

VERMILION PARKS & RECREATION BOARD
Minutes of July 21, 2020 - 6:00pm | Zoom Meeting

Roll Call: T. Parker (Chairman); B. Scholtz (Vice-Chair), W. Warden, D. Brudney, J. Keck, L. Elden, K. Repola, E. Cann

Also, Present: C. Kuhns, RECREATION DIRECTOR; Mark Weisenberger, PARKS SUPERVISOR; B. Holmes, COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

Guests: Mayor Forthofer, Jake Williams

Terry Parker, Chairman called the July 21, 2020 meeting to order.

B. Warden MOVED, B. Scholtz seconded to approve the meeting minutes of June 16, 2020. Roll Call Vote 7 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

OPEN TO THE AUDIENCE:

Jake Williams, Building Grounds Chairman of the Harbourtown Fine Arts Center was present and conveyed they are in the process of purchasing the old Town Hall in hopes of restoring it to its former glory. He said they were approached about a month ago by John Riddle who is currently on Broadway in Phantom of the Opera and previously before that he was in the production of Frozen. He agreed to do a fundraising show at the Opera House at no charge to them, so they were going to sell 100 tickets and do it inside. It sold out immediately and it was a great venture for them. However, with COVID, John Riddle, Dr. Jennifer Casey and Jim Chapple the President all got together, and everybody felt they would be more comfortable if they did the event outside. When this decision was made, they forgot that the front of Town Hall is actually owned by the City and Parks Department, so he is asking for Parks approval to have the guests bring their own lawn chairs, require masks, and distance themselves accordingly, so they can have the show on the front lawn of Town Hall.

T. Parker said he spoke with Jim Chapple on this matter and they are in a tight spot as they have limited time to figure this out. J. Williams said if they cannot do it this weekend there is the potential, they can do it next weekend. The doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the event starts at 7:30 p.m., so they would like to do it this weekend because this is when everybody is committed to coming. T. Parker said he spoke with the mayor on this matter to find out about whether a group gathering like this would be permitted at this time, and the bottom line is that the Parks Board can say yes, but it's really between the event organizers and the Erie County Health Department on whether the event can occur. Mayor Forthofer concurred with this statement and from his point of view he said the venue is worthy, but with little events like this he doesn't object if the Parks Board doesn't object, but the Health Department has the final say. Jake Williams said he would pass along the action plan of the event to Peter Schade of the Health Department and if he got his blessing, would the Parks Board be okay with

proceeding. T. Parker said he would like to hear from the rest of the members of the Parks Board first and if they can proceed, then they would have to provide paperwork to the city.

B. Scholtz said he has no objection and thinks the event is worthy but wanted to check with the mayor if the size of the gathering creates a potential problem. Is there a number they are using to determine whether they move forward with an event such as this? Mayor Forthofer said the Health Department shut down the Beach Market as they were anticipating 500 people. He said nobody really steps up and gives them a number; it is an awareness.

B. Warden asked if Anne Naugle of the Beach Market was okay with the city holding her payment in abeyance until next year. T. Parker said they will need to iron this out with her. G. Fisher said she was contacted by Anne Naugle who would like to be present at the August Parks Board meeting, so they could discuss this with her then.

Erica Cann said she has heard about this event and loves the idea behind it. She wanted to attend but the tickets were sold out. However, she felt it was a wonderful opportunity to support a non-profit within the community, so if the Mayor gives his blessing then she is certainly onboard with it. She thought it was a great alternative from not being able to do it inside.

Kate Repola said her daughter attends dance at this facility and the moment she saw this event was happening she was concerned with it being inside, so the fact that it's moving outside is a fabulous idea and as long as everybody is okay with it, then she's all for it.

B. Warden asked if there would be a weather alternative. J. Williams said if the weather is inclement on Saturday, then he believes the following weekend is an option as John Riddle can do a rain delay.

Dennis Brudney said he is good with this event if the Mayor and the Health Department agree.

Liz Elden said she is all for the event, but again, she thinks Jake will need to talk to the Health Department. She looks for pushback from the community with everything that has been cancelled.

Brian Holmes said if the Health Department is okay with this and they are transparent of how the event will play out, then he doesn't have a problem with it. However, he does feel they will get some kickback from other organizations, but it's a case by case situation and if the group is able to show the distancing and a plan, then they can give it a shot determined by the decision of the Health Department.

