Hickey Park play unit was installed near Pavilion Two in the park. The unit was stored during the construction of Field Seven. This will allow a safe place for children to play while at the park.
- A new twelve foot batters eye was installed on Field One at Hickey Park. The new batters eye is built with the same materials used for the construction of backstops. This new fence should withstand the heavy winds that caused the last fence to fail; we hope.

- The water tower property was cleaned. Clean up included hauling off old metal, burning brush, straightening up materials and removing an unusable shed that was an eyesore. We plan on putting new cover on the fences, adding some landscaping and pruning the existing trees to make the area more appealing to the neighborhood.
- The underbrush was cleared for the trail at Illinois Bayou Park. The county work release prisoners assisted us with clean up of the trail. We hope to install culverts and begin excavation work soon in preparation for base materials and asphalt. The project is part of the Wildlife Observation Trail Grant we received from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.
- The department held registration for an adult mixed volleyball league but unfortunately did not receive enough entries to have a league this year. We will try to reestablish the league next year.
- Mayor Eaton and Mack Hollis visited with Mayor McPherson, Parks Director Jimmy Clarke and Aquatics Director Ina Brown of Heber Springs while taking a tour of their new aquatic center and community center. Both facilities were well designed and very busy while we were there. This trip was part of the ongoing study to develop a plan for an aquatic center for Russellville.
- Memorial plaques were installed at the soccer complex for the trees planted in memory of Richard Shilling and Kenton Sisson. The trees were pin oaks which seem to do the best in this area and will someday provide shade much needed to our park patrons.

**RUSSELLVILLE RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION**  
**Minutes from Monthly Meeting**  
**January 10, 2012**

Present: Marvin Collier, Mayor Bill Eaton, Andy Hatley, Theresa Herrick, Mack Hollis, Mike Johnston, J.W. Stratton, Terry Thomas  
Absent: Chloe Lieblong, Mark Tripp  
Person Recording: Kelli Nealy  
Guests: Ron Knost, Kacie McCurrie-RV Leader, Adam Sweeney-The Courier

The meeting was called to order at noon.

Mike Johnston made a motion to accept the minutes from the December meeting. Andy Hatley seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

**New Business**

**A. Election of Commission Chairman**-Mike Johnston made a motion to appoint Chloe Lieblong as the chairman of the parks commission for 2012. Andy Hatley seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

**B. Department Special Events Schedule**-A schedule was distributed to the commission listing the dates of the 2012 department special events. Traditionally, the Russellville Christmas Parade is held the Thursday following Thanksgiving. By following this method, the 2012 parade date would be Thursday, November 29. A questionnaire was sent to the 2011 parade participants asking for their input. Seventeen participants responded, and thirteen preferred that the date for this year's parade be changed from November 29 to December 6. After a brief discussion, a recommendation was made to begin scheduling the parade on the first Thursday in December. Marvin Collier made a motion in favor of the change. J.W. Stratton seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

**C. Consideration of a Rental Refund**-Petit Jean Youth Foundation reserved the gym for a fundraiser to be held on December 31, 2011. The event was cancelled on December 28 due to a lack of participation. Our current policy states that rental fees for December events will only be refunded if notification is received 30 days prior to the event. This policy was established to keep groups from renting the center as an alternative site for their event and cancelling at the last minute which was not the reason that Petit Jean Youth Foundation cancelled. A recommendation was made to refund the group's rental fee. Marvin Collier made a motion in favor of the refund. Mike Johnston seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

**D. Discussion of Event Setup Time**-Many of the groups and/or individuals that rent the gym for a Saturday event request set-up time on Friday. There is currently no charge for the set-up time unless someone else wishes to reserve on Friday. If this happens, the Saturday renter is given first right of refusal to rent the gym on Friday. The commissioners agreed to continue the current policy.

**General Update**

**A. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration**-The 24<sup>th</sup> annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration will be held Saturday, January 14 at the Hughes Center. Event spokesperson Andy Hatley said the event will be held from 11:00am to 3:15pm and is free to the public. The River Valley Progressive Men's Club will be teaming with the Little Rock National Guard to present the event.

**B. Monthly Report**-The commissioners received a copy of the department's monthly report.

**C. Upcoming Events**-A schedule of upcoming events was given to the commissioners.

**D. Future Agenda Items**- Indoor Swimming Pool/Aquatic Center  
Kayak Trails

The meeting adjourned at 12.35pm.