

New Castle City Playground Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes  
January 22, 2024 – 5:30 p.m.  
1 Municipal Boulevard, New Castle, DE

Members Present: Suzanne Swift, Chair  
Brian Mattaway  
Judy Guttenplan  
Nermin Zubaca  
Matthew Eide

Absent: Andre Jerry

Ms. Swift called the Playground sub-committee meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

A motion to begin the meeting was made, seconded and unanimously carried.

### **Minutes**

A motion to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2023, meeting as presented was made and seconded. The motion passed with a vote of four in favor and one abstention.

A motion to approve the minutes of the December 18, 2023, meeting as amended was made, seconded, and unanimously passed.

### **Playground Equipment Update**

Swing Height – Ms. Swift stated that during a discussion with another vendor, the appropriate height of the swing equipment was questioned. Ms. Swift reached out to Kompan and is waiting for a response to ascertain the correct height. If the swings are not in compliance, Kompan will return and make an appropriate adjustment at no cost. Mr. Zubaca read out the Federal Standard approved minimum distance from the swing to the ground:

- 12” – preschool age children
- 16” – school age children
- 24” – tot swings

A discussion of the minimum height ensued.

Rubberized Surfacing – Ms. Swift reported that a second quote was received.

1. Kompan – \$432,604.71 for the entire space. Ms. Swift is waiting for a quote for rubberized pads only.
2. Recreation Resources - \$398,376.00

The second quote includes removal of the existing mulch, but does not include a curb; and if the zip line launch pad is eliminated they will deduct \$30,000.00.

Ms. Swift is waiting for a response from the Trustees and the City as to the cost of mulch.

Regarding funding, Ms. Swift also reached out an individual recommended by Senator Poore and is waiting for a response. Senator Carper's office informed her that there are grants available for playground equipment and ADA surfacing and asked that members of the sub-committee work to compile the necessary data to pinpoint possible sources of funding. John Gentile from Senator Carper's office has been assigned to assist the sub-committee. Ms. Swift will also be receiving information from Councilperson Day on funding from the City, including deadlines.

Mr. Eide noted that in his research, a unified surface was recommended for any type of mobility device instead of a combination of a rubberized and mulch surfaces. A discussion of surfacing ensued.

Further discussion of funding from DNREC and the City ensued.

Jessie Ball Dupont Fund – Ms. Swift noted that the Fund focuses on disadvantaged neighborhoods. Mr. Zubaca will research to determine if any of the city neighborhoods meet the criteria for funding.

#### **Neighborhood Playgrounds Update**

Mr. Eide gave a report on the Bull Hill community. He stated that there was much interest in water and sand tables, and expressed his concern with liability for a water table. A discussion of water and sand tables ensued. Mr. Eide will continue with outreach to the community.

#### **Committee Member Comments**

Trustee Grant – Ms. Swift reported that the grant request was submitted on time and the sub-committee will be notified in April if they are awarded funding.

City Council Budget Review – Mr. Zubaca noted that Council has scheduled a Budget Review in February. He suggested that an Ask For Funding could potentially be added to the meeting.

A motion was made to approve Mr. Zubaca draft an Ask For Funding for neighborhood parks and the Battery Park Playground out of ARPA funds to be presented to City Council. The motion was seconded and unanimously passed.

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The motion was unanimously passed, and the meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen R. Weirich  
City Stenographer