K. Repola asked if they were planning on serving food and drinks. Jake Williams said they had planned to if they were inside, but since they will be outside on city property, then they would offer a pre-packaged snack bag.

T. Parker said the other events on their property that had been cancelled were events that the Parks Board approved. The Parks Board did not cancel the events as it was up to the Health

Department. If they think it is okay from their standpoint, then they will do no more or less from the standpoint of what they did for anybody else, and the bottom line is what the Health Department will say.

B. Holmes said the only concern is that they sold 100 tickets, but how will they stop others from sliding into the event. E. Cann thought this was a valid point and advised Jake that he should have a plan in place for this, and if the weather is nice, how will they plan to handle the people walking around. She suggested they rope the area off and include signage to advise the public this is a private event not open to the public. T. Parker agreed they needed a visible boundary established.

B. Scholtz MOVED, B. Warden seconded to approve this event contingent on the facility getting approval from the Erie County Board of Health. Vote 7 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

RECREATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

C. Kuhns reported with the six leagues they have going with baseball, two of the leagues will finish up this week and the other four will be finished next week. He noted that everything has gone well so far, and they have not had a lot of problems relating to COVID. He said they screen the kids prior to playing. He said there were three that were not able to play because they tested positive for COVID. As far as the football season, the 14 communities involved in the league voted 12-2 to move the football season to the spring, so it will start in mid-March and will run through May as opposed to trying to work through the fall season with deadlines and testing according to the rules. He said they may try to do flag football, but it will depend on when it is safe to do so.

M. Weisenberger said they have two sets of bleachers at Sherod from Belden Field and asked Chad if there was any place, he could use them. C. Kuhns and Jeff Keck said they would think about whether they had any specific place of need for them and would let Marc know.

PARK'S SUPERVISOR REPORT:

M. Weisenberger reported on the following:

Showse Park – He said a couple weeks ago Satellite Electric repaired some exposed wires that had pulled away from the poles. They did not have expansion joints so every time they would freeze and thaw, they would expand and pull away from the poles.

East Exchange Park – Vermilion in Bloom has had a landscaper there and the original plan was to replace the railroad ties with sandstone which has been completed. They noticed at the bottom of the hill they ended in the grass, so they came up with a way to make this a smoother transition. They did add additional landscaping to keep the mowers away from the new sandstone. There is a 12" gap between the existing sidewalk and the white picket fence that has been leveled and they will add sandstone there to make it wider and less maintenance.

Victory Park Roof – Is about 90% complete. They ran out of material but got some more ordered. The painting crew will come in later this week. They will work on electrical lighting improvements and they will look at the landscaping, especially on the backside of the gazebo by working with the Lions Club and Vermilion in Bloom. They may remove some overgrown landscaping and replace with lower landscaping to make the gazebo more visible.

Main Street Beach – Last year there were some folks who were cited at the beach for being in the wrong place with their kayaks and canoes, so they worked over the winter with Harbor Patrol and the Service Director to come up with some signage to direct people to the proper launch area.

Intern Program (BGSU) – He submitted the job description for the position, and they are currently taking applications for the position. The names will be forwarded to him, so they can help in making the selection for the intern.

Lastly, he welcomed the two newest board members, Liz Elden and Kate Repola and said he looks forward in working with both.

Mayor Forthofer said the materials for the roof on the gazebo were excellent choices and it looks very nice. He asked when the sign went up at Main Street for the launch area. Marc said it went up last Thursday.

Budget/Finance Subcommittee Report:

B. Scholtz said they met a couple weeks ago, and a five-year action plan was forwarded to the board members. He said the plan has project descriptions of all expenditures and they are leaving themselves cash rich so they can attempt to pursue other projects. This plan outlines operating and capital projects. T. Parker noted this is not a budget, but merely a plan and stated that Brad's leadership has been good. B. Scholtz said if other board members have ideas of other projects, they can probably contact Marc because he is good at prioritizing as to knowing what fits and the timing.

Community Relations/Publicity:

T. Parker said when Kate Repola was introducing herself to the board, he noticed she mentioned experience in community relations, so he wondered if this was something she would be comfortable moving into with the departure of E. Cann from the board. K. Repola said she would be interested but wanted to know the description of what this entails. T. Parker explained this is hers to develop as she is not held to any past definitions. They felt it was good for the board to be proactive on how they share with the community on things they are doing with regards to plans, goals, and dreams. There are a lot of good positive things the board is doing, and they need to be more visible and vocal. K. Repola asked in what way. T. Parker suggested social media, news media, and having a point of contact through the board. Kate said this was up her alley and she would be happy to help.

