

VERMILION PARKS & RECREATION BOARD
Minutes of October 20, 2020 - 6:00pm | Zoom Meeting

Roll Call: T. Parker (Chairman), W. Warden, B. Scholtz, D. Brudney, L. Elden, K. Repola. Not Present: J. Keck

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

Guests: Mayor Forthofer

Terry Parker, Chairman called the October 20, 2020 meeting to order.

B. Warden MOVED; B. Scholtz seconded to approve the meeting minutes of September 15, 2020. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

CORRESPONDENCE:

T. Parker reported the board received a thank you from Maria Santoferraro of Daily Downward Dog Yoga along with a \$500 donation to the Parks Department for letting her use the parks this summer for Beach Yoga. She was glad she could offer the classes considering the pandemic.

T. Parker read correspondence from resident Homer Taft relative to possible dog park venues and casting a wider net as far as the community pool. He also read an email from Councilman Frank Loucka as follows: The Erie Metroparks has a dog park, a comparatively short ride from Vermilion, in Huron, Ohio. This seems a better deal to me than struggling to fund/locate/manage/maintain one in Vermilion. It is suggested that the city residents think of another way to honor Mr. Goddard. Council/Mayor could sponsor a resolution honoring this fine man, for sure. Interested groups could possibly fundraise for a memorial plaque to be placed in a city park. Other suggestions?

He also forwarded to the board an email from Tina Swinehart regarding Nokomis Park, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein as part of the minutes. He forwarded the letter to the service director and mayor regarding a fire pit and furniture that is currently in the yard to the north of the house that is on park property. He noted that Tina offered to remove it from park property, but he suggested that it shouldn't be a personal action on her part. It would be better handled by the city. T. Valerius agreed that T. Swinehart should not start removing things. He said they should first make sure the sale is final to stay in decent relations with Mr. Paradissis. If the property is sold, then he agrees the Parks Department should move forward with removing those items that are on city property. He said he didn't know where the pins are located but if you look at the auditor's site, it gives a pretty good estimate as to where the property lines are, and it shows the property lines are no more than two feet or so off the porch of the house at 401 Minnie Wawa. The homeowner claims those aren't correct, but until a survey is done they won't know for sure, but certainly the fire ring and other things are on city property, so he would recommend leaving it as is until they know the sale is final. B. Warden asked if it would be realistic to put a chain-link fence in there. T. Valerius said in his opinion he doesn't think the city wants that as they don't want to ruin anyone's view and it is public property, so he doesn't feel it is necessary. He said the city put signs up a couple years ago due to the erosion as they want people to stay 10' back, but now it has eroded back to about 5' of those signs. However, he didn't think they

would want to put a fence up for aesthetic reasons. T. Valerius said he does not know what Mr. Paradissis told the potential buyer with regards to what is theirs and what is not.

OPEN TO THE AUDIENCE:

Homer Taft of 3972 Edgewater Drive said he would hope the board would look carefully at all the options and maintenance for the Dog Park and he thinks they need to cast a far wider net on the pool, and they need to see if something is possible and ambitious from what they currently provide, and in a different location.

T. Parker said he got an email from the finance director regarding the funds that are being moved over to the city from the residual funds of the lighthouse repair funds. He said she received a check for \$7,518. Reenie Rak of the Lighthouse Committee said their committee got together at the end of September and they made the decision to retire the committee at this point, and the decision was based on the fact that everything they had planned on doing from the beginning has been completed, and they are a project based committee. She said if the Parks Board needs anything from them concerning the lighthouse, they can reconvene to do fundraising to keep the lighthouse the way it is today, which she thought looked darn good. She said that Tim Costello has agreed to remain as the volunteer Lighthouse Keeper. She said they deposited \$7,500 into a restricted account and with money already donated by the Vermilion Foundation, there is almost \$20,000 in there. They feel confident in the future if they need anything to keep the lighthouse up, they have funds for a good period. She thanked the Parks Board for all their help. She said M. Weisenberger has been very supportive and the City of Vermilion has been supportive, and they have never had roadblocks in six years, so she thanked everyone for everything.

