

CITY OF CALLAWAY  
SPORTS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 5, 2018 – 5:00 P.M.

The City of Callaway Sports and Recreation Committee met in regular session with Chairman Brent Harshbarger, and Committee Members Tim Legare, Andre Goss, Deric Hiscock, and John Piercy in attendance. Also present were City Manager, Eddie Cook and City Clerk, Janice Peters.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Harshbarger, followed by an invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN & VICE-CHAIR**

Nomination was made by Committee Member Goss for Brent Harshbarger to stay on as Chairman.

**Motion:**

Motion was made by Committee Member Goss and seconded by Committee Member Piercy for Brent Harshbarger to remain as Chairman. Motion carried unanimously.

Deric Hiscock volunteered to be the Vice-Chair

**Motion:**

Motion was made by Committee Member Hiscock and seconded by Committee Member Goss to appoint Deric Hiscock as Vice-Chair. Motion carried unanimously.

**REGULAR AGENDA**

Agenda Items 1-3, Master Planning of John B. Gore Park, Master Planning of the Callaway Recreational Complex, and Needs Assessment/Prioritizing of Capital Improvement Projects for all City of Callaway Parks, were somewhat discussed as a whole.

City Manager Eddie Cook began the discussion by relaying what he is looking for is a long-term strategic plan for parks, as well as a needs assessment, maintenance needs, and a vision.

He tasked the Committee to look at each park individually, ranking needs and looking to the future for things we need that we do not currently have, such as a dog park, playground equipment, frisbee park, putting green, etc.

Referencing John B. Gore Park, he recommended considering the baseball fields and deciding if some can be turned into football fields as well as addressing lighting needs.

He indicated new playground equipment is needed at Veteran's Park, which he has addressed Commission regarding this and the Committee has their full support. He advised there is some money in the budget for next fiscal year for these items.

Committee Member Goss asked about current out of town tournament scheduling, which Committee Member Legare reviewed. City Manager Cook relayed kudos received after

last year's tournaments regarding staff involvement and the overall condition of the fields.

Committee Member Legare advised that with Leisure Services, being short staffed, they have mostly concentrated on current local soccer, baseball and football leagues. He also advised there is no recreation staff, all leagues are run by volunteers, and the revenue to the City itself is minimal.

Vice-Chair Hiscock asked if there is a way to reach out to the citizens of Callaway to see what they would like to see for parks. City Manager Cook recommended a survey, which can be added to the website as well as the Newsletter.

Committee Member Piercy indicated Gore Park is in his area of town and that is his priority. He would like to see Gore Park brought up to the standards of other parks. He has a list of things he would like to see at Gore Park.

City Manager Cook reiterated that a needs assessment needs to be done for each park with a ranking of priorities. A few things City Manager Cook offered for the survey is a dog park, frisbee golf, etc. He referenced Brittany Woods Park, indicating there is nothing on that side of town and felt a small playground and pavilion would do well there. Once a needs lists are compiled cost assessments will be done.

Chairman Harshbarger reviewed the process that the Committee does the research then makes recommendations to the Mayor and Commission. The City Manager then handles funding. City Manager Cook advised some funding is currently available in the 2019 budget but the goal is to be ready to focus in on specific projects for the following budget cycle. He expects the process to take 3-6 months.

Committee Member and Director of Leisure Services Tim Legare advised he has been with the City since 2002 and reviewed improvements during his tenure. He showed a PowerPoint on the current City parks and amenities, as well as current Leisure Services staff and what they do.

He further reviewed groups that are supported as well as events that are held, which included:

- Callaway Baseball
- Junior/Major Baseball
- Youth and Adult Soccer Leagues
- Callaway Historical Society
- Rebels Football
- Bay United Soccer Club
- Bay High School Soccer
- USFA Girls Fast Pitch World Series
- Relay For Life Events
- Senior's Tai Chi
- Bay County Cross Country Runners
- Meritt Brown Middle School
- Rutherford High School Cross Country & Soccer
- LA Youth Center
- Bay County Council on Aging
- Baseball & Soccer Opening Day Events
- Step Up Florida
- Annual Fishing Rodeo
- Summer Baseball/Soccer Tournaments
- Callaway Heritage Day Celebration
- Veteran's Day Parade

- Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony
- Ground Breaking Ceremonies
- Setups for Arts & Conference Center
- World Softball League Annual Men's Tournament

Committee Member Legare advised that since the improvements were made to Gore Park it is getting a lot more use and vandalism is down.

Committee Member Goss asked what Leisure Services' annual budget is. Committee Member Legare advised it is around \$900,000.

Committee Member Piercy asked how much of the 80 acres at this property is being used and how much is available for expansion. Committee Member Legare there is a good percentage available depending on use. To do more sports fields would be difficult but other things, such as nature trails, could be done, as well as a camp ground. He felt quick impacts could be made by upgrading some of the smaller parks like Brittany Woods.

Regarding Gore Park, Committee Member Legare advised there was one football field here that got overcrowded by Soccer so they moved them back to Gore Park where they had plenty of room and could do their own concessions.

Jeff Beech, President of Callaway Football, advised they've been around for 51 years, he advised their numbers dropped after moving off the field to Gore Park while Lynn Haven has tripled if not more and are building three new ballfields. Parker and Springfield are trying to build their leagues back up. Callaway's numbers are back up to around 120 and they are doing everything they can. It would help if the kids could be brought back to the main field area. He indicated GCYFA would like to bring games back to this area as well, which brings in money. He felt it possible to rebuild Gore Park and make it a successful football field and park and are currently trying to expand their league.

Dwayne Evans, Baseball President, advised the fields at Gore Park are utilized in the spring quite a bit.

Committee Member Legare indicated his idea was to maybe do away with two baseball fields and reconstruct a nice football field in its place, with stands, restrooms and concession building and a perimeter walking trail. He also advised new lighting with underground electrical wiring is needed.

Committee Member Legare encouraged committee members to bring back their own recommendations for the next meeting. City Clerk Peters advised she can put together a list of everyone's recommendations if they email it to her.

City Manager Cook recommended, in the survey, giving a few choices for citizens to choose as to what they would like to see with additional space for other recommendations.

Committee Member Piercy recommended concentrating on Gore Park to begin with, considering its usage, and move the other parks up from that point.

Chairman Harshbarger agreed with using City Clerk Peters as the contact to submit information. She indicated that, because of Sunshine Laws, committee members cannot discuss, outside of an open meeting, anything amongst themselves that will come before the board for consideration.

City Clerk Peters recommended meeting on September 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. to consider the survey. Vice-Chair Hiscock asked if it would be possible to get a list of all the parks.

City Clerk Peters indicated the 2014 minutes would be brought back for consideration at the next meeting but someone who was actually at that meeting would need to move to approve.

Committee Member Legare briefly reviewed an idea for Veteran's Park, which was a military themed playground that would be handicapped accessible. He indicated this is something that could possibly be done sooner rather than later as there are budgeted funds available. Although he did agree with Committee Member Piercy that Gore Park needs to be a priority, which will be a big project, costing over a half million to several million dollars easily.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

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City Clerk

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Board Chairman