

Southwest Area Commission  
Meeting Place: Online

Southwest Area Commission (SWAC)  
Prepared for approval by Kristin Hayes

Chair: FeLisa Jenkins  
Vice-Chair: Open  
Secretary: Kristin Hayes  
Fiscal Officer: Maurice Jenkins

Meeting Location: Online

Minutes for: May 18, 2021

7:30 p.m. Meeting called to order.

**Commissioners:**

Present: Maurice Jenkins, Liz Reed, FeLisa Jenkins, Kristin Hayes, Peggy Fossett, and Patty Spencer.

Absent: Barbara Parsons, Don Parsons, and Jacob Barker.

**Special Guests:** Special Guests regarding RBX Sign at Berliner Parks:

Jack Castle, Columbus Recreation and Parks  
Sandy Seago, RBX  
Jeff Brown, RBX

Castle is now serving as Interim Assistant Director of Columbus Recreation and Parks and oversees Berliner Sports Park. The department is looking for community relations partnership and is exploring signage for Berliner Park. The master plan from 2014 states that the department should seek funding outside for the department and park's foundation, fundraising, grants, and development.

The partnership between Recreation and Parks and RBX is to develop new revenue for better use of Berliner's facilities. A significant portion of revenue from this project will go towards youth sports access. It is estimated on an annual basis that pre-COVID-19 that it takes about \$80,000 annually to offset fees to have youth sports access. The Department put out a request for vendor information and RBX responded and submitted a proposal that was reviewed by a CRPD committee. The Department decided to move forward with RBX media.

Seago and Brown said that RBX is excited to help the community. The parent company Rockbridge Capital, a private equity firm located in Columbus, has a goal to put the sign up to provide value. The sign will be a 45x15 board, the architecture very nice and is digital on both

sides. The board will be placed by the 71 highway. The branding will be made by Recreation and Parks. The company wanted to come to the commission to explain why they are putting the sign up and why the Recreation and Parks department supports this.

F. Jenkins asked at night if the sign would post a traffic hazard. The presenters explained that it will not because there is a standard by ODOT that they are not able to be too bright. The goal of this is not trying to make it a spotlight.

The presenters explained that birds were a consideration. Additionally, the area is already well-lit with one electronic sign in front of the park. Additionally they will be able to reduce any impact at night by dimming the light and because the background is white.

M. Jenkins asked if advertisements of future events held at the park would occur throughout the year. The presenters explained that that is the plan, but that some of that is yet to be determined. Some parts of the board will advertise for RBX and some parts will advertise CRPD events. Each spot on the advertisement is 7 seconds on each side.

P. Fossett wanted to confirm the location of the sign - Spencer confirmed that the sign is facing the freeway on I-71, not on Greenlawn Ave. and that there are two sides to the signs.

P. Fossett wanted to confirm the type of lighting. The LED lighting used will be seen more in the day. Additionally, they will dim lights at night and not use a white background for advertising.

Spencer asked the dimensions of the sign. The presenters explained it was 45 feet tall (but not all of the height is screen, the screen in 30 feet range) by 15 feet wide.

F. Jenkins asked how sturdy the sign is and if there was any concern about wind. The presenters explained that the sign will be sturdy, as this is done all over the world. This type of sign is new in the U.S. and a very high end sign that normally billboard companies don't put up. The safety of people is important and the presenters are more than confident that it will be ok.

Reed addressed Castle with her observations about the parks in the Southwest Area. There are four parks in the Southwest Area, Berliner is in this area as well but it is not seen as a community park because guests have to pay to park, the nice picnic area is gated in, and community members can enjoy. At the other three parks in the community, there is one picnic table, no portapotty or restrooms. Reed said she appreciates what Recreation and Parks does, but that she feels that funding to broaden services is needed because the Southwest Area is very weak in Recreation and Parks attention. Reed said there is a lot of attention to Berliner and that's not a public park for us. She said she understands the regional asset and value this provides to the city.

However, for the rest of the parks assets - McCoy is just land with no walking path or park. There is a lot of opportunity with parks in this area and Reed would like the department to consider they need attention too. Stoneridge and Willow Creek are the other parks in the Southwest Area. Castle spoke about the long term goals of McCoy Park. He said the park used to have a ball diamond, lights and an old concession stand and all were removed recently - five to six years ago. He said the next phase is to develop community outreach there. There is discussion about adding a dog park and walking path but nothing is formalized. He said that Reed provided valuable comments that can be taken back to the management team to be discussed. He said he was shocked to hear that there was only one picnic table.

