

**VERMILION PARKS & RECREATION BOARD**  
Minutes of April 19, 2022 - 6:00pm

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

*Also, Present:* Marc Weisenberger, Parks Operation Manager; Tony Valerius, Service Director; Teresa Mayle, Council Representative. Mayor Forthofer - Guest

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Kate Repola, Chairwoman called the meeting of April 19, 2022 to order.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**B. Warden MOVED;** L. Elden seconded to approve the meeting minutes of March 15, 2022. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**Correspondence:** No Correspondence.

**COMMUNITY EVENT GROUP USE PERMITS:**

**Main Street Vermilion:**

*Light Up Vermilion – Friday, December 2, 2022 – 3:00p.m. – 10:00p.m. (Exchange, E. Exchange, Friendship)*

Representative was not in attendance, application tabled until next meeting.

**Grace United Methodist Church:**

*Worship by the water – Sundays on May 29 – September 4, 2022 – 8:30a.m. – 10:30a.m. (Northeast corner of Sherod Park)*

K. Repola asked Dianne, the representative for Grace United Methodist Church if there were any changes in the layout from last year. Dianne answered that it will be the same. She said last year there was a special parking area on the edge of the grass for people who chose to remain in their cars, and that will be marked with cones. K. Repola asked M. Weisenberger if there were any concerns with the park, M. Weisenberger stated no. Dianne said the only unknown would be the number in attendance due to COVID, it could vary. K. Repola stated they would like to make her aware that there could be some construction beginning in August with the new playground but it would be fenced off and there should not be any noise on a Sunday morning.

**L. Elden MOVED**; B. Warden seconded to approve the Worship by the Water as described above. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

**City Council Representative Report:**

T. Mayle reported that the Sherod Park plan was presented to City Council at the last meeting, and everyone seemed supportive and excited. Council will meet again May 2.

**Recreation Director:** No report.

**Service Director's Report:**

Tony Valerius reported that he spoke with the water plant superintendent on the possibility of putting an observation deck on top of the pump house. Although it is a good idea, the EPA would not agree. Inviting people onto a building that has a main focus in producing water for the City is not a good idea. Because it is a mini substation, there is a lot of electric powering the pumps and if the pumps need to be changed, they will need to go through the roof, therefore he did not think it would be feasible for that structure.

B. Warden stated he thinks it is something that could be pursued and maybe get a second opinion or explore some of the other possible solutions. If not the main structure, maybe an adjoining structure. He would hate to see the loss of the existing deck and then you are confronted with a rather ubiquitous, unattractive block in the middle of the beach which is basically not doing anything at all. Whether you put a deck on top, or you put a deck around it seems like it could be enhanced rather than just putting pictures of fish on the side. It is an unused asset, and he would not want to give it up without a fight or similar investigation.

**Parks Supervisor Report:**

Marc Weisenberger reported on Saturday April 23 from 9a.m. – 12:20p.m. they would be working with the Vermilion High School track team at Main Street Beach to clean the beach with about 60 or 70 students. He stated they also have been working with the tree commission on the urban tree canopy grant. The trees are scheduled to be delivered the first week of May, and they will be planting 65 trees in the spring. The playground project was presented to City Council for the Finance Committee to prepare legislation to enter into a contract with Snider Recreation which had the best proposal of the three bids. With that in mind, they will be looking at the first reading at the May 2 Council Meeting to enter into the agreement with Snider Recreation to purchase the equipment they need.

**Budget/Finance Subcommittee Report:** No report.

**Erosion:**

M. Weisenberger said at this point the only area they were taking a closer look at is the Main Street piece. Some information was sent to Marcy Kaptur's office regarding the issues they are having with the shoreline, and they have not heard anything back but it was a start in getting the word out to them. A plan is beginning to develop piece by piece but there is a long way to go, it takes a lot of money, a lot of time but it is definitely something that needs to be looked into.

B. Warden stated there was some discussion previously about the neighbors on the eastern end of Showse Park and asked if there had been any further pursuit and what the status is by the outfall. M. Weisenberger stated that the City Engineer is working on an estimate for them on what it is going to cost to address some of the issues that they are having in that area.

