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News Release

Beautification Advisory Board sets public hearing on March 15

Board also talks plans for Spring Cleanup Day on April 7, Arbor Day event

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (March 1, 2018) — The Arkansas City Beautification and Tree Advisory Board has scheduled a public hearing to discuss spring cleanup plans and the status of three City parks.

The meeting will be at 7 p.m. March 15 in the commission room at City Hall. The three parks to be discussed for possible transfer into the City of Arkansas City's Land Bank program are:

- **Brock Park** (0.76 acre) — located at 501 S. Sixth St. in southwest Arkansas City;
- **Mills Park** (4.77 acres) — located at 614 Highland Drive in northeast Arkansas City;
- **Robert Cox Memorial Park** (1.7 acres) — located at 1201 N. Fifth St. in west-central Ark City.

This hearing is for informational purposes only and no action will be taken. Anyone with objections to any of the proposed actions is encouraged to attend and state his or her opinions for the public record.

These three parks were selected for consideration based on observations of low utilization by the public, close alternative park locations and/or high maintenance and mowing costs. Another factor is that all three parks potentially could be attractive locations for future housing construction, if sold or donated.

Based on the discussion March 15, the board will make a recommendation to the City Commission that could include adding part or all of one, two, or all three of the parks to the City's Land Bank program.

Final action would not occur until after additional public discussion at the City Commission level.

For questions about details of these park proposals, please contact City Attorney Tamara Niles at (620) 442-6010 or City Manager Nick Hernandez at (620) 441-4415. For questions about any of the three parks themselves, please contact Parks and Facilities Director Tony Tapia at (620) 441-4473.

Upcoming events

For immediate release

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The Beautification and Tree Advisory Board has designated April 7 as Spring Cleanup Day in Arkansas City. Volunteers will meet at 8 a.m. at Wilson Park for breakfast and then work until noon.

In preparation for this event, another item on the agenda for the March 15 special meeting is to discuss plans for spring cleanup with volunteers interested in participating, include which areas to target.

Volunteers who participated in either Fall Cleanup Day or Spring Cleanup Day last year will be contacted by email about this meeting. They are encouraged to arrive around 7:30 p.m. March 15.

Other items for discussion will include work assignments and the types of projects to be completed.

The board also discussed some ideas for the 2018 Arbor Day celebration during its regular meeting Tuesday, which was postponed from last week due to icy weather. Arbor Day is on April 27 this year.

Board reorganization

The board elected new officers Jan. 25 during its annual reorganization meeting, after welcoming four brand-new members — Robin Henderson, Paisley Howerton, Brooke Padgett and Jessica Taylor.

Jill Wineinger was appointed chair and Peggy Soule vice chair in unanimous motions. Public Information Officer Andrew Lawson, a nonvoting advisor, was re-designated as the board's secretary.

The board also reviewed and approved its schedule of meetings for 2018 during Tuesday's meeting.

It will meet at 4 p.m. on the last Thursday of each month, but the April, May, August, November and December meetings might be moved or canceled for special considerations. Announcements of any such changes will be made the previous month. Also, the March 29 meeting will start at 3:30 p.m., not 4.

In other business Tuesday, the board:

- Voted 4-0 to approve the Jan. 25 regular meeting minutes as written.
- Heard a proposal from Breastfeeding Advocates of Cowley County (BACC) representatives Rylee Blanton, Taylor Schwartz and Charissa Wall regarding the possible placement of "breastfeeding benches" in some City parks. The board gave BACC some ideas to consider.
- Received training from Niles on the Kansas Open Meetings Act and Kansas Open Records Act.
- Discussed Niles' memo concerning the possible transfer of three City parks to the Land Bank.
- Reviewed and approved a proclamation of Mayor's Monarch Pledge Day, to be read March 6.
- Discussed and tabled possible movie titles and dates for the spring outdoor family movie series.

Henderson's absence was excused for medical reasons. Soule arrived late due to family obligations.

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In other business Jan. 25, the board:

- Unanimously approved the Nov. 30, 2017, regular meeting minutes as written.
- Underwent board orientation, including a review of the board's bylaws, purpose and duties as established by the City Commission in Municipal Code, as well as general board provisions.
- Discussed the proposed meeting schedule for 2018. A few modifications were proposed to staff.
- Heard a basic overview of the BACC proposal from Henderson, who also is a BACC member.
- Reviewed possible action items in 2018 concerning preservation of monarch butterfly habitats.
- Agreed to watch and participate in one "Tree Board University" video per month in 2018.

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