Betsy Wakefield said they also appreciated the opportunity to work with Main Street Vermilion as they were not able to open their own 501-3 C, so they graciously allowed them to go under their umbrella. She said she approached M. Weisenberger to see if they could form a subcommittee for the lighthouse under the Parks Board if needed. The lighthouse had a special meaning to her and Lynda Wakefield as this was their father-in-law's last big project before he passed. She said Reenie Rak was the driving force behind the committee and she is in love with the lighthouse. She said Elaine Carlin is an avid sailor and is enamored with the lighthouse too, so they thought they could co-exist to support the parks board. T. Parker asked the board how they felt about allowing them to be a subcommittee of the Parks Board in the event they need to call on someone. B. Warden felt it was a good idea and the remainder of the board agreed. G. Fisher said she would put the 'Lighthouse Subcommittee' on the agenda only as needed. T. Parker thanked them both for all their work.

OPEN TO THE AUDIENCE:

Marilou Suszko said that she and Sandy Coe of the Vermilion Chamber of Commerce have both followed up on alternate locations that have been suggested. She sent a letter to Troy Schaffer who is the owner of the property to the west of West Breeze Park asking him if he was interested in donating any of his land for this purpose. She wrote in the letter that if she did not hear back from him then she would assume his answer was no. She said she has not heard from him, so she assumes the answer is no. She followed up with Ken Cassell about any potential property he might have or suggestions, and his property is tied up in development. She said they talked about the property behind VIS and South Street School, but she understands this property is off the table because the school board is looking to sell this property. Sandy Coe said she looked at the property that was suggested at the Lions Club and it was off the beaten track for people to come to. M. Suszko said as they move through this they are exploring all of their options at this point, but if it's something they need to fundraise for, the hope is that after it is fully developed, that it goes back to the Parks Board with

some funds for maintenance for three to five years. She said none of the properties they are talking about are park properties. Sandy Coe said T. Parker had talked to the School Superintendent about property. T. Parker said the Advisory Committee has not had a chance to explore, but it became apparent that City Council needed more information about the fund they were trying to establish, so the city could receive donations. At some point, they need to clarify to City Council that this is a depository account, and it is not part of the city budget. It is exactly what they have done with the lighthouse. They have transferred their donated money over and it is being held on their behalf, but it is not something they will ask the city to maintain. M. Suszko said it did go through two readings, but it was tabled on the third reading, so more information needs to be provided to Council before they move ahead. B. Holmes said they definitely need to figure out where they are going, what is the master plan, how does a dog park fit in the master plan, where is the location, and is this something the city and parks board need to focus on. He said they are not saying no as they would love to have something in honor of Dick Goddard because he was the Master of Ceremonies for the Woollybear. He said some feel that it would be better honored by having a plaque or statue of Mr. Goddard with a Woollybear on a corner downtown. They are concerned that they are going to have all these donations and the donations will run out and the city and parks will be stuck with the overall long-term maintenance of the dog park. He did not know if the parks supervisor has thought about this or has considered long-term on how this will affect the city. As a city they should honor Dick Goddard, but some feel that maybe a dog park is not the right thing due to the current situations they have in some of the parks. They just talked about Nokomis and the erosion issues they are having at their lakefront parks, so they need to focus on those before they add more to the parks board plate. He has people approach him in the city stating these concerns as well, so he would hope the parks board would work to come up with a solution that is financially beneficial and honors Dick Goddard as well.

T. Parker said he met with the Advisory Committee a couple times and they are essentially asking this would be a revenue neutral situation for the city. He said they do not have a definite answer on where the park would go, so it is open-ended.

Mayor Forthofer said at the initial council meeting, he thought council would feel better if they had some definition of this project before they make any commitments. He said there is too much left in the imagination, and they need to come back with better explanation. B. Holmes agreed they need definition and what this looks like in 10 years. They must look at financial longevity. He said they need to come back with plan on how they move forward as it will help them in deciding. T. Parker said this item will remain on the agenda as discussion continues.

RECREATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Chad Kuhns reported football is continuing forward with no COVID-19 issues. He is in the process of talking with the schools to see how basketball is going to work with restrictions, and they will go from there.

SERVICE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

T. Valerius said the city received an estimate from Abraham Miller Contracting for the Showse Park Revetment Project. He said the initial estimate was \$29,730. They met with Justin Miller to discuss other items that should be done during this project, which included re-grading the western portion of the land, so it doesn't form a cliff, which was another \$5,930. They discussed creating a better pathway out to the pier by using blocks, which is an additional \$13,000. The total work that needs to be done would cost \$49,440.

