

VERMILION PARKS & RECREATION BOARD

Minutes of August 16, 2022 - 6:00pm

Roll Call: Kate Repola, Liz Elden, William Warden, Bill Malin, Tina Swinehart. Absent: Jeff Keck, Dennis Brudney

Also, Present: Marc Weisenberger, Parks Operation Manager; Tony Valerius, Service Director. Mayor Forthofer - Guest

Kate Repola, Chairwoman called the meeting of August 16, 2022, to order.

Approval of Minutes:

B. Malin MOVED; L. Elden seconded to approve the meeting minutes of July 19, 2022. Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Correspondence:

Anne Naugle thanked the parks board personally for allowing her to host the non-profit community event (Vermilion Beach Market). She thanked Marc and his crew for manicuring the park and delivering cones so she could block off the fire lane, and for also delivering the garbage cans. She said she is doing her best to give back and mentioned she hosted a "Adopt a Beach" beach cleanup through the Alliance for the Great Lakes, and she made an annual donation to the Parks Department.

She said she turned in her paperwork for 2023 last week but it did not look like it was on the agenda to be voted on. G. Fisher said she did not receive the paperwork. A. Naugle said she turned it into the mayor's administrative assistant last Tuesday and noted she secured insurance for the same amount of people and projected attendance. G. Fisher thought she did not receive it as she was off last week, but she would get with her to get a copy. K. Repola said since she was present, she could proceed with discussing next year's event, and then the board could review and ask questions. A. Naugle said the group use permit is identical to this year's. They are still requesting the same area of the park and she does not want to get any larger. She had 90 vendors including seven food vendors, which was enough. The dates will be Friday, August 4, 2023, from 3:00 to 8:00 p.m. and Saturday, August 5, 2023, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. She did have a proposal for the event that looks like it always does. She said she hired the Erie County Sheriff's Department for traffic control to the entrance of the park and they are also there on security duty overnight, so this will still be in place. She said the Lions Club helped her this year, which was huge. She said she ordered two dumpsters this year, so the garbage did not get too out of control, and it was just enough.

K. Repola asked M. Weisenberger if he had any concerns with the playground. M. Weisenberger said they will work with Anne next year. A. Naugle said she can go a little wider on her perimeter, which will provide shade for her vendors, which will be a suitable layout for next year.

Mayor Forthofer said Anne is one of the best groups to work with. K. Repola said the event was wonderful and she really enjoyed it. B. Warden asked if she noticed any problems with the businesses across the street having a concurrent sale. A. Naugle said she partnered with Grace United Methodist Church, and she received permission to use the church's south parking lot for overflow parking, so she donated to the church. She has not heard anything negative from the church about this. K. Repola mentioned the church had their yard sale that day too.

G. Fisher said she would get the paperwork from Jody, but everything should be fine to proceed with voting on the event permit.

K. Repola MOVED: B. Warden seconded to approve the Community Group Use Permit for the Vermilion Beach Market for August 4 and 5, 2023 contingent upon confirming all the paperwork has been submitted to the administrative assistant. Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Jerry Western of the Vermilion Tree Commission spoke to the parks board about the Ohio Urban Forestry Canopy Grant that the Tree Commission and the Parks Board applied for jointly and were awarded. He said in 2020, City Council encouraged the Tree Commission to apply for this grant and the minimum they could apply for was \$100,000. This meant the Tree Commission would have to match whatever they apply for, so in 2021 the State of Ohio applied for the grant, and they received a large portion of this. This grant comes from the United States Forest Service, so it is federal funds. The State of Ohio Urban Forestry Department applied for a grant where they could disperse it in smaller packages to communities from \$2,500 to \$25,000. He said with the support of City Council and the Parks Board, they applied for a grant asking for \$12,500 to \$25,000. Upon review of the grant, the State of Ohio awarded them the maximum of \$25,000, so Council gave \$10,000 to the Tree Commission and the Parks Board approved \$15,000. This allowed them to start planning and getting into planting trees this year. The funds they received allows them to purchase approximately 120 new trees for the City of Vermilion and 40% of them will be in the streets and 60% of them will be in the parks. With the first half of the grant, they planted trees in Sherod Park, Nokomis, Victory, East Exchange, and Village Green, and this fall they plan to use the remaining trees for Showse and Main Street Beach & Park. The ones that go to Main Street will be out of the area of construction and will be along the western boundary or along the driveway or streets where nothing will be disturbed. Should they run into a problem, the drop back will be West Breeze Park. The trees they are planting are a diverse group as they do not want to have all the same species as witnessed by the different tree diseases, so they are going with canopy trees because that is the specification of the grant, so this means big trees. They planted 60 trees this spring and will plant the remaining 60 trees this fall. In the stipulation agreement that the mayor had to sign, they must follow certain criteria and then the state will

