

VERMILION PARKS & RECREATION BOARD
Minutes of October 19, 2021 - 6:00pm

Roll Call: Terry Parker (Chairman), William Warden, Brad Scholtz, Liz Elden, Kate Repola. Absent: Dennis Brudney, Jeff Keck

Also, Present: Marc Weisenberger, Parks Operation Manager; Chad Kuhns, Recreation Director

Terry Parker called the meeting of October 19, 2021, to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

L. Elden MOVED: B. Warden seconded to approve the meeting minutes of September 21, 2021. Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

CORRESPONDENCE:

T. Parker referenced a letter he wrote on October 12, 2021 to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry on behalf of the boards support of the application for the Urban Canopy Grant.

Parks Supervisor Report:

Marc Weisenberger explained that some of the trees and landscaping in front of the gazebo at Victory Park have been there since the beginning and has obstructed the entertainment view, so they met with Greg Super to see about re-landscaping so it would open the view for performances, and to replace the overgrown landscape with something that has lower maintenance. He said if they decide to remove the blue spruces they would like to use them in a couple spots around town for Christmas. They can be removed inhouse. They would remove the weeping cherry trees and as opposed to putting in taller landscaping around the gazebo, they would put more shade trees around the perimeter of the park. They would eliminate some of the landscaping on the backside with grass and would use river rock around the perimeter to catch the water that runs off the roof. They would power wash the brick around the base of the gazebo. They would landscape some islands in front of the gazebo. He asked for board input as far as moving forward with this project.

B. Warden said the Riddle Funeral Home used one of the pine trees for a memory tree. M. Weisenberger said they put a tree on the inside of the gazebo each year. B. Warden said it was one of the live trees and suggested that he check with Riddle on this.

T. Parker asked when this project would take place. M. Weisenberger replied probably in November. T. Parker asked if they had a ballpark figure and M. Weisenberger said not yet as they may not be doing planting in the fall, but the removal may be the first step. Mayor

Forthofer thought it was a good idea and he does a lot of weddings in the gazebo, and it does fill like a cave – almost enclosed. At the same time, is there any efficiency to be had by addressing the southwest corner of Victory Park where the fountain is. M. Weisenberger said there is a bigger plan they are reviewing. Mayor Forthofer thought repurposing the blue spruce was a great plan and asked if they intended doing it as a live tree or a cut tree. M. Weisenberger said a cut tree. He asked if the board was okay with him moving forward. B. Warden said he would like him to check with Riddle Funeral Home first because they not only use the tree for people who have passed, but they have a ceremony in the gazebo also.

M. Weisenberger addressed the pool and mentioned they received some quotes for the pool house roof replacement. They have a good handle on the pool itself as far as water loss and controlling chemicals. They would also like to get a garage door on the bathhouse. He will have numbers for the board at the November meeting.

M. Weisenberger said he has been working with the Tree Commission and they will be doing some tree removals of dead and dangerous trees this fall. He spoke with Tony and asked him to add three trees to the list that they would cover out of park operations. One would be a dead tree at Exchange just east of the Comfort Station. There is plenty of growth around it that it will fill in quickly. East Exchange has a tree in the same condition that they would like to remove. These are trees that were recommended by the Tree Commission. Another tree at Village Green has a limb that is in pretty bad shape, which needs to be removed for safety concerns. They have budgeted money for fall tree replacement and the trees will be delivered Monday and planted this coming week. Two trees at Village Green and three at Sherod. They would like to remove four of five stumps – one at the pool and a couple at various locations.

M. Weisenberger addressed the grants and said they are moving forward with two of the grants with one being a pre-application. The full application is due December 13 if they accept their project. They are working on a third grant that is due November 15, which is a land and water conservation grant. The city has been awarded two of them in the past for some of the property that was acquired at the Main Street Beach area, so this counts against you in the scoring process if you received a grant previously, so they want to make sure the rest of the application is thorough, so they don't lose points. The funding would be for the playground at Sherod park.