#### Main Street Beach Revitalization Project:

Brad Scholtz reported that the Edge Group would like to have everything narrowed down in the next couple of weeks so they can start to work on the bid documents. Starting at Huron where the parking lot begins to change they will add some low shrubbery to the south to give some privacy and indication to visitors that it is the beginning of private property. On the north side of the parking lot will be a sidewalk and on the northwest corner will be a retention, where the water coming down the parking lots will be gathered. There will be two handicap spaces on the west side and there will be a path from there to the beach that will be handicap accessible. There are at least two other additional handicap spaces by the restroom and two at the end of Main Street. As you begin to walk down the path, there will be a bench and a couple picnic tables on the south side. As the path goes towards the lake, it will jet off which is where the art piece will tentatively be. Just to the south of that will be where the chairs will be placed – just in front of the water retention gravel area. As you come down from the lighthouse, the intent is not to put any more hardscape there, maybe some small performance type things, but that can be added at a later date once they see how the park is used. In the area of the mobi-mat, there is an observation deck there, not as big as the existing one, probably about half of the size but at least another meeting area close to the parking area which will help address the issue of the disappearing deck. The other path at top of the new parking lot will not be handicap accessible, it will have two sets of stairs, there will be a small garden there and a sign that will give the history of the Wakefield Mansion. He stated that with the help of the parks board and the tree commission they will decide on the trees later.

Mayor Forthofer stated that the removal of the deck is absolutely necessary, it was addressed that there will be a couple observation areas in the design, and it could very well substitute for what the deck used to be. B. Scholtz replied yes, and in the newer design at the northwest end of main street there is a nice design that will be close to the parking lot and down close to the water.

T. Swinehart asked if there is a plan for irrigation in the areas where flower beds are. B. Scholtz replied yes, there is a plan for irrigation.

B. Malin said that after hearing concerns of the citizens, when they look at the design he would look at going towards the larger design and make sure there is some place for them to sit. Some people are not going to want to park up top, they are going to want to be down close to the water and we need to try to give that back to them. He appreciates the hard work that has been put forth in listening to people in regard to that.

B. Scholtz stated from the restroom going east there is a design of a small gathering area similar to Friendship Park. They are envisioning a table and three chairs in that area. The good news is that the innerworkings of making sure everything is tied together is being communicated well.

K. Repola thanked Brad for the tremendous undertaking this has been and is very excited that it is all coming together.

T. Valerius mentioned that the comfort station bids were open, and the contract is currently in review with the City's law director. There is one more fine detail to look at and it will be ready for signing and then the contract can move forward. He foresees it coming early May depending on the contractor's schedule. B. Malin asked if the board would be able to view the bids that were submitted. T. Valerius replied that he will send the bid sheet to the board.

T. Valerius stated that they asked Schmid Architects for a proposal for construction administration. He explained that construction administration is that the architecture firm would handle any of the contractor RFI's (request for information) and they would respond, they would review shop drawing submittals, on site observations, and they review all the pay applications, and they would do punch lists and walk throughs. They sent a proposal for \$3,705 which would include all of the listed items during the process of the construction phase of the comfort station. He asked for it to be passed this evening. K. Repola stated the \$3,705 should come out of the \$600,000 that the parks board has already allocated towards the project. T. Valerius said to be clear, this is beyond the scope of the architectural design of the building. L. Elden asked when they were approving the building they were getting up near \$425,000 or \$450,000 but the bid has come in slightly less. T. Valerius answered yes, they were well under that number with the bids. L. Elden stated she believed they could readily absorb the construction administration contract with the numbers they have been working towards, it is not another add on.

**L. Elden MOVED;** B. Malin seconded to approve the services for Schmid Architects with the understanding that it is out of the original funds for the project. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Recreation and School Relations: No report.

Sherod Playground: No additional report.

Rotary Pool Fundraiser:

T. Swinehart reported that Rotary has agreed to help with the fundraiser. They are going to involve other community organizations and their goal is to raise \$10,000. They are not going to do anything until after May. John Hill said that he will help recruit other organizations. They are trying to come up with something different for a fundraiser that would get people involved. K. Repola said that she believed it will be an annual event that the community is a part of.

West Pier Project:

B. Malin reported the Army has employed TTL associates to do some soil borings Thursday and Friday this week on land and next week from the water.