Reed explained that the urban forestry plan has a lot of opportunities - another opportunity is Willow Creek Park. There are two parts to the park. One part is completely inaccessible to anyone. Reed said she would like to see a walking trail.

F. Jenkins asked Reed to get a map showing that space. She noted that it is interesting that the park has land available to use and plenty of space. She said she would want to have input on having that developed.

Reed asked how to start action on McCoy Park. Castle said he would talk to management and bring forward the Commission's concerns. He said he will give an update either through email or come back at the next meeting. He said he would follow up on McCoy but he was not familiar with Willow Creek Park.

Reed said that she would like to see, when McCoy Park is up and running, (she noted hopefully soon in the next year or two) a safe crosswalk to allow the children access to the park. She said that the children have a safe place to play at Stoneridge Park, but another opportunity for that park is a fake trail back to the park and connects to an apartment complex. Reed said it would be nice to legitimize that trail, since it's not even 10 yards long, so that the apt complex would have access to the park. It would improve community park access in the area. Since there is no community center in this area she would want to see parks at the place. The money generated at the sign at Berliner is important but these issues important too and she said she doesn't want continued to be forgotten

Spencer said Eagle Scouts could be a potential partner for the Department, if the decision to put picnic benches at the parks is made. That can be an Eagle project and all the Department would need to do is supply the materials and supervision. Spencer said that regarding the discussion with a sign at Berliner Park, this may be a pipe dream. Spencer said that the Southwest Area doesn't have a community center. The closet is Dodge and that's not within the Southwest Area. Spencer explained that land at Berliner Park is not utilized year-round but a community center

would be.

Castle said the Department is discussing a multi-year plan for community centers but that park issues can be addressed immediately. He said there is a volunteer section of the Department that does work with the Eagle Scouts. Spencer said she knows at least four troops and that she can contact the area council for contacts for other parts of the city.

Fossett said she was concerned about the traffic and safety of anyone coming up and down Harmon Road by McCoy Park. She said Harmon Road is becoming industrialized and large, commercialized trucks are occupying the road. She said that she is concerned that McCoy Park is there but it is not a big space. She said she is concerned about safety and access and when people are leaving the park. Additionally, on Frank and Harmon Roads things to make things safer have not been completely installed. She noted that Stimmell Road is totally industrial.

**Zoning Presentation:** 1313 Harmon Ave (ADEPT)

Kathryn, the representative for ADEPT, was going to give an update to changes that she had/wanted to make with the city. Spencer emailed her earlier and she confirmed, but did not come to the meeting.

**Regular Reports:**

Beth Fairman Kinney – Spoke about the following items:

- There is no update regarding the vacancy for Officer Shay.
- The COVID vaccine update is that now people 12 years old and up are eligible to receive the vaccine. There are many more walk-in clinics, with walk-in availability for Johnson & Johnson and Pfizer shot.
- Glenwood Pool had a public meeting. Check out [columbusaquatics.org](http://columbusaquatics.org) for more information. Pools are open for Memorial Day and are free; however, patrons have to register in advance to reserve a timeslot and can register online at the pool, the rec center.
- The free produce drops continued in the past year and is open to anyone. Distribution is available until supplies last.
- Safe Streets began. The Zone 3 contact information is [westsidestatestreets@columbus.org](mailto:westsidestatestreets@columbus.org). Sgt. Greg Meyer is the lead.
- There is a virtual town hall for the Columbus Police Chief finalists.
- The engagement survey that was previously available did expire, but it was still there for the Columbus Police.

Nancy Pryor Sully – spoke about the following items:

- Columbus City Council highlights are published every Monday.
- The public can sign up for emails regarding upcoming City Council

meetings and sessions and individual councilmembers hold public meetings.

- Celebrate One is trying to reduce the number of infants lost in minority communities. The state created a statewide effort similar to Celebrate One with the goal to reduce health inequalities for minority communities.
- Since the mayor is holding a very important virtual meeting tomorrow, the district commission is postponed tomorrow and will be added back later.
- Upcoming schedule - is out of the office tomorrow afternoon and will be back Monday. Will not be on email or phone until possibly Saturday or Sunday, but is available to call starting Friday if needed.

Jeremy Alder said that Brad White is new community liaison officer for the Southwest Area and no other updates.

