

AGENDA VHM QTRLY MEETING 16 APR 2009

Call to order: 1:10 pm by Harlan Donaldson

It is a picnic in the park today with some games.

Meeting Minutes: are posted on the web. 1st and 2nd to approve them.

Treasurer Report: \$671.24 before picnic bills

Cost is under \$200. Blockade cross bars and to close the street \$40

Port a potty was donated for the day.

Everyone needs to check in at the table and pick up their free bag. There will be a drawing for prizes later.

Welcome committee report:

Papers are updated and we have give information to one new household.

More free stuff has been donated. Free bags!

Park news: www.dmparks.org

The surround for the swing set is not going to happen soon. Insurance and safety concerns mean the surround must be larger with a smaller drop off between the surround and the ground outside it. If we can get another area leveled, they can use the dirt for the surround.

We had a visit from Russ Star (landscape artist), an associate, Doug Romig (Parks Department Manager) and his son. Doug took some time to answer our concerns about our park (and others). There are 72 parks in the system.

The Honey locust trees, except for the one that will be removed because of its proximity to a house, will be trimmed of thorns on an annual basis.

It was asked if we could plant more trees. There is a Schwartzell grant that can help and you can plant the kind of trees you would like.

<http://www.dmqov.org/departments/pr/pdf/2007swartzellapplication.pdf>

The budget was cut by \$9 million last year. The only way to make it happen was to contract out some jobs. Mowing and custodial were done this way. They are still working out a few problems. Some full time positions were created by sharing people with the airport. Parks needed people in the summer and the airport needed them in the winter.

The department was restructured and people moved in hopes that new eyes could help with some issues. He explained which departments report to him and how the zones work. Also, how the other departments will rotate and replace as people leave the departments. They are looking at 2-4 year shifts during the process.

Bike trails. This year's goal is to connect the major routes (spines). Next is to connect the neighborhoods to these routes. Then the recreation areas.

They have privatized some parts of the organization also. Zoo, Golf course, etc. The city owns the property, but the private company puts money to repair and enhance the building and running the programs. People are more likely to donate to private companies than the government.

\$3-5 million will be reduced next year. Some more jobs will probably be cut. Federal funding has been lost also.

If there is a enterprise fund (profit centers), they pay taxes to the city to cover projects and funding.

Neighborhood parks are not in danger of losing their funding because it was the number one item on the survey. People want their recreation and parks. They will not put a restroom, but could put a port a potty. They don't want to because it is \$40 a month to maintain a port a potty.

They are doing inspections of restrooms, playgrounds, pools, etc. They are setting priorities to remove some items and fix others before they add new. Example: Glendale cemetery had a water line break. They fixed it and 10 feet down it broke again. That was fixed and it broke again a ways down again. They shut down the system and put in barrels with spigots. This cost some, but saved much. A more permanent solution would be to put in a few water stations around the park that people could use. They would put extra a memorial day.

We can build something with our money and their backing.

There was some discussion about other parks, park standards and requirements. Some areas were built at a higher level to attract tournaments and make some money. Ewing park had 500 volunteers come in to clean up the Lilac arboretum. Some parks cannot be upgraded to meet all standards. Our park will never be ADA compatible. Park on E14th north of the river (was Hawthorn park). They are trying to go more environmentally oriented and conservational in their parks. Jester park is a good example of this.

Our park has an area that is natural grasses. It has been suggested as a rain garden instead. Their park planner probably needs to take a look.

Prize Winners:

- Winning a prize package from Sleepy Hollow.
- Chase Hall
- Bergerons

Spend our money:

- We need to come up with priorities and goals to help our neighborhood and our neighbors. Email ideas to Harlan, Dave or any board member.
- Grant commitment from BKM. They will match up to \$1000 for a neighborhood improvement project. Good until next July.
- We can put up signs on the posts at the entrances to our neighborhood that announce our neighborhood.
- There is a grant from Metro Waste Authority that may help us, but we need to get it in soon.
- Signs to ask people not to litter on Dean and Williams.
- Build a shelter house.
- Mow, clean, paint, etc. people's houses in the neighborhood.

Idea:

Visit another neighborhood to see what they discuss and how they are doing. There is a new neighborhood starting on the other side of Grey's Woods.

Next meeting: October 15th, 6:30 pm at the Four Mile Community Center. Elections will be held at this meeting.

Adjourn 2:20 pm