Vermilion Community Pool Subcommittee:

D. Brudney reported the pool is scheduled to open May 28 which will be a free public day based on getting the OPEC grant. When they did it last year they had about 150 people there that day, so they want to do that again. The last day of school is May 27 the sixth-grade teachers are going to walk the students to the pool so they can look at it. They will make sure there are flyers sent to the school prior to that for the students to take home that will have information on memberships and costs. Rotary swim is set for the first and second week in June and then there will be three other swim sessions scheduled after that. The steps that were approved have been delivered and this will allow better access to the pool not only for the young children at the swim sessions, but also for the older folks. The pool managers are currently working on a program for exercise in the pool for older adults. They polled students and asked how they would feel about having a coed basketball program and the students thought it was a fantastic idea, so the managers are looking into that possibility on Saturday mornings. Two of the managers are returning from last year: Jean Habermehl and Shelia Myracle. There is also a new manager this year who is graduating from Slippery Rock University in May and has already begun to work with lifeguard classes at LLC and she is also already ASHI certified. ASHI stands for American Safety and Health Institute, they are the ones that certify CPR, AED, First Aid, blood born pathogens, and basic life support. They will be going with a new lifeguard program this year called WASH, part of that program includes the ASHI certification. She will also be able to train any of city employees in those programs. The cost of training an employee will be \$13.76 so very inexpensive with her being the trainer. They went with Lifeguard Pro last year, but this year decided to go with another program. Lifeguard Classes LLC is the vendor of the program and they have been so good working with the city they decided to look into the new program they

began which is called WASH. WASH stands for World Academy of Safety and Health. They are an authorized training center for it. It has been approved in 17 states so far and Ohio just gave a preliminary approval last week with a final approval yesterday. Lifeguard classes at LLC gave Red Cross classes for 18 years, then did Lifeguard Pro and they took all of the difficult parts into consideration and changed to WASH, which is basically an identical curriculum, but they can do it less expensive. For example, what it was going to cost this year to train each guard was \$103 minimum with WASH it will cost \$28, so they will save \$78 per guard. The \$28 not only certifies them as a lifeguard, but also certifies them in the ASHI program.

D. Brudney stated that the new roof was approved for the building, and Mark is hoping to get ahold of the contractor to get it done by the end of the month or the first week in May. Garth Grobe has already begun putting chlorine in the pool and said the water looks pretty good already, nothing has been turned on yet, but it stayed a lot cleaner than when it was shut down for a year with COVID. They are going to pull the cover off at the end of April or beginning of May and get it ready for Pool Tech who will come in and start the system up and get everything running. If all goes well, it should be running and started to be heated the first week of May and at that point the lifeguards can begin their certifications in the water. The managers will get trained to be lifeguard instructors beginning this Thursday. Jean Habermehl is going to take each one of the lifeguards and work with them to make sure they get all of the online steps done correctly because it is a new program. There were over 50 candidates for lifeguards and Jean went to four high schools: Vermilion, Huron, Firelands and Amherst. After calls and interviews they have narrowed it down to about 20 good candidates for lifeguards. He said that last year it cost \$150 to train the guards, now they know it will only cost \$28 to get the certifications. He has been watching the industry standards on what they have been doing and with most other aquatics programs, if the city does not pay for the training, they will in some way as an incentive give that money back to the guards if they work a certain number of hours or if they complete all of the things and do a good job. Because it is only going to cost \$28 per person, what they would like to do is to reduce the fee from \$150 down to \$50 and then allow the guards to get it back at the end of the year if they complete everything and do good job. Mark was able to get the grant approved and they have already put the money forward to do the \$103 and now since they will get a break they thought it was a good idea to give the lifeguards an incentive to get that back. He wanted to run it by the board and see if they would go along with that. M. Weisenberger stated that they think that will be one less hurdle for kids as opposed to coming up with \$150 they will only have to come up with \$50 but there is still a little bit of a commitment to the training and time that will be invested in them. Between the grant and the lower rates, they should be able to more than cover the expenses. T. Swinehart asked if the grant will cover the trainer expense. M. Weisenberger replied yes, the trainers and the certifications.

D. Brudney said that Mark has talked with Firelands Vending about vending machines and they are going to try to come up with a solution to get the machines back at the pool. M. Weisenberger said they are willing to provide the machines and service, but over the years their experience has been if a vending machine is sitting in the wide open, it leads to vandalism. If they do want to utilize vending machines, they would have to open space inside the building – probably in the area they are using for office space right now and they can put the door down and lock it at close. We would enter into an agreement with them and 10% of whatever they would take in on a monthly basis would come back to the city. They handle all of the product, and the money so basically the city would receive a check on a monthly basis for the three months they are open.