Patty Spencer - Spoke about the following items:

- Zoning presentations tentatively scheduled for June's meeting:
  - Cooper Stadium - possible site visit in June
  - 2333 Harrisburg Pike - trucking facility across Blue Rock is hoping to come to the June meeting and have a site visit.
    - \*Site visit tentatively scheduled for June 19th.
    - Spencer said that she will try and make the site visits around 12-12:30.
- Bryan Hunt is planning on updating the Commission next month regarding 2151 Frank Road, the trucking bay across the street from the fire house. They are currently making amendments on what to discuss and want to update us. They would like to get a formal vote, since they have not had a formal vote on it yet.
- New demolition request at 1381 Harmon Ave. The Commission has time for this request, they are not due on this until 7/13. Everything will go out to everyone for the next meeting to look at and talk about.
- The day after we said yes to the emergency meeting demolition the house was gone.

Reed asked Fairman Kinney if the bike donation still was occurring. Fairman Kinney said that there are upcoming events and the selected kids but will get bikes and badges.

Fairman Kinney said that Doug White is Community Liaison Officer.

Kristin Hayes - The last Keep the Southwest Area Beautiful took place in front of the Family Dollar off Harrisburg Pike and Blue Rock Boulevard. There was one volunteer for the event and

one trash bag was picked up. The event took place on May 15, 2021. The next event will be in June by the Certified gas station near Frank Road and Brown Road.

### **Chair's Announcements:**

F. Jenkins said that she received the ok from Barker that the Commission can start meeting in church in-person for training. She said she is working on dates for training for the Commission. She proposed two Saturdays. She asked if it could be completed by the end of June. She proposed the weeks of May 23-29 and May 30-June 5 to avoid Memorial Day. Fossett said she had a conflict with June 1st and 2nd but would be able to meet after. F. Jenkins said she would select June 5th as a good weekend. She would have Dr. Pierce from WORTH (the training provider) work with Barker to reserve the space.

### **Routine Business:**

### **Unfinished Business:**

### **New Business:**

Spencer created a Facebook group for the Commission, but said that she needs F. Jenkins and Hayes to join the group and to make Reed an administrator. She said Hayes will be moderator, as there is a file that she can put meeting minutes in and also the meeting agenda. Spencer can post agenda and anything with a link and make it public so anyone can see anything.

F. Jenkins we can share Pryor Sully's and Fairman Kinney's materials on this page.

Spencer said that the moderator can share pages to group anyone in the community, can see the page, and can post to the group. She said that a lot of things the Commission will post will turn off comments because some things don't need to be commented on, like the agenda.

### **Old Business:**

F. Jenkins said communications were sent to D. Parsons and B. Parsons regarding their attendance. D. Parsons contacted F. Jenkins via-phone and explained that he felt that the Webex platform used for the virtual meetings was not safe. F. Jenkins said that D. Parsons did send supporting documentation regarding the fear regarding the patches not being safe. F. Jenkins said that D. Parsons and B. Parsons were sent information about what the Commission's bylaws state. After receipt of this information, D. Parsons spoke with Fairman Kinney and David Hooie. F. Jenkins said that D. Parsons and B. Parsons did not send a letter back to the Commission, but D. Parsons did reach out verbally. D. Parsons said that he felt that meetings were not regular meetings because these are not in person like the Commission's bylaws state. The technology department was aware of the vulnerability that the set of patches created. F. Jenkins asked how the Commission handles this situation. F. Jenkins said that D. Parsons and B. Parsons asked that

the Commission excuse their absences. She said that D. Parsons and B. Parsons did not communicate back to the Commission in writing.

It was noted that they did come to the demolition special meeting.

M. Jenkins suggested amending the bylaws to indicate what constitutes a meeting, by phone and in other means. He said that he can understand concern about the internet but that the phone has been around longer than the internet. He asked if D. Parsons and B. Parsons can't use the phone or doesn't trust the phone either.

F. Jenkins said the Commission needs both D. and B. Parson's commitment that we would have their participation if a second round of Coronavirus came up.

Reed said that she was disappointed that they didn't call in.

Fairman Kinney said that virtual meetings during COVID-19 are special circumstances. The only reason the Commission is allowed to meet virtually is because the Governor and State Attorney's House Bill allowed exceptions to Sunshine Law. The Commission can't modify the bylaws. Additionally, in the legislation, these Commission meetings are treated the same way as they would if they were held in person. This bill allowing the exemption expires in July and it is unsure if it will be extended if not extended, or what the procedures are. Fairman Kinney said she is talking with the Director of the Department of Neighborhoods and her supervisor. They will have discussions and meetings with other departments. This discussion will take place in two days. If the Commission reaches out to Barker about how the church feels about having a meeting in-person, it could be July.