Erosion:

B. Warden said they have a couple bids available and he mentioned he met with Homer Taft last month and he talked about this specific project and things to consider, including restoration of any possible damage when they actively start the restoration projects. He said they need to know if they will have seed planted, which probably should be considered in the bid.

M. Weisenberger said they received a second estimate from Miller Excavating and it was less than Haynes Construction. He sent him the exact specifications, so they quoted the same. They will tackle the project a little differently. With Haynes Construction, they will be doing a couple of the neighbors' land and will work more out of the water. He said that Justin Miller would be working from up above and potentially be doing some regrading of the area before he would put stone in. He did contact the Landoll's immediately west of the park and they will be using Haynes Construction. They did talk about access and they will need some access through the park, and they are aware they would need to repair anything they would disrupt. He said he needs to talk with the Service Director because they talked about doing \$4,000 - \$8,000 of improvements in the corner of where their property connects to the Parks property, and it sounds like they would cover some of the expense of getting the city's corner started, and then the Parks bid would pick up where they leave off. It sounds like it might be about 10' of the Parks area they would do. He said if the city goes with Justin Miller it would be more of a fall project where Mark Haynes would be ready to go in July or August. He said he also put together some maps and photos for ODNR (Coastal Management) to get their approval to move forward on the project. If they can keep it as a repair for a revetment and not new construction, then they do not need additional permits and they would not need any new engineering expenses. Before turning anything into Coastal Management they need to select a contractor and he would like a meeting with the contractor to define the project.

B. Scholtz asked if he found the survey or does not, he need it because they are above water. Marc said he should not need this. He said he did get a county map indicating all the property lines. T. Parker explained for the new board members that this is at the west end of Showse Park – the landowner has a revetment that protrudes into the water and not only has the high water and waves got behind and undercut some of the city's stuff, but it also got behind this property owner and the two are kind of tied together. They originally were trying to do a joint project if they could, but they have moved away from doing this.

M. Weisenberger said if the board is ready to pick a contractor than this would certainly help with regards to getting things more specific to keep the ball rolling. T. Parker said this project is under the \$50,000 threshold for going out to bid, so they can choose the contractor. He thought they were in the \$35,000 range for this project. M. Weisenberger said that Justin Miller's estimate was under \$30,000, but he did mention in his email that it could be a little more than that as he was unsure of some areas with materials. B. Scholtz asked Marc if approval for a not to exceed number of \$35,000 would work. Marc thought it would work. T. Parker said they need to pick the contractor and approve the bid. B. Warden that B. Scholtz had some negative feelings about Haynes previously and asked if there was anything that would carry over or was it just the fact that they demonstrated some problems, which may be enough to discount him. B. Scholtz said it was strictly his experience when they tried to finish

the second phase as they ended up with issues that Haynes was not willing to address, so he felt the board should be aware of this, so his personal feeling is strongly against using Haynes. He said he was less money before, and therefore they had to go with him because he was the least expensive bid and he feels that this was the quality of the work that the city received. B. Warden said they have dealt with both contractors and his only hesitation with J. Miller is that he has been offering to repair or solve some of their original problems for the last couple of years; whether it's high water or something else, but it's been put on the back burner, so he hopes he is serious about it. E. Cann would think this would be the part of the contract they enter as there should be an established time frame. T. Parker noted that Justin Miller is a local contractor. B. Scholtz said that both are local.

B. Scholtz MOVED, B. Warden seconded to approve a not to exceed of \$36,000 from the capital levy and to allow the Service Director and Marc Weisenberger to work out the details in choosing the contractor and the specifics, and to be done with the project this year. Discussion: B. Holmes said he knows another contractor who might be interested in this project and he will talk with Marc about this. He said he has worked in the past in the Metro Parks and is currently working in Lorain County on bridge projects. Vote 7 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

Main Street Beach Revitalization Project:

T. Parker along with Brad Scholtz and the Mayor were recently a part of a Zoom meeting with the Western Reserve Land Conservancy to basically see where things are at. He said things are at a standstill because the state capital budget has not been finalized. Therefore, they have decided not to raise money locally at this time until they get a better idea of where they are at on the grant front. They have a two-year window to acquire the Stuckle property and the Western Reserve Land Conservancy is handling this.

