

**City of Wyoming  
Recreation Commission  
City Building Conference Room  
Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, April 6, 2023**

Members present: Howard Krueger, Megan Anderson, Chris Woodside, Laura Lazaraton, and Jonathon Daugherty.

Staff members present: Rachel Leininger – Director of Recreation and Citizen Engagement

Others Present: John Otten, Helen McCormick, Brian Smith, Ron Sweeney, and William Best

**Citizen Participation:** None.

**Call to Order:**

Ms. Leininger called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:**

A motion to approve the January minutes was made by Mr. Krueger and seconded by Mr. Woodside. All ayes.

**Reports:**

- Chairperson—none.
- City Council –none.
- Administration – none.
- School – none.
- Greenways—none.

**Business:**

- Commission Member Responsibility Areas:
  - Youth Sports— none.
  - Adult Sports/Recreation & Senior Activities (Howard Krueger): none.
  - Fitness, Programs, and Aquatics: none.
  - Facilities, Parks & Grounds (Alex): none.
  - Special Events—none.

**Other:**

- Dog Park Proposal Presentation: Mr. Otten introduced himself and his team that were there to present a dog park proposal on behalf of their foundation Brave Like Me. Mr. Otten explained that the Brave Like Me foundation is a 501©3 whose mission is to inspire children with complex medical conditions, their friends, family and their neighbors to live their fullest brave lives. In his presentation, Mr. Otten explained that his son, Brayden, was born with congenital heart disease, and unexpectedly suffered for 86 days in the hospital before he passed. Mr. Otten

explained that Brayden, his bravery, and special relationship with his dog Dugan, inspired their organization with the idea of fully funding a dog park as a gift to the City of Wyoming. Mr. Otten explained that the overwhelming community support his family received during Brayden's illness was so important to their family, and that he wants to give back to the community. Brave Like Me believes that a dog park creates a safe space for both people and dogs to exercise, socialize, and bond, while also contributing to economic development and community building. Mr. Otten proposed that a dog park could be constructed in the green space on Van Roberts, across from the W Lounge, as the space is currently underutilized land in the city and is a less than attractive lot. Mr. Otten shared design concepts with the group that included ADA self-closing double gates, divided space for small/big dogs, artificial turf for low maintenance, dog and human water fountains, trash receptacles, dog waste bag dispenser, added trees and shrubs, black aluminum fence, dog activity obstacles, shade structure and concrete pad, and benches for relaxing. Mr. Otten shared that the new dog park would improve property values in the immediate vicinity and the city, enhance the current space, away from child play areas, provide a positive impact for the business district, as well as enhancing the walkability of Wyoming. Mr. Otten stated that once the city approves this plan, he hopes to have phase one of the dog park completed by December 2023 and phase two completed by March 2024. Mr. Otten reiterated that the Brave Like Me foundation would be incurring all expenses, and that this project would not be funded by tax dollars. Ms. Lazaraton asked how far down the dog park would go from the existing parking lot. Mr. Otten stated that it goes up to the trees and stops at the retaining wall near Wirtz Way. Mr. Krueger asked if public works has reviewed this proposal to evaluate the plan for water issues. Mr. Otten stated that he realizes the area currently does not drain well but that they would address that problem through this project. Mr. Smith also explained that the addition of the turf would help with addressing drainage issues. Mr. Krueger asked if there were plans for on-going maintenance of the dog park. Mr. Otten stated that there were no plans to fund maintenance, only the initial improvements, but that the hope is that the installation of the turf would allow for less maintenance required. Mr. Woodside stated that he felt like getting the buy in from the neighbors would be one of the most important things moving forward. Ms. McCormick stated that the W Lounge has no issue with the dog park, and that they are working to engage with the other neighbors. Ms. Lazaraton stated that there another neighbor on Van Roberts with a dog that would be a good person for them to connect with. Ms. Leininger stated that this plan also allowed plenty of room for the bike path extension that would be between the dog park and the road. Ms. Anderson commented that she was excited for this gift to the city, but that she would urge the foundation to consider the different types of turf installed so that it would be easily maneuvered for someone using a mobility device. Mr. Daugherty asked what the life span of the dog park was. Mr. Otten stated that the turf had about a 20-year warranty. Mr. Smith stated that fence would last 30-40 years. Mr. Otten also stated that they

intentionally did not include any type of mounds as those are much harder to maintain. Mr. Daugherty also asked about the location of the water fountains. Mr. Otten stated that there were three water fountains—two inside of the fence and one outside of the fence. Ms. Leininger asked if the group would make a motion as to whether to recommend that City Council proceed with exploring the construction of a dog park at the Van Roberts location. Mr. Woodside made a motion that City Council move forward with exploring the construction of a dog park at Van Roberts. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion. All ayes.

Ms. Anderson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Ms. Lazaraton seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rachel Leininger