He met today with Debbie of Grace United Methodist Church, and they are very interested in helping with the playground and they have a grant program through their charitable trust, and they want to help with this project. Between this contribution and the grant, they could look at a really nice upgrade in combination with park capital funds. They would like to incorporate some earth tone colors to make it visible from Route 6 – kids like the bright colors and sensory wise it is good. They would like to get benches and different types of seating – possible sitting logs with sandstone, picnic tables built into the concrete pads, so parents can sit close to the playground as they feel this interaction is very important. Also, they would like shade structures similar to the skate park. It is very important to have a toddler area for the crawlers and features for the older toddlers. They want kids to move from one play apparatus to another as part of the design, along with a combination of surface materials and

accessibility. They may use the traditional mulch or rubber type material, along with concrete walks.

In closing, he mentioned the museum grass is starting to turn green.

B. Warden said some of the residents in his area ask him from time to time how long the blocks will be sitting next to the parking lot. M. Weisenberger said hopefully not too much longer. Once the new mini excavator the city is purchasing arrives, there is a trailer that will allow them to move them, and they have a repurpose for them at the Service Center. The guys at the Service Center have done a great job of reorganizing and they used the recycling grant to purchase a screen machine where they can take the screenings from when they mill a road and run it through there to take the clumps out. They will also be able to run soil through there as well, so they can make their own topsoil as opposed to buying it.

B. Warden asked the status of moving the Parks Department into the old Fire Station. M. Weisenberger said they started moving today and as the weather gets colder they will move more things in there. Mayor Forthofer said because of the bridge closure the Fire Department has asked to reposition one of their engines into the old station temporarily, and because the ambulance station is operating out of Station 2 in VOL, they keep one of their engines there. M. Weisenberger said the IT department will be meeting with him at the old fire station to move his computer over.

Recreation Director's Report:

Chad Kuhns said they will start basketball for the second, third, and fourth grade, and then fifth, sixth, and seventh grade will start the first week of January. Registration will be out next week. They just finished up the football season and the fifth and sixth grade team won their first flag game, so they are playing again this week, so hopefully they will keep going.

Service Director's Report:

On behalf of the Service Director, Mayor Forthofer reported that at last month's Parks Board meeting the board approved the adjustment to the Poulos and Schmid contract for the amount of \$16,000 for a landscape architect (The Edge Group), and because this now affects the Poulos and Schmid's operations and they have to add some of their own services, the total is now \$20,500, which means the board would be requested to approve an additional \$4,500 for the project. T. Parker asked which fund they should take the money from. B. Scholtz was not sure they needed to approve an additional amount because they had already earmarked \$500,000 for this project and they approved last month an additional \$16,000 for the landscape architect, so he feels they made a substantial commitment to the project. The group that is working with the overall budget will have to take the extra \$4,500 from somewhere else. T. Parker asked if they would need to approve this amount. B. Scholtz said when the invoice comes it would then come to them for approval to distribute, same as if Western Reserve needs to pay anything they come to the Parks Board to authorize Tony to make payment. Anything that comes out of the \$500,000 will come to the Parks Board for

approval. Mayor Forthofer said they could approve it this evening in advance of the invoice. T. Parker said they could, and they can take it up under new business.

Budget/Finance Subcommittee Report:

L. Elden said she had nothing new to report this month. T. Parker said the board received reports as of the end of August and the capital levy had an unencumbered balance of \$196,218.80, the recreation fund had \$12,706.14, and the operating levy had \$390,566.02. The good news is they are solvent.

Community Relations/Publicity: No report.

Erosion: No report.

Main Street Beach Revitalization Project:

B. Scholtz said Kate Repola has joined him on this committee and they are close on their restroom design, but they are not comfortable that they will meet their budget as designed, so he isn't sure they want to bring it to the board and bring it public until such time they are comfortable that it can be built as designed. He said the subcommittee is really happy with the design but it's just a matter of if they can meet the budget. They had several meetings with the Edge Group and Poulos and Schmid and they do have good working drafts of the park as a whole, so hopefully they should have something next month they can discuss in terms of a layout.

