



**Town of Atherton
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

**Minutes
March 2nd, 2022
Regular Meeting
Park & Rec
6:30 PM
Zoom Meeting**

1. ROLL CA

Meeting started at 6:33 pm

Committee Members: Matt Baker (Chair), Taylor Henkel, Alex Keh, Frank Merrill, Julianna Robertson (Vice-Chair), Walt Robinson, Marylue Timpson
Councilmember Liaisons: Rick DeGolia
Staff: Sally Bentz-Dalton

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES –February minutes – approved as amended 4-0

4. PRESENTATIONS –None

5. REGULAR AGENDA-

5a. Memorial Tree Donation – Betsy Colby was attending and wished to donate a memorial tree. Matt Baker ordered her a plaque for her tree. Betsy Colby was interested in a plaque.
Vote to approve a Blue Oak near the Playground bathrooms. Alex Keh asked about the locations are picked. Staff said she picks locations near older trees or open areas. Betsy Colby has additional trees in the area she picked for the new planting.

1st Matt Baker and second Julianna Robertson Approved 7-0

5b. Option to add a 90-minute court reservation to HPP tennis courts

Robertson asked about what the issue is. Staff stated it would take up more of the courts time. Bob Roeser said if both players have keys, then they can each reserve one hour each to play for two hours. Bob Roeser stated that a guest can buy a key and get an additional hour. Bob Roeser said a key holder can bring a guest without a key.

Michael Jessup said that the policy has been one hour per key. If 4 people take the court, then 2 people would have to have a key to play longer. If you have 2 people who want more time, then the second person would have to buy a key. He mentioned that if 2 people with keys booked at 90 minutes each then 3 hours would be booked, and this is more of an issue.

Robertson retracted her comment because what Jessup said makes sense. Staff stated that the Town has the discretion to change the policy and that this policy wasn't in the contract. Michael Jessup said that

when he started the Park & Rec and Jessup agreed on the 1-hour time. He feels the one hour has been working for most people.

Keh asked how often a key holder can make a reservation and Jessup answered that there is one reservation a day up to 7 days in advance.

Jessup stated that Saturdays are the most popular and summer is not that busy. After school hours is the busiest, from 4 pm to dark. Use of the courts goes in phases.

Baker's concern is that 2 key holders would book 2 hours. Jessup said that 2 hours seems to be the right amount of time and hasn't been a concern. Three hours is more of a concern. Baker likes the one-hour time slot and feels the second person can get a key.

5b. Review of possibility of adding pickleball courts to HPP

Staff gave a brief overview of why the Committee is discussing a pickleball addition to Holbrook-Palmer Park. Staff gave a brief overview of pickleball for informational purposes.

DeGolia asked about if a pickleball court would fit where the handball is. Staff said it may fit and that it hasn't been measured.

Robinson asked if two pickle ball courts would fit. Keh said that two courts would fit. Staff mentioned the noise of two courts would be noisy for the neighbors.

DeGolia and Robertson said that the handball area is not used and in poor shape.

Jessup asked about the cost of putting in a pickleball court. Staff no costs have been considered.

Robinson would be interested in the 170 people who signed the petition and if Noah would be able to fund it.

Baker stated that there are a lot of interest and people love pickleball right now. The noise aspect will be the largest issue.

Jessup said pickleball is loud. He said many key holders will complain if a court is converted.

Robinson asked about a temporary pickleball. Jessup said people would complain and that lines for pickleball would need to be added. Keh said that Menlo Park converted a court for \$2,000 so that it can be done.

Noah Eisner was happy that the Committee is discussing this. Eisner presented 13 slides of information about pickleball and the benefits to the community.

Staff was unaware of why Pickleball was not considered previously.

Bob Roeser has been playing tennis 9 years at Holbrook-Palmer Park. When Player Capital started more people used the courts and the courts were improved. He said there are a lot of walk on's on the

courts. The Town received income from key sales and Player Capital. Roeser feels that taking a court out of service will only allow 4 hard courts. He stated pickleball is noisy and annoying. The Committee should be aware because of complaints. He suggested putting it in another location. Roeser is not against pickleball but would prefer it as a stand-alone court(s).

Robinson asked Noah Eisner about the size. Eisner said the Holbrook-Palmer courts are 60x20. You would run courts perpendicular to the current way to fit 4 courts. Robinson with that many courts that it would be very disruptive. Eisner recommended going over to Nielson courts to see pickleball.