come in and inspect. The first 60 trees have been inspected and they only had an issue with one of the 60 trees, which was a small and minor issue that will be addressed. The state urban foresters worked with them and gave a class on how they wanted things done. They have been able to secure the materials that were needed per the specifications for the state. He said in a lot of communities they are happy if the trees live 10 years, but they hope these trees last one hundred years. A group of five are watering them religiously and they will water them for one to two years depending on their size and location. Once all the trees are planted in the fall, the state forester will come in and finish the inspection, and then they will need to turn in all the paperwork, invoices, and receipts, then the state will reimburse them the \$25,000. They are spending \$50,000, but the finance director banked \$25,000 based upon the reimbursement to the community. He said with climate change, trees are the soldiers in the war against climate change, so the trees along the lake will help with water control, water shed, and they will help with providing shade. They have received favorable comments during events at the parks as people are noticing the new trees.

K. Repola said this is big project that certainly is well-needed, and she thanked the Tree Commission. J. Western thanked the parks board, administration, and city council, as this is how they enabled the program. T. Swinehart said the Tree Commission is keeping the trees alive as she sees them out watering the trees.

M. Weisenberger said the Tree Commission is an exceptional group of people who are very knowledgeable and dedicated. He said they do an awesome and amazing job. K. Repola said the city is very fortunate and lucky to have them.

COMMUNITY EVENT GROUP USE PERMITS:

Ritter Public Library

Star Gazing Program – October 6, 2022, @ 8:00 p.m. (Deck at Main Street Beach and Park)

K. Repola said there is not an end time noted for the event, so she suggested it ending by 11:00 p.m., as they would need to extend the hours of the park on this day.

B. Warden MOVED; L. Elden seconded to approve the Star Gazing Program on October 6, 2022, from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

College Club of Vermilion

Plant Sale/Fundraiser – May 13, 2023, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. (Victory Park & Gazebo)

Dr. Marie Agen, President of the College Club of Vermilion explained they are an organization of women who have received at least two years of post-secondary education. The purpose of the organization is to promote the cultural, social, educational, and civic interest in the community, and to raise funds to provide scholarships for Vermilion High School students. One of their

major fundraisers has been a plant sale, which they traditionally hold in May, so they are asking for the use of Victory Park on May 13, 2023, and they asked to run the sale from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., but they would also like to bring plants in the gazebo, as well as display them on the lawns.

L. Elden MOVED; B. Malin seconded to approve the Community Event Group Use Permit as described above. Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

City Council Representative Report: No report.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Forthofer said sooner than anticipated is the construction of the deck at Main Street Beach & Park. They had planned to have it removed eventually as the design committee felt it was time to remove it. However, their schedule has been accelerated by the Army Corp of Engineers who will be repairing the west pier and they need access right away. He was sure with the cooperation of the Parks Board; they will be able to accommodate this and accommodate some additional seating in the interim.

He said the downtown continues to hum and the service organizations are working overtime to bring people down. The sanitary services are taxed to the max by the number of people in town as they are taking full advantage of the parks.

Service Director's Report: No report.