K. Repola added that with the budget the variable construction costs and materials is the big factor and question mark that they are trying to narrow down as close as they can. B. Scholtz said even if they did the project now it could potentially be a much different number than building in six months, which is the architect's biggest concern. B. Warden asked if this is in a positive or negative way. B. Scholtz said negative, but things could come back down, but not obviously everything is going up if you can even get it. B. Warden asked what the status was of the old pump house. B. Scholtz said they are anticipating putting a new face on this because where the restroom is anticipated to go they would basically be looking in that general direction, so they are hoping to at least put a new face on that, so it fits in with the rest of the park. B. Warden said once upon a time the restroom was on the beach and that was part of it. B. Scholtz said it was shut down quickly to not put a restroom on the water source, so they are bringing it into the overall plan as best they can.

T. Parker said he will be requesting an executive session to discuss property acquisition and there will no action taken after.

Recreation and School Relations: No report.

Sherod Playground:

L. Elden said they have a pack forward contingent upon three pieces – the donation, the grants Marc is applying for, and then funds they put towards the project. M. Weisenberger said they will look in the near future of what they can afford to put towards this project. His initial ballpark budget would be determined on materials and equipment. L. Elden said they want to make this project a statement – a high impact destination. M. Weisenberger said to do this they are probably looking at somewhere between \$300,000 and \$500,000 depending on what scale they would go to and what the prices come back at. Hopefully, a large part of this would be the grant they are looking at, as he will apply for \$200,000, which will be very competitive, especially since the city has received money out of this grant in recent years. However, the project can be done in phases. Out of a combination of the parks two budgets, they could possibly look at around \$100,000 when they plan ahead. T. Parker said some of the money they borrowed this year, they took \$320,000 of that into the Main Street project, which left about \$200,000 roughly that they were going to plow into for Showse and Sherod, so they may be able to pull some of the money from that, since they already borrowed the money and will be paying it back over 15 years. L. Elden said this was their thought as well during their discussions. M. Weisenberger thought if they could note this in the grant application it would help immensely. He said in talking with the grant administrator today, he said the more documentation they have specifically earmarking to this project would help immensely. This money will also include sidewalks and improving the accessibility from the parking lot. T. Parker said he would be comfortable taking action to declare their intent today, so that it is in the minutes, so it can be included in the grant application, since they already have this money.

Public Art Subcommittee:

L. Elden said the meeting got pushed out to a later date. Debbie Zanglin had no update because until they go further with the park plan she thinks they are on hold. They made it clear that they feel public art is an important component along with all of the other elements, so until they can look at all of these things in total they are on hold.

Pool Subcommittee Report:

M. Weisenberger said Dennis Brudney asked him to bring up a couple of items as they are working on a year-end report for the pool in regard to the pool expenses and income. They are also working on attendance figures. A year ago, they discussed treating less water by making repairs to the pool and adding the Chemtrol. He said natural gas is used to heat the water and in 2019 it was over \$5,600 and as of right now they are at \$1,784, so this number went down significantly as did chlorine which was their biggest savings. They went from \$13,443 in 2019 to \$3,323 in 2021, so they saved by adding the Chemtrol, which they paid \$3,000 for, so it more than paid for itself just this year. Another area that was high compared to other years was contracted services. In 2019, it was only \$535.00 and this past year they were at \$6,278.00, but this included some of the tests they had done at the beginning of the year to figure out where the leak was. These are expenses they hopefully will not have again. He said they had to make increases in staff for the lifeguard wages and managers, so the \$10,000 or so they saved, they spent on labor. Overall, if you include the \$24,000 in donations, they are still

in a negative around \$3,000. Minus the donations, they are more like \$27,000. In looking at facilities like this they call cost recovery – how much of your cost can you recover, and they are at about 50 percent. They are roughly spending \$55,000 and they brought in \$27,000, so they are a little over half. Compared to 2019 they are about 25 percent in cost recovery. He said there is \$50,000 in expenses and \$13,000 in income.