T. Parker said they still have encumbered from March an amount of \$21,000 for the initial project, and the board talked in July about a \$36,000 project, so they would need to encumber from the capital levy an additional \$28,440 in order to move forward. The contractor has been selected. M. Weisenberger said they did not use all the money encumbered for the gazebo. They had \$28,000 budgeted for the roof and painting and they still have just under \$12,000 and they had \$80,000 for miscellaneous projects, so they could probably use that towards this project. He feels they received a good price on the concrete work and he will take the blocks that are sitting on the hill and incorporate those between the current shoreline and the concrete work that was done a couple years ago, and then put a cement cap on top of that. The grading work will prevent this from happening again. Because of the slope of the cliff he will cut it back, so they will not have another gap created. He will straighten up the toe stones and will incorporate some engineered stone 15' up the hill. He said the contractor is planning on being at Showse in November to start this work. The neighbors asked if they could get a heads up when the work begins because even though they are using two different contractors they would like to do the work at the same time. B. Warden agreed with Marc and said the price seems reasonable and the sooner they can start the project the better.

H. Taft said one part that concerns him is cutting back of the eastern portion. He does not think it is wise for them to retreat. He feels there is better solutions available long-term because once you retreat you cannot undo it. He does not think it is creating a safety hazard but denying them of usable property.

T. Parker said they are restoring and repairing what they put in at Showse about seven years ago, so they do not lose the shoreline due to erosion.

B. Warden MOVED; L. Elden seconded to approve the additional items needed at Showse in an amount not to exceed \$28,440 to proceed with the project. B. Scholtz asked what they were thinking about Homer's point about the additional \$5,000 – this is kind of what they did eight years ago when they did this project by reducing the angle at the cliff. Do they still want to move forward as they need to know from a pricing standpoint? B. Warden feels it is inevitable that they must cut this back a little. He asked if they talking about the west side next to Landoll's? T. Parker thought they were talking about the east side. T. Valerius confirmed it is the west side. B. Scholtz said they are only working on the west side. B. Warden said this is correct and it is all the way up to the pier and slightly past it. M. Weisenberger said there will be no grading east of the pier. T. Valerius said because they have to go higher up the hill for this revetment, he thinks this is what will create a steeper slope on the west side and a possible cliff, so this is why they are discussing having him grade this down to not create a cliff there. M. Weisenberger said they will talk to J. Miller to keep it as minimal as possible. T. Parker said it is a not to exceed number so if the contractor does less then it will cost less. Vote 6 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

Community Use Group Permits:

Main Street Vermilion – Triathlon – Sherod Park – August 13-15, 2021 (Stacey Scholtz – Requestor)

T. Parker noted that attached to their permit was an acknowledgement and request to their COVID Safety Plan, along with their proof of insurance. He said they have done this event numerous times and they were not able to do this year, so they are hoping by next August they can do it depending on the status of COVID and the Health Department.

K. Repola MOVED, B. Warden seconded to approve the Community Use Group Permit for the above-stated. Vote 6 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

PARK'S SUPERVISOR REPORT:

M. Weisenberger said in October they assisted Vermilion in Bloom with fall flower and hanging basket removal. He said it was another great summer and they did a great job. He said they will be working with Tim and Dana as they will be starting to string lights for Christmas in November and decorations later in November. They plan to have everything in place prior to Thanksgiving. Also, they will do plantings of 24 trees and they will be working with the Tree Commission on this. He noted the Erie Metroparks is out at Sherod as they were willing to bring their mini excavator with a mowing boom, and are helping them remove the vines and ivy that have overtaken the creek in the middle of the park. It will open the creek and will provide additional site line to the park. They will be there the rest of the week and a day or two next. He stated his appreciation for their help.

He said in working with Amy Hendricks and Tony Valerius they were able to utilize some of the CARES ACT funding. He said \$2,130 went to reimbursement of the cleaning and sanitizing at the Comfort Station. They were able to use another \$1,100 to purchase automatic flush and touchless faucets for the Comfort Station and paper towel dispensers, so there will be as little contact as possible.

