



Staff Report

File #: 22-326

Version: 1

Date: 7/25/2022

Item #: 6.a.

TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Kristin Retherford, Interim City Manager

FROM: Peter Fernandez, PE, Public Works Director

SUBJECT:

Communication from the Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to City Council regarding increased communication and engagement between the two bodies.

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

Result Area(s): Natural Environment Stewardship; Welcoming and Livable Community.

SUMMARY:

The Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (Board) provides recommendations and advice to Council. To increase communication and engagement between the two bodies, the Board is proposing five recommendations as outlined in their formal letter to the Mayor and Councilors (Attachment 1).

ISSUE:

Receive the communication from the Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

RECOMMENDATION:

Information only.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

1. *Salem Revised Code* (SRC) Chapter 13, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, governs the composition, functions, and duties of the Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (Board).

2. The City's policy for the Board is provided Section 13.025, which states "it is hereby declared to be the policy of the City that all matters relating to public parks, playgrounds, and related activities and programs shall be submitted to the Board for counsel and advice."

3. Per Section 13.080 the function of the Board is advisory. Its duties are further described in this section to include:

(a) Recommend and advise the Council, Planning Commission and other bodies, groups or officials on all matters referred to it.

(b) To act in the role of community catalyst in the formation and achievement of a comprehensive community-wide parks and recreation system and program to serve the horticultural, environmental, historical, cultural, and leisure needs of all the City residents.

(c) To make and issue reports respecting its studies, research, examination, and other activities to the Council as may be required by the Council.

4. In Section 13.055 there is a requirement that "at least once each year the Council shall meet in joint sessions with the Board to review existing and changing policies, review Board bylaws, and tour facilities and programs." To the best of staff's recollection, such a meeting has not been done in the last 15 years.

5. The Board periodically receives communication from members of the public about desires for new amenities and resources, but it has not yet identified a good method for relaying this information to City Council. In the attached letter the Board is seeking better methods of engagement and discussion regarding parks and recreation facilities and programs.

BACKGROUND:

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was established 70 years ago in 1952. Its purview includes 90 parks totaling over 2,300 acres, recreation and athletic activities and programs, programs and projects related to City-owned trees, and decisions related to appeals of City-owned tree removal permits and Heritage Tree designations.

Robert D. Chandler, PhD, PE
Assistant Public Works Director

Attachment:

1. Parks and Recreation Advisory Board letter to City Council dated July 25, 2022.