

New Castle City Playground Committee Meeting
Minutes
August 5, 2022 – 5:30 p.m.
1 Municipal Boulevard, New Castle, DE

Members Present: Suzanne Swift, Chair
Andre Jerry
Brian Mattaway
Michael Platt, Council Liaison

Absent: Carl Benson
Judy Guttenplan
Nermin Zubaca

Council President Platt called the Playground Council Subcommittee (PCS) meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Roll call followed and a quorum to conduct business was declared.

Minutes

A Motion to approve the July 30, 2022, Minutes as presented was made, seconded and unanimously carried.

PCS Updates

Ms. Swift presented an update of visits to a number of different playgrounds to determine what the PCS wanted and to see, how the playground equipment is being used, what is really necessary, and what would fit in the budget.

Zip Line – The pricing the PCS obtained was mostly for the equipment and installation was not factored into the original \$100,000 estimate.

Proposal #1:

- Single zip line instead of a double zip line.
- Custom swings.
- Spider web around the tree (location must be approved) to act as a climbing piece until the ship feature is purchased.
- Super Nova, which has multiple parts and was the best played-on piece of equipment.
- Border – A border is necessary, but better pricing can be obtained. The existing border is not in very good condition.

Proposal #2:

ADA Ramp system that goes with the zip line. This needs to be confirmed.

Phase 1B

This phase includes three pieces for ages 2-5: (1) See-Saw (\$6,000), (2) Tippy Carousel (\$5,000), and (3) Trekking Trail (\$11,000). Ms. Swift noted that some of the existing climbing

equipment could also be retained. Ms. Swift saw the trekking trail and thought it was an excellent choice.

Choices to make:

- Keep the spider web and prioritize the older children;
- Eliminate the spider web and add more for ages 2-5; or
- Do more fundraising and include everything. Ms. Swift noted that the PCS submitted a pre-application for a DNREC grant to see if they are approved to submit a formal application, but decisions have not yet been made. If the DNREC grant funding is approved all of the proposed items would be within the \$100,000 estimate.

During discussion it was noted that:

- The proposal does not have a price-lock date on the quote. Ms. Swift did not think that the pricing would time-out.
- The PCS automatically gets the New Castle County 50% discount on everything except the Border.
- The cost for installation is approximately \$27,000.00.
- Regarding how hot different materials get, Ms. Swift stated that she received samples of both the metal and plastic equipment. Metal can be used for structural pieces that are not typically touched. Netting can be used for the cradle swing.
- Ms. Swift noted that the color scheme of the Kalmar Nyckel is light blue, yellow and red; and she suggested that to compliment that color scheme the playground equipment be a darker blue and yellow. She will review that suggestion with others who are good with color.

Ms. Swift noted that the PCS needs to determine if an order should be placed for:

1. Everything in Proposal #1 (zip line, spider web, swings, super nova, and border);
2. Everything except the spider web (\$21,000) and replace that with the see-saw, tippy carousel and trekking trail; or
3. Only the zip line, swings, super nova and border, and wait to see if the DNREC grant is approved.

Council President Platt stated that the PCS will need City Council approval to place an order. Ms. Swift asked if Council could review for approval at the August 9th meeting. Council President Platt stated that he added a placeholder for a report from the Playground PCS at the August meeting, but was not certain if there was time to add an Agenda item for discussion and vote at the August meeting. Council President Platt noted that if necessary a Special Meeting could be scheduled.

Council President Platt noted that the maintenance for the Playground the Trustees have committed to is for mulch only, and the cost for yearly maintenance, repairs and/or vandalism needs to be determined and whether funds should be set aside to cover those costs. Ms. Swift noted that the equipment does have a warranty, and opined that vandalism would be covered under insurance. Ms. Swift opined that after the warranty expires the PCS could fundraise for

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additional funding. Council President Platt opined that vandalism should not be an item of high concern at this time.

During discussion Ms. Swift noted that relative to the surface of the playground, certain equipment will require a deeper mulch base than others. She also noted that reusing existing mulch should not be a problem.

Relative to safety, it was noted that appropriate signage should be displayed, and the PCS does not have a budget for signage at this time. Ms. Swift will research this matter.

During further discussion it was agreed that if the PCS needs to prioritize equipment by age, equipment for ages 2-5 should be a primary consideration.

Ms. Swift reiterated that the consensus of the PCS is to wait to see if DNREC grant funding is approved, and if a decision needs to be made regarding which equipment to purchase that that PCS agrees Option #2 is the best choice.

Council President Platt will check to see if a discussion and vote at the August City Council meeting can be added to the Agenda.

Ms. Swift stated she would like to email the documents discussed to all Council members and contact each Council member individually to see if they have any questions. Council President Platt cautioned Ms. Swift about conducting a serial phone chain, which would violate FOIA laws and recommended that all questions be asked during the Council meeting. Ms. Swift stated that she would only email the documents to Council members so they would have time to review the information prior to the Council meeting.

Council President Platt noted that it is important that the scale of the proposed equipment is presented to Council in a public forum to better inform the public. Ms. Swift explained the proposed layout of the equipment.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen R. Weirich
City Stenographer