He said on Friday, Quality Sprinkling Systems who also does landscaping and turf treatment applications will start to incorporate a new application of the parks and they will do the fall application on Friday after they mow. After a year or two they will not have dandelions, broadleaf, or clover, so it should clean up the quality of the turf in the parks.

Mayor Forthofer said the Lorain County Commissioners have been pressing hard for the lakefront communities – Avon Lake, Sheffield Lake, Lorain, and Vermilion to join a Special Investment Development area which pertains to erosion. It is where different municipalities and private individuals can be assessed in a collective for large projects on lakefront erosion. He said there are a lot of details to be followed through on, but they want to know if Vermilion is willing to participate. He understands it has been a blight on the parks system, so as a community he is voting yes, and he is trying to get some residents to be on board. He has circulated this information to Chairman Parker, M. Weisenberger, B. Warden, Frank Loucka, Barb Brady, and Emily Skahen who are the council members who have lakefront wards. He will see if they can get something organized. He said this has been done in Lake County and now they have got their sights on Lorain County. He said it is vague at this point, but it is very promising.

Budget/Finance Subcommittee Report:

B. Scholtz said the committee met but not much as transpired. They are putting together some good numbers for the budget (both operating levy and the capital levy) for 2021. They will report at the November meeting. T. Parker said they have a five-year capital expenditure plan, which needs to be slid forward so they are looking five-years out, which will be part of this process.

Community Relations/Publicity: No report.

Erosion: No additional report

Main Street Beach Revitalization Project:

B. Scholtz said they are still in a holding pattern. They are moving forward on the acquisition of the Stuchal house. He hopes to have more information to report on next month.

Sherod Playground:

L. Elden said they met on September 30 and the planner presented a Master Plan and they walked the park. She had to leave the meeting early so she was not sure where they left it with the playground. M. Weisenberger said they reviewed the concept plan and made a few changes. They also had in attendance representatives from Mid States Recreation who sell and design playground equipment. They have identified a couple areas of where they want to develop the playgrounds, but he needs to get with Liz to go over this material to give ideas back to Mid States, and then they will put together some conceptual drawings for the parks board. This would be a good tool to do fundraising for the playground. He said this company has unique lines of equipment with public art types of look, including nature designs they feel will fit in nice with the wooded area at Sherod. He said they also have some nice ideas for Showse park. As they move forward in 2021 and 2022, they have some capital money for some work, so they are trying to put together a plan for Showse and Sherod.

B. Scholtz said he was looking at the five-year action plan and he doesn't see that they have put money in for the playground and asked if they should revisit this to get it into the budget. M. Weisenberger said if they shuffle funds around it would be nice to have some dollars for 2021 to possibly start in phases. He said there was money for 2022 for Showse – next year is \$85,000 for Showse for the courts. He would like to get something to the board at the November meeting.

Vermilion Community Pool:

D. Brudney said they have been trying to gather as much data as possible from outside pool companies as they are trying to gather information as to what it would cost to repair the current pool at Valley View. He also has Patterson Pools looking at what they could do with the pool as far as adding to it and fixing it up, including splash pads, etc. They are also looking at different issues as to how they will open the pool next year if the residents truly want to continue with a pool. He said it is anywhere from minor repairs to replacing the pool. They are trying to consider locations of a pool and they met with Mr. Pempin of the Vermilion Local Schools to see what interest they had. The schools are interested in looking at what they can do to help with this situation. He said nothing is definite, but they are interested in working with the city and the parks in coming up with a solution for the pool.

He said they have the intern on board who is working on a survey they will send out to the residents to see what kind of reaction the board will get on the pool and within the parks system. He said the intern sent an initial draft and it has been updated a couple times. He sent a message with a link to the pool subcommittee and parks board asking for their comments on the draft survey. M. Weisenberger asked everyone to forward their comments/questions/suggestions on the survey through D. Brudney. D. Brudney thought the school could help in participating by getting the survey out to the public. B. Scholtz asked if there was a goal for when then survey would go to the public. M. Weisenberger said they have not given the intern a date, but she feels she can have it ready in November depending on the changes she receives. They will need to decide on the different avenues to get the survey sent out. D. Brudney said they want to give as much as information to the community they can on all alternatives and ideas of costs to renovate the pool. He said they need to know what the community wants to do in terms of renovating the pool, location, and the parks overall. M. Weisenberger said they usually will give the residents two or three weeks to respond. K. Repola questioned if they should ask about the Dog Park in the survey. B. Warden said there were a couple questions in the

survey about this. T. Parker said they don't want people to be overwhelmed with the survey. Mayor Forthofer said he has been an advocate of surveys and keeping the attention on one thing, and he believes this is mainly a pool survey and suggested they should keep it that way.