K. Repola said Dennis had mentioned to her that there were some funds that he could not find itemized regarding what the lifeguards paid for their training – were these recovered and put in the budget? M. Weisenberger said they are either in parks or recreation – he is not sure they are in the pool yet. It was noted this amount was \$2,200. He said they got \$3,006 in money that is encumbered, which he believes they do not have to spend.

One additional pool related item, is the fact they narrowed it down to O.P. Aquatics who they were working with on the Chemtrol and the new vacuum system. They came in with the lowest quote of the three received for the steps for the pool in the amount of \$3,485.25, which includes \$2,850.00 for the steps, \$175.00 for the side skirt, \$125.25 for 4cr-set closed risers, and \$335.00 for delivery and freight. He showed the board a visual of the steps, which will have three or four steps because it will be in the shallow water. He said the senior swimmers will appreciate the new steps. K. Repola said there were reviews from residential and colleges, so she feels it is a well-known product. Mayor Forthofer said a patron of the pool offered to help pay for the stairs and asked if they had that name. K. Repola said she is a personal friend of hers and she spoke to her today, and she still unfortunately has lasting effects from her fall. However, she took the information and is speaking with her husband and will get back to them. However, she reiterated her full support that they definitely need steps. She also mentioned that when other groups come in like Lucy Idol, she noticed there is a need for others and not just senior citizens.

Mayor Forthofer said before the season, the rates were adjusted down, yet he believes the revenue was good, so is there a plan to have an analysis of the revenue per individual. It was suggested there were more people attending the pool. He would like to see what the revenue is per individual because that would inform them as to where they could get more money if rate increases were needed.

L. Elden asked what their plans are for next year because she doesn't want them to have to do another fundraiser within two weeks. K. Repola said this is something they need to speak about because they need to decide how long they're going to have to rely on donations or an asset that serves the city. They have been successful with donations in the past and she isn't sure necessarily they are a fundraising board. If they could get some of the numbers of the people attending and how much they spent, then the pool committee could come up with suggestions or thoughts of ways the city could contribute more to the budget of the pool, and not rely on fundraising year after year.

M. Weisenberger thought a lot of the credit needs to go to the managers on the pool attendance because they took solid ownership and did a great job running a tight ship. He said there are some things they can improve upon through possibly lowering the labor budget. He said they need to be recognized for a great job, including Garth Grob who was at

the pool every day keeping a close eye on the heater and not running it when it did not need to be on.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

T. Parker addressed the amendment of Ordinance 2021-58, which moves M. Weisenberger from part-time status to full-time status. The amendment includes establishing him as an exempt salaried employee to address overtime issues. The second amendment is to replace the hourly rate in Section 2 with a salary which is based on the current hourly rate times 43 hours per week. There are times when you work over and if this became a regular thing, there could be issues with overtime.

B. Warden MOVED; L. Elden seconded to recommend to Council the amendment of Ordinance 2021-58. Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

L. Elden MOVED; K. Repola seconded to amend the motion the board approved last month to approve the additional amount not to exceed \$4,500 for the Edge Group through Poulos and Schmid out of the \$500,000 that was already earmarked. Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

B. Warden MOVED; B. Scholtz seconded to set aside money borrow from the Park Bond funds in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 toward the new playground project at Sherod Park. Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

B. Warden MOVED; L. Elden seconded to authorize the purchase of pool steps from O.P. Aquatics in an amount not to exceed \$3,500 from fund 218 (park operations). Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

L. Elden MOVED; B. Scholtz seconded to adjourn into executive session to discuss the acquisition of property. Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

At the conclusion of executive session, T. Parker reconvened the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

L. Elden MOVED; B. Warden seconded to adjourn the meeting. Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday – November 16, 2021 @ **6:00 pm**
at the Vermilion Municipal Complex, 687 Decatur Street, Vermilion, Ohio

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