Parks Operation Manager Report:

Marc Weisenberger said they topped off the playgrounds at Showse, West Breeze, Victory, and the Vermilion Community Pool with new playground surface material (mulch) over the past week.

They worked one day last week with Erie Metroparks and cleaned up the Wakefield Park, but they were also able to get the east end of the beach cleaned up as part of this project.

He thanked Jerry Western for presenting details on the Vermilion Tree Program.

He said the Erie County Community Foundation had a second-round application due the end of last month of which he applied for. They requested funding up to \$10,000 for the playground at Sherod Park.

He reported they received the shoreline erosion signs and posts, and over the next week they will get them installed.

B. Warden asked what the status was on the Pickle Ball Court. G. Fisher noted this item is on the agenda under Old and New Business. B. Warden asked what was going on with the clock downtown. M. Weisenberger said he is working with M. Suszko of Main Street on this project as she has a couple of sources for a new clock to replace the one that is there. B. Warden asked if there was some reason, they could not put in a battery powered motor instead of revising the old one. Mayor Forthofer said about three years ago or longer somewhere took a shot at repairing this clock, which lasted until recently. K. Repola asked if they had a cost for replacing the clock. M. Weisenberger said they do not have an exact number, but it depends on whether the clock is lighted or not. As opposed to lighting the clock, they discussed up-lighting the entire monument/clock.

B. Warden said in years past they had a tennis net in Showse Park, which has not been seen for a while. M. Weisenberger said there are cracks which are too thick. B. Warden said the tennis court itself needs to be fixed. M. Weisenberger said this is on their radar once they get some other projects out of the way.

Budget/Finance Subcommittee Report:

L. Elden reported that Amy Hendricks provided pool numbers to the board and from what she can tell the revenue at the pool is up \$6,000 over last year, which is a 20% increase. There was a big jump in party activity, lessons, daily admissions, and passes. They are on track to come in on their expenses of what the finance director budgeted of \$60,200. She hoped that since it is already August that they will find a little space on chemicals and things like that and come a little under. M. Weisenberger said they are trying to stretch what they have now to last the season.

Erosion: No report.

Main Street Beach Revitalization Project:

K. Repola mentioned that she along with Mayor Forthofer and Tina Swinehart attended a meeting this morning. She put out an email to all previous members of that group to see who was interested in continuing the committee. She said there was a great turnout of business owners, residents, Rotary, Chamber, Main Street, as well as neighbors, and the Erie County Metroparks. There were so many people interested in making sure this part of the project is exactly what they want for Vermilion. They discussed what their commitments were within the grants they already received along with conversation of what they need versus what they want. She thought the next step was to contact the architect and start to whittle down some of those thoughts and streamline what the budget is as well as where they would like to spend their monies. She said taking down the deck earlier than anticipated was not expected as they did not

want to take down the deck until they had a replacement. There was a lot of conversation of temporary seating that would be accessible, which was the main concern. L. Elden asked if there was seating elsewhere that could temporarily go there. K. Repola said she did not know yet. There will be Adirondack chairs, but it is not exactly accessible, so the question is if they should put something in temporarily or can they move forward with what they planned.

Recreation and School Relations: No report.

Sherod Playground: No report.

Vermilion Community Pool Subcommittee:

M. Weisenberger reported they held a lifeguard appreciation night, and he thanked the mayor for attending, and the managers did a nice job and prepared a nice meal for them and they played games and presented awards to each of them. The grant they received for training their guards for this year had some money left over, so they were able to recertify nine guards for next year. Once school starts the pool hours will be from noon to 6 p.m. on the two weekends and 3 – 6 p.m. on the weekdays to finish through Labor Day. She will adjust the staffing to the size of the crowd. If it is not well attended, then they will close. The vending machines took in another \$950.00. There is one special event scheduled in August. At the October meeting, they should be able to present some solid numbers on the pool.