Recreation and School Relations:

J. Keck gave a shoutout to Marc's crew and the maintenance people as the grounds/fields are in great shape. He thinks the backboards have been put up by the tennis courts which look great.

Vermilion Community Pool:

D. Brudney said they have been trying different methods to gather information when deciding the future of the pool. He said the BGSU intern will be a big part of this as they will be gathering information and data from the citizens of the city. They are trying to gather information from pool people who are involved in swimming pools. They met at the pool this morning and talked with OP Aquatics. Marc said they provide all the chemicals for the pool. Dennis said they met and walked around the pool and B. Cunicella joined them today as well to give them some information. They looked at the components in the pool area and the gentleman will give them a written summary of what he thinks may need to be done with the

pool. Also, Pool Tech is coming in August to do the second treatment on the pool (liquid chlorine) and they are going to take a look and give a summary of what they think. He said Marc has talked with two other companies as well. He said Marc has gotten names of other companies who do pool assessments and assumed Marc would contact them.

He said they found out the pool liner is 15 years old and they think the pool cover is the same age, so they might not have too much longer of life in them. They also looked at the pool filters and understand they will need to be done. He said the roof leak has created damage inside the pool house. Marc said if they look at a renovation of the pool there is a way they can have three individual filter systems, which gives them a quicker turnover of water, which filtrates it. He said Pro Pool and Spa are coming to do an assessment of the pool. They are trying to get as many opinions as possible from pool companies so they can make good decisions down the road. Dennis said they know they will have to fix the roof, leak, and pool deck, but from what he saw today he thinks there will be more things to do to get the pool in good shape. Marc said they also talked with the contractor who did the gazebo roof and they will give the city an estimate to replace the roof rather than repair it. He noted it is a smaller building square footage wise. He will contact other roof companies to compare estimates. He suggested having one of the board meetings at the pool, so everybody can see the current conditions.

Dennis said that Bob Cunicella was confident the leak was in the north skimmer and supposedly this can be fixed at a reasonable cost. They also talked about a splash pad at the pool.

Dennis said they have been trying to get some information from the schools to see if they are interested in participating in anything. He talked with Mr. Pempin and they scheduled a meeting this morning to see what interest the school would have. He said Mr. Pempin thought the school board may be interested in participating with the Parks Board on some type of aquatic feature; possibly on school grounds as long as it benefits the people of Vermilion, and as long as they didn't have to incur all the costs. In discussing the negotiations of the field, he would be interested in meeting with members of the board. T. Parker thought Chad and Jeff would be important parts of this discussion. Dennis said he would like to set up a meeting next week at the high school with Mr. Pempin to talk about the negotiation of the fields and a possible aquatic feature. T. Parker said they need to discuss the level of usage of the fields at this point from when they entered the lease 20 years ago. He said they need to see if their level of usage has gone down and whether they need to renegotiate their financial participation.

J. Keck mentioned the Booster Club has agreed to pay for half of a turf infield on the varsity baseball field and they are looking for naming rights.

Dennis said he will contact everyone on their availability next week. B. Scholtz said only three members of the board can attend this meeting. J. Keck said Andy Stillman the Athletic Director should be at the meeting along with John Parsons the new head of maintenance.

Financial Report:

T. Parker said they received month end reports for June, which shows a summary of what they have available to spend.

D. Brudney conveyed that at last month's meeting the board voted to approve the purchase of the shade at the skate spot and he contacted Shade Systems and they were able to lower the price of the shade from \$1,812 to \$1,498.

Mayor Forthofer suggested the board consider refunding fees for any reservation cancellations due to COVID. T. Parker said they only approved two events (Beach Market and Erie Shore Wave Runners Jet Ski Invitational) this year that require fees as non-profits do not pay a park use fee. He felt this was a reasonable request to handle this administratively.

ADJOURNMENT:

E. Cann MOVED, J. Keck seconded to adjourn the meeting. Vote 7 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday – August 18, 2020 @ **6:00 pm** at location TBD

*~Gwen Fisher, Certified Municipal Clerk
Vermilion City Council/Boards and Commissions*