

**LA PORTE PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
BOARD MINUTES
OCTOBER 19, 2022**

The meeting was called to order by President Mitch Feikes who also led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. Those also attending were Nicole Messacar, Joe Ault, Karen Ellison, Dennis Bealor, Jake Huelat, Mark Schreiber, Brett Binversie, Kyle Cashmere, Karyl Feikes and Roberta Mumaw.

Recognitions

None

Minutes

The minutes from the previous months meeting were unanimously approved on a motion by Denise Bealor, seconded by Karen Ellison.

Bills and Claims

Bills and claims in the amount of \$95,234.98 were unanimously approved on a motion by Joe Ault, seconded by Nicole Messacar.

Public Comments

None

Sub-Committee Reports

None

Old Business

None

New Business

Mark Schreiber requested permission from the Board for the Park Department to operate the ice rink downtown as we did earlier in the year. He stated that the discussion is to either rent or buy a rink. We are not wanting to use city monies for the purchase or rental, so we are looking at outside donors, we will be looking to watch staffing and paying for the operations portion of the rink. This is a good addition to the area. The dates would be late November through early October. The motion to operate the ice rink was made by Karen Ellison, seconded by Jake Huelat. Karen Ellison stated it was a great addition and seemed to be well attended. Mitch Feikes has had conversation with Pastor Meyer from Bethany Church who will be moving their rink indoors this year at the fairgrounds. Mitch asked if it would be better to not duplicate services. Karen Ellison stated that being at the fairgrounds it is not convenient for all to get to, and the size is not equal in comparison. Nicole Messacar stated that it is two different rinks and two different types of environments. Mark Schreiber stated the hours would be adjusted since attendance from the previous season showed it was not well attended through the week. We would look at Friday, Saturday and Sundays and possible opening during the entire Christmas break. Mark Schreiber stated that during the first year if the rink is purchased the chiller would be included, but after that it would need to be rented. The motion to operate the ice rink was passed unanimously.

Mark Schreiber informed the Board that throughout the summer there was a religious organization that were simply sitting in the park with their pamphlets and information. They were not approaching or soliciting anyone, they were simply in the park with their

information. Mark was then contacted by a political group stating that if this group was allowed to be there they would also like to be in the park with their information. Mark then contacted the religious group and asked them to take a break from being there to give us time to investigate the situation. Currently there is no ordinance or park policy that addresses this certain situation. This may be something for the board to consider as far as creating a park policy or make a recommendation to the city council to establish an ordinance regarding solicitation in the park.

Mark Schreiber recommended to the Board that the zero-tolerance policy that was passed earlier in the year be changed to include all officials and all program personnel. Nicole Messacar made the motion to include all park personnel and basketball officials in the zero-tolerance policy, seconded by Jake Huelat. The motion passed unanimously.

Mark Schreiber informed the board that through conversations with the Clerk-treasurers office it has been determined that Park Board approval for budget transfers was not necessary. Most transfers again are due to fuel costs and are as follows:

PARK AND RECREATION

From #111 (salaries) to #221 (operating supplies) - \$1500
 From #111 (salaries) to #351 (utilities) - \$2500

CIVIC AUDITORIUM

From #315 (professional services) to #321 (communications) - \$1200
 From #111 (salaries) to #321 (communications) - \$2100
 From #111 (salaries) to #211 (office supplies) - \$500
 From #111 (salaries) to #221 (operating supplies) - \$500

Beechwood Golf Course

From #351 (utilities) to #321 (communications) - \$500
 From #361 (repairs & maintenance) to #221 (operating supplies) - \$5500
 From #231 (repairs/maintenance supplies) to #221 (operating supplies) - \$2200
 From #331 (printing & advertising) to #221 (operating supplies) - \$500

In addition to budget transfers, there were also additional appropriations done in the amount of \$10,000 for park non-reverting and \$125,000 for civic non-reverting.

Mark Schreiber wanted to give Brett, Kyle and Roberta a great deal of credit during a very difficult year. With the cost of fuel and the increase in staffing wages it has made for a difficult budgeting year.

Kyle Cashmer requested permission from the board to attend his annual PGA meeting. The cost would be approximately \$500 for hotel and the conference fee. The motion to allow Kyle Cashmere to attend the PGA conference was unanimously approved on a motion by Nicole Messacar, seconded by Jake Huelat.

Mark Schreiber updated the board on the small fire that we had at the Senior Center that was caused by a furnace motor. There was a dinner being held at the center with about 100 people in attendance with everyone getting out safely. We are currently working with H & G to get the motor replaced.

The 5-year Master Plan is moving along well. The public sessions have been well attended and have had approximately 316 people take the online survey. This is line with the number

that tool the online survey for the last master plan. 76% feel the parks are in excellent condition maintenance wise, 3 of the 316 felt the parks were poorly maintained. The top amenities were walking trails, playgrounds, swimming beaches and nature preserves. Kesling Park is the most visited park, with Stone Lake Beach being number two. Of the recently renovated amenities the most satisfaction has been with the amphitheater, Fort La Play Porte and the stone lake trail. Items needed to be worked on was security lighting, natural areas, restrooms, and connecting trails. Mark would like to hold the planning session on November 2 at 4pm at the Park Office.

Board Member/Department Head Comments

Nicole Messacar reminded everyone that there will be a workshop on Saturday from 10-Noon at Kiwanis Teledyne to plant the 2 remaining floating wetlands.

Mark Schreiber informed the board the Northwest Indiana Planning Commission had the opportunity through an 80/20 grant for us to get a trail counter. The Park Foundation paid the 20 5 for us to receive this. The counter needs to be strategically placed to detect motion for a count of those using the trail.

Brett Binversie stated that The Purple Xperience was well attend with approximately 825 in attendance. The Civic profited roughly \$10,000 from this event.

Kyle Cashmer stated that golf course revenue is up \$20,000 from 2021. Lat year the course closed on November.7 and Kyle anticipates being open a bit later then that this year.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Nicole Messacar, seconded by Joe Ault.

Mitch Feikes, President

Roberta Mumaw, Secretary

Approved: 11-9-22