Rotary Pool Fundraiser:

T. Swinehart reported that she has not received firm numbers from Rotary as they are putting in a new accounting system. The Rotary did not want to release hard numbers at this time, but they intend to donate \$3,000, which is in addition to what they made on the Pancake Breakfast and the Putt for the Pool. There were other checks they were following up on as the Booster Club donated \$3,000 to the pool and they were checking with the other service organizations who said they were going to help. She said the Rotary is a hard-working group of people and they do a lot and give a lot of time. K. Repola said the Putt for the Pool was a great event and the board thanked them for their backing of community events and community assets. T. Swinehart said it is an incredible positive as they have super volunteers and service groups.

West Pier Project: No report.

Public Art Subcommittee:

L. Elden reported their next meeting is in September.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Sand Volleyball Court & Pickle Ball Court – M. Weisenberger said they have two sources for sand they can look at to determine which one they may want. The location they looked at for sand volleyball is Sherod Park where the old playground was. T. Swinehart asked if the intent is to get this going in the spring. M. Weisenberger said he does not have a target date, but once they determine the source they want to use for the sand, then they will get numbers. They will need approximately 186 tons of sand. T. Swinehart asked if they would refurbish the sand each year. M. Weisenberger said every other year they will add some sand. He will keep the board up to date on this matter.

K. Repola asked if they could put a pickle ball court at the unused tennis courts at Showse Park. M. Weisenberger said they can put two pickle ball courts at one tennis court. B. Warden said there is also a small basketball court at Showse at the southeast corner of the playground. M. Weisenberger said the surfaces would need to be redone. There are inexpensive fixes that do not last very long and then there are the more expensive ones that would last longer. T. Swinehart said she has heard that it is so windy in this park that it might not be the best location for pickle ball, so it would affect the ability to play. M. Weisenberger said the one advantage is that they already have the court. K. Repola said they could put up some windscreens. M. Weisenberger said it could be as simple as restriping. He said a court at West Breeze could be a location and so could the high school.

B. Warden said there was a brief meeting last Thursday at the Parks Department meeting room with Marc and several other members of the community. He said it was requested by the relatives of Diane Chesnut who are interested in contributing improvement to the parks that could be used as a dedication her mom, father, and uncle who were the founders of Friends of Harbortown. Their ideas along with Marc's suggestion would be that the southwest corner of Victory Park is stale and unused where the fountain is. They were thinking this would be the area of focus to eventually improve the fountain and add additional seating, and some other decorative things that would make this more of an attractive entrance to this part of town. He said this is in the preliminary stages, but he thought Deb and Denise were interested in contributing time and financial interest, as well as applying for grants and other things.

B. Malin noted that Marc took him on a tour of some of the parks and wanted to say what a hard worker Marc is.

M. Weisenberger said he met with Amy Hendricks as the third component of the playground project is to purchase and install the rubber surfacing and potentially if the engineering works out, the hillside slide will be part of the playground. The city is currently a member of Sourcewell, which is a cooperative purchasing program. They have already bid out the equipment on a national basis, so they do not have to necessarily bid this project out because it has already been done. The company that is doing the rest of the playground will be the ones to install the rubber surfacing and hillside playground because they are a part of Sourcewell. This offers a group discount, so they would save \$1,334.64. He said it would cost \$68,000 for the

rubber material and installation, and if they do the slide it is covered through a donation and this portion was just over \$25,000, so combined it would be \$92,878. The surface material would come out of the \$100,000 that they already committed, and \$25,00 for the slide would from a donation.

T. Swinehart MOVED; L. Elden seconded to approve utilizing the Sourcewell Purchasing Program for the expenditure of the rubber surface and installation in the amount of \$92,878. Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

ADJOURNMENT:

K. Repola adjourned the meeting upon no further discussion.

NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday – September 20, 2022 @ **6:00 pm** at the Vermilion Municipal Complex, 687 Decatur Street, Vermilion

Transcribed by ~ Gwen Fisher, Certified Municipal Clerk