B. Holmes said that some people may not have the ability to get the survey online, so he suggested they set up a booth, so it gives people the opportunity to take the survey.

Financial Reports:

T. Parker said they don't have the September month-end reports, but there is just under \$210,000 in the capital levy and \$300,000 in the operating levy, but obviously they are not done operating for the year, and they do have projects they are trying to shuffle in, but they are well within their means at this point.

ADJOURNMENT:

B. Scholtz MOVED, L. Elden seconded to adjourn the meeting. Vote 6 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday – November 17, 2020 @ 6:00 pm
at a location to be determined

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

Gwen Fisher

From: Tina Swinehart <tswine@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2020 10:32 AM
To: Gwen Fisher
Subject: Fw: Nokomis Park
Attachments: 61877869795_09EED956-B4FD-47F0-B634-2AA453BF8A78.JPG

Good morning Gwen,

Below is a letter I sent this morning to Terry Parker, Tony Valerius, and Marc Weisenberg. After sending it I realized that tonight is the Parks Board meeting. Could I get a link to join the meeting? It isn't necessary for me to address the board unless they wanted to ask me questions. I think the email says all I would say.

Thanks,
Tina Swinehart

Good morning,

I'm writing to bring attention to a few items of concern in Nokomis Park. We have enjoyed a beautiful summer despite Covid-19. The park was a great respite for many people who came to enjoy the beach (when we had some sand) and the access to the water for swimming, kayaking, and paddle boarding. Many visit daily to sit in their cars or the chairs in the park to enjoy the view. Some walk along the shoreline to get a little exercise or walk their dogs. I have enjoyed all of this and more because my home is adjacent to the park. I've also enjoyed gardening along the fence, and have received positive feedback on my work from neighbors and visitors. Nokomis Park is a little gem much loved by many.

There are two concerns I would like to bring to your attention. The first is the continued and devastating erosion along the shoreline. We lost a tree along the shore at the street end of Minnie Wawa St. this spring due to erosion. Another near the steps was rotten and blew over in a storm. Most of the native shrubs and plants that were growing along the shore have sloughed off and been lost to the lake. There are two storm water outfalls in the park that have lost the supporting soil base and are hanging over the water. I know you are aware of these erosion concerns as well as those in all of the parks in our city. I would like to offer my help to do whatever I can to assist to help protect what is left of Nokomis Park. I fear if we do nothing we may lose the ability to access the park by vehicle in the future.

The other concern is the encroachment on park property in front of the house at 401 Minnie Wawa St. which is currently being sold by Markos Paradissis. It was brought to his attention at a previous Parks Board meeting that the fire pit and furniture that is currently in the yard to the north of the house are on park property. Markos refuted that claim and continued to rent out the house giving renters use of the park as if it was his property. The house has sold and I would like to help reclaim the park area by removing the large fire pit that is defined by rocks, bricks, and stones. The wrought iron table and chairs and plastic lawn chairs should be placed on the property west of the house that is not in the park giving renters their own private area and allowing residents and visitors use of the park. Most likely there has been a survey which would define the property lines as part of the sale. I think this is

the best time to have a clarification of the property lines. I plan to continue to volunteer to mow and take care of the park area that is west of Minnie Wawa along the lake and adjacent to the Linwood fence. I would like to volunteer to remove the fire pit and trim the hedges that are overgrown on park property. Perhaps the city should be responsible for mowing east of Minnie Wawa along the lakeshore in the future rather than relying on homeowners to take care of it.

Thank you for the work you do to keep our town a special place to live. I appreciate your dedication and the time you spend maintaining our parks. They are a valuable and important part of our community.

Sincerely,
Tina Swinehart

4867 Shoreline Way
440-231-5558