

Special Joint Meeting of the Carbondale City Council and Carbondale Park District at Garden Grove Event Center (Tuesday, April 19, 2022)

Generated by Jennifer R Sorrell on Monday, May 2, 2022

Council Members present

Councilmember Adam Loos, Councilmember Ginger Rye Sanders, Councilmember Jeff Doherty, Councilmember Lee Fronabarger, Councilmember Tom Grant, and Mayor Pro Tem Carolin Harvey

Council Members absent

Mayor John M. Henry

Meeting called to order at 8:31 AM

1. Roll Call

Procedural: 1.1 **Roll Call for Each Body**

2. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: Approve the Agenda

Motion by Tom Grant, second by Jeff Doherty

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Adam Loos, Ginger Rye Sanders, Jeff Doherty, Lee Fronabarger, Tom Grant, Carolin Harvey

3. Citizen Comments

Procedural: 3.1 **Citizen Comments on Matters Not on the Printed Agenda**

Adam Loos inquired if the meeting was being recorded.

Tom Grant noted that the Irish Festival is returning to the City of Carbondale on April 30.

4. General Business

Discussion, Procedural: 4.1 **General Discussion Among Board Members about Carbondale Parks and Recreation**

The April 2019 ballot initiative has been discussed by both bodies at their respective retreats. Mr. Washburn noted this was a good opportunity to reset and perform the due diligence for the citizens.

Setting The Context - There was a ballot question in April 2019. Mr. Washburn noted that he was aware that the outcomes of the meeting could be positive, negative, or status quo.

Council/District Expectations - Mr. Washburn summarized the responses he had received from members to the question of "what do you perceive as an outcome of this meeting".

The consolidation of units of government can take two major forms: functional (leaves) and structural (pros: efficiency, less duplication, eliminate taxing body, everybody pays; cons: might not provide equivalent services, focused resources). Any significant change should be incremental. The options available are to keep the status quo, expand or reduce functional consolidation, or structural consolidation. The variables associated with trying to establish a definitive end goal are complex. Things like Park District debt service, Home Rule question, changes in elected officials, different boundaries, and changes in revenue streams are examples of variables affecting decision-making.

Washburn's Summary of the two distinct positions:

City: Board and City agree to terms to merge, with Park District becoming a City Department, and merge through an Intergovernmental Agreement rather than through petition and referendum.

Park District: Community and residents can best be served by ongoing and new intergovernmental agreements between the City, Park, and Schools that recognize the variances in each governmental entity's own specialties and authorities.

What are the specific suggestions to address the 2019 ballot question? Is there common ground for collaboration?

- More specificity from the Park District's proposal
- Keep Kids Korner open
- Equipment lease arrangements
- Carbondale Park District to provide recreation in public parks
- Creation of a City Parks and Recreation Department
- Identify unique Intergovernmental Agreements where the two governmental entities collaborate on items like bookkeeping and insurance
- Lower the level of hostility and increase the level of respect; rebuild trust
- Parks and Recreation is more than a budget item – clear vision of what the City sees as its long-term role in Parks and Recreation
- Agreement on action plan that would allow City to help Carbondale Park District to be a success
- Examine options for Carbondale Park District to increase revenues
- Home Rule question is going to have a significant impact on what is possible
- Interim move to structure a merger in a scenario similar to Library Board
- We live in the same community, elected by the same people, what is the best option for the community
- Examine how the City proposal would impact the taxpayer
- Maintain an independent Park District funding source for parks/recreation
- Areas of collaboration such as insurance, human resources through a series of smaller intergovernmental agreements
- Create a five-year financial plan for the Park District
- Contingency plan by the City if Home Rule does not pass

- Must find ways to collaborate, not dissolving the Park District, blending things together
- Productively move forward – there is common ground
- Key is merging operations

A break was observed at 9:50 – session resumed at 10:02 a.m.

Washburn Takeaways

Mr. Washburn will summarize the discussion points and areas where it is possible to move forward. Those results will be sent to the Mayor and President.

5. Comments from Council and Board

Discussion: 5.1 **Comments from Park District Board Commissioners and City Council Members**

6. Adjournment

Procedural: 6.1 **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the public body, the meeting was declared adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Jennifer R. Sorrell, City Clerk

Date