DeGolia added that previously the Park & Rec Committee didn't want to interrupt the tennis courts to add a pickleball court. DeGolia mentioned that pickleball could be a donation to the park as the Clay court was.

Robertson brought up that there are no noise paddles on the market.

Eisner state he can think about raising money for this. He said he could send percentage of Atherton residents that signed.

Robinson asked about the fee for use would work. Eisner felt a key system or hourly rental would work to generate additional money. It would be a positive to charge a fee to add revenue to the Town. Robinson asked Eisner would feel if everyone had to have a key. Eisner said that it should be like tennis so 1 to 2 people would need to have a key to play pickleball.

Jessup feels pickleball would help his business and that it's a great sport. He reiterated that if a court will be converted that there would be a war. He said new people would come into the park.

Timpson said that more than one person should have a key. She stated that everyone who plays should have a key. Jessup said it is hard to tell if everyone has a key because there is no check in system. It would be difficult to oversee.

Roeser said pickleball will be popular and recommended the Committee review Player Capital payment to the Town.

Don Keller an Atherton resident commented that it will build community in Atherton.

Baker suggested using the front parking lot for a pickleball court. DeGolia said it will eliminate a lot of parking. It will be important to see how many Atherton residents are interested in a pickleball court. If many Atherton residents are interested, then there would be more interest by Town.

Keh suggested we try a trial and taking over a court for the trial to see if there is any interest. Roeser said many non-Atherton residents will play.

Baker suggested that we should know when the courts are resurfaced before we start a trial. Baker to move and study to next meeting.

5c. Review of dogs off leash issue

Staff gave overview of dogs of leash in the park. The police department has stated that people can call the non-emergency number to report dogs off leash and an officer will come out if they are available.

Keh asked if they have sited anyone. Staff did not know.

Robertson asked when the signs went up. Henkel asked how many complaints have been made and stated it will be helpful for the Committee to see numbers.

Robinson asked why the Code Enforcement officer can't go out and deal with a dog off leash violation. He agrees that the police department should ticket.

DeGolia stated the Code Enforcement officer is processing many code violations. He stated a police officer would have to go out and ticket a person. He asked staff if dogs are always off leash. Staff stated that dogs are always off leash. DeGolia stated that police officers will ticket.

Baker explained that off leash dog owners don't care. Victims of dog attacks stop going to park with off leash dogs.

Ken asked if the volunteer patrol can help. The residents could call in was a suggestion.

DeGolia reinstated that enforcement by the police should be done. He agrees that dogs shouldn't be banned. He suggested a part time patrol person. DeGolia suggested staff to bring up a part time patrol person in the park to enforce.

Keh says once people see that dogs on leash there will be more compliance.

George Rodericks joined and said that the police department just started proactive enforcement. He said the police department will begin to ticket.

Staff will give out the number and explain that we are being more proactive.

Keh suggested putting the number on the sign. Robertson thought it was a good suggestion.

5d. Review and recommend updated Memorial and Donation Policy for Holbrook-Palmer Park

Staff received redlines from Robinson and Keh. Committee decided to move this item for further review and make a vote at the next meeting.

Robinson asked if the Committee really looked at the new policy. He stated he made many changes. He suggested everyone have one more read. The Committee agreed to move to the next meeting.

5e. Updates on the prioritized park projects and goals

Staff said that the Town is reviewing the scope of the new architecture company. She stated that

there are still not any final drawings for the circulation. In a delayed stage.
Keh said Henkel and Keh will present the fee changes at the next meeting for a recommendation.
The signage committee will wait till the Civic Center signage is done and have continuity with the park.

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS- None

7. COMMITTEE AND STAFF MEMBER COMMENTS

7a. Foundation report: Merrill stated there was no meeting this month.

7b. Park goings on reports and Q&A: Staff opened item to the Committee for questions and discussion. Staff will get information on the categories for the next meeting.

7c. Park Events Report: Staff opened item to the Committee for questions.

7d. Individual Committee Member Comments:

Keh asked if the park is planning any summer events. Rodericks said that the Civic Center opening may overshadow other events and stated Erath Day is coming up. Keh asked if the swings will be restored, and the hand sanitizer stations will be removed. Staff will complete by end of next week.

8. ADJOURN

Next meeting is scheduled for: April 6th, 6:30 PM Location TBD

Meeting ended at 8:23 pm with a motion by Baker and 2nd by Keh – 7-0.