

Memorandum

To: Board of Park Commissioners
From: Garry Harrington, Liaison for the EAC
Subject: Ecological Advocacy Committee Update
Date: March 15th, 2019

Commissioners,

Here are the bullet points from the last EAC meeting.

Discussion:

Orkin Pest Control by Michael Jacques

VPA was presented with opportunity to partner with Orkin Pest Control - to remove stinging insects from VPA playgrounds & pavilions. Signage around the pavilions/playgrounds might read "If you come across stinging pests, please call this number."

Orkin Pest Control:

- Removal of the stinging insects will be the standard practice.
- Usage of chemicals will be the last options in the treatment of these areas and will only be used in extreme situations. They will contact VPA before using this method of treatment.
- Will not do any removal of Honeybees.
- They will not touch any nests that are above 15 feet above the ground.
- Orkin uses mostly dusts that will erode the exoskeleton of the insect. They do also have sprays and/or water hose from their truck.
- There are no human health concerns with the chemicals they use – just could cause skin irritation. Almost everything they use is damaging to the pest and not to humans.
- Orkin has a division entomologist that can help with educational signage.

EAC Comments:

- Make sure there is a clear division between hiking trails and playgrounds/pavilion areas.
- Make sure the signage is clear about when/why to call.
- Opportunity for educational signage on the different species of stinging insects.
- EAC would like a year- end report to see how many they actual remove.

Patrick Sherman – General update on the projects within My SB Parks and Trails

Current Projects:

- Maintenance building at the Facilities and Grounds building.
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- West Bank Trail project will be starting soon (it is out for bid) –updating the existing trail and adding a 10 foot wide walking trail.
 - No dredging will be needed to put the trail into the river
 - VPA is not expecting an damage to the trail during a flood
 - The consultant on the project is concerned about bank stabilization near the Century Center during the construction. They will be monitoring it.

Howard Park:

- Suggested to have a huge poster on the fence to show the design plans for the park.
- Scheduled to have ice by Thanksgiving 2019.
- Planting 250 trees. They are adding 30% more trees to replace all of the mature lost during construction.
- There will be a rain garden(s) near the river which is where the storm water will be directed.
- EAC would like to the plan for the rain garden(s)
- EAC Recommendations for the Rain Garden:
 - Plant native plants & trees
 - Educational/Interpretative signage (add on where they can find other rain gardens within the city)
 - Have a plan to properly maintain
 - Train the employees who will be maintaining the rain gardens
 - The rain gardens will be a good opportunity for programming within Howard Park

Small Neighborhood Parks:

- Restrooms making them accessible and ADA compliant

Governor Joseph Kernan Park:

- VPA has a 60% plan for the park which includes replacing the dock
- Hillside erosion issue – EAC recommends that VPA investigates best options for the erosion between the upper and lower paths.

Leeper Park:

- They are in proposed phase one which will take place this year.
 - Starting with updating the playground near the tennis courts.
 - Adding the Studebaker Fountain and river overlook with signage.

EAC Recommendations:

- Best practices for Canada Geese issue. Some kind of plantings on the bank to deter the geese from continuing to come up from the river. Use the area between the road and the river for the plantings.
- EAC would like to be involved with the plantings in Leeper Park and would like to sit down with the people who will be designing before they actually design the gardens/park to recommend native species to plant.
- Turn the tree lawn into rain gardens like Howard Park to help with storm water running into the river.



Pinhook Park:

This project will go out for bid in fall of 2019.

- New trail around the parameter of the park (asphalt)
- Nature based playground
- New accessible kayak launch
- Resurfacing and striping the parking lots
- Putting a fishing pier to increase water usage

EAC Recommendations:

- A study to see if there are fresh water mussels in Pinhook.
- Signage to have boaters clean their boats.
- Best management practices for the Canada Geese issue in this park.

Various Updates and Information by Garry Harrington

- Meeting Operations Suggestions:
 - Use the Google Drive/email to cover more items that are not listed on the agenda.
 - Adding time limits on the agenda.
- EAC would like to focus more on the key ecological issues to save time
- EAC members will rotate taking notes/minutes.
 - Allison Turner - May 6th EAC Meeting.

Update on Tree Ordinance by Steve Sass

- Wording on the Ordinance 19.13 & 19.14 has been submitted to City Legal.
- Next step: have a community meeting to talk about the changes to the Ordinance.

Action Items for the EAC:

1. Review both the Tree Standards document and the Tree Protection plan in the Google Drive. Submit any comments or suggested edits to Brent Thompson.

Sincerely,

Garry Harrington

Director, Rum Village Nature Center