Reed said that D. Parsons and B. Parsons are choosing not to attend. She said that is a burden to those who attend when it comes to having quorum. She said she knows she is personally going on vacation next month.

Spencer said that the Commission has had site visits for zoning for two years and D. Parsons and B. Parsons have never once attended.

F. Jenkins said that the Commission can only consider attendance for the actual meetings.

Hayes said she would have liked to see the bylaws being followed. Additionally D. Parsons and B. Parsons could have called into the meetings.

F. Jenkins asked if this ends all or if there are conditions for D. Parsons and B. Parsons to return

to the Commission.

Spencer said that they need to attend next month, that it is a make or break situation.

M. Jenkins said next month's meeting is not in person. He said that he agrees they can't meet the minimum burden of calling in by phone. He said he was not sure if the Commission can expel, as the bylaws state that meeting is in person.

Spencer asked about Barker's attendance.

F. Jenkins said that Barker had a conflict.

Fairman Kinney said the Commission can do hybrid meetings and have quorum. However, if there isn't a quorum, the Commission can't have a meeting. This impacts zoning. She said there are multiple choices that can be made on this. The first decision is if the meeting is going to be virtual or hybrid next month.

Reed asked if the Commission did receive a petition from D. Parsons and B. Parsons.

F. Jenkins said she was inclined to have mercy because a couple of years ago she missed a lot of meetings. She said she was willing to invite them to her home to attend the meeting. She wants to be able to have a quorum. Going forward, for the remainder of this year, D. Parsons and B. Parsons must be on the video call, in person, or telephone.

Fossett said she was not fully understanding the video call.

Reed said she appreciates the effort that Fossett puts in by trying to call in. F. Jenkins said she appreciates Fossett's effort as well.

Hayes said she thinks D. Parsons and B. Parsons should follow the bylaws. She said she took the time to document their absences per the bylaws and that needs to be followed.

Spencer said if the meeting is hybrid, D. Parsons and B. Parsons will be there.

F. Jenkins said the Commission can have a hybrid meeting.

Fairman Kinney said she will have to ask if the meeting can be in person next month. She said as long as CDC guidelines are in place. She said we will need to see any revised orders come up that need to be followed on.

Reed asked if the church has wireless internet.

F. Jenkins said that she thinks the church has wireless internet. She said the intent is to move the Commission meetings to the community room.

Pryor Sully said she would have to hear back on when she can be released to return to office. She said she will participate in hybrid meetings.

F. Jenkins said that for the next meeting the Commission will try to have a hybrid meeting. She said everyone must be accounted for. She said the hybrid meeting can be at her house.

M. Jenkins said he had a suggestion for the next meeting. Whether it is in person or virtual, he said to have David Hooie in the meeting too. He said Hooie is one of few people D. Parsons seems to respond to. He said to have Hooie to get things resolved at minimum and if D. Parsons can't participate by phone, that is a major issue.

Fairman Kinney said she made the request to see if Hooie can attend and will reach out when she hears back.

Fossett said it can be dangerous picking up trash. She asked if it is not the city or county's responsibility to pick litter up. She said that Mound Road to Harmon Road is really bad.

Hayes said that she provides safety vests and sends safety training for each Keep the Southwest Area Beautiful event.

M. Jenkins spoke about information sent out by David Hooie. The Memorandum Of Agreement was sent out. The new budget for next year was started to be worked on. M. Jenkins said by the next meeting be able to have information completed. The new budget would need to be brought to the Commission. The Commission would have to vote on it. The only thing that changed from last year was the money that was set aside for training. The information will be submitted by June 30 and can be discussed at the next meeting. M. Jenkins said he was not going to submit the budget until everyone sees it and votes on it.

Reed moved to approve the amended February 2021 meeting minutes; M. Jenkins seconded the motion. Result: Unanimous Approval

Reed moved to approve the March 2021 meeting minutes; M. Jenkins seconded the motion. Result: Unanimous Approval

Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 215, 2021 at 7:30pm.

Reed moved to adjourn the meeting; Spencer seconded the motion. Result: Unanimous Approval

Meeting End Time: 9:25pm