Mayor Forthofer asked if the contract would be with the Finance Director of the City or if it would be with the Board. M. Weisenberger said it could be either. It will not amount to a whole lot of income, but it is more of a service rather than a revenue. Mayor Forthofer said the lifeguards made a case last year that it was an important thing, and he would much rather see that than a concession stand.

B. Warden asked if the \$50 remittance would be at the end of the season. D. Brudney replied yes. B. Warden asked if essentially then it would cost \$22 to train. D. Brudney said yes, but Mark already got the grant, so it won't cost the city anything this year, so they are ahead of the game. What they found last year is there were some candidates that had a problem coming up with the \$150, so this is a lot easier way to do it. It will be based off the performance at the end of the season.

K. Repola said her only request would be the expectations for the money to be given back at the end of the season are written down so that everyone knows what those expectations are to receive that money. B Malin agreed and said it should have metrics, not subjective. They don't want to have someone saying, "I don't think she liked me", it should be black and white metrics of either you get it or not so there is no favoritism.

Public Art Subcommittee: No report.

**OPEN TO THE AUDIENCE**: No participation.

**OLD and NEW BUSINESS**:

K. Repola stated with the Main Street Beach Project there has been a lot of discussion about what the name of the entire project should be – If it should just continue to be Main Street Beach but now with the addition of the park where the mansion was and the boardwalk and the

pathway leading to the metro park – if there should be a change in the name or addition to the name. She knows there has been some discussions within the committee and she has had some discussions with the Mayor. Her personal preference is to see the entire area remain Main Street Beach, she does not feel that there needs to be any additional wording. B. Warden stated it could be Main Street Park. Mayor Forthofer said that was his thought. K. Repola said there has been a lot of discussion and she did invite members of the subcommittee if they had strong feelings to come and speak. The working title of the area that Brad presented on tonight has been Harborview. She was not present when that title was decided, so she is not sure the history, or why they decided to call it that. Mayor Forthofer answered that it was part of the name of the land the Wakefield House was on. The city then developed Main Street Beach and Main Street Beach Park after that and when the property that the mansion stood on was purchased, there was not an intent to keep the name separate but it is certainly worth discussion. He is always for self-locating names that people can look at and say I know where that is – Main Street. K. Repola said she knows there was some concern about keeping history and the roots of that area intact, and her opinion is the sign dedicated to the Wakefield Mansion and the history serves that purpose. It is not something they need to decide on tonight unless everyone has a strong opinion, but she asked that everyone would think on it. T. Swinehart said that everyone is going to call it Main Street because it has been Main Street forever but, to call it Main Street park would make sense because there is more than just a beach. She knows she has stumbled around between what is Harborview, what is Main Street, what is the metro park, so she agrees with the Mayor. Mayor Forthofer said there is opportunity for future acquisitions also, and if you start naming them all something separate, it could be interesting. K. Repola asked if everyone was under the opinion it would be one name and whether or not it is Main Street Beach or Main Street Beach and Park. T. Swinehart said thinking of Lakeview, their sign says Lakeview park which includes a beach. K. Repola said she likes the word “beach” in the title because it is an attraction of Vermilion - that there is a beautiful beach down there and maybe if someone was just reading about the city and they see Main Street Park they might not realize there is the beach there and it is such an asset and tourist attraction. Mayor Forthofer said that it is unusual to have a downtown beach in a small community. B. Malin said he liked the thought of having the committee come forward to explain what their thoughts are because he does not know what their logic was behind it, and there are a lot of options out there. He believes there should be one name for the whole piece of property. K. Repola stated they all agreed the property should be one name. B. Malin said you could then get creative and emphasize the Main Street Beach and say “Harborview at Main Street Beach” and then there are different things you could do and the sign could articulate with names different sizes and people can really call it what they want to. K. Repola said the board could continue to think about it and ask around, see what the community members have to say about it, and she will put the invitation out once more to the subcommittee if they would like to come and speak to the board they can. It is not an



emergency they have time to figure it out, but it is also an important piece of Vermilion and they want to make sure they get it right.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

K. Repola adjourned the meeting upon no further discussion.

**NEXT MEETING:**

Tuesday – May 17, 2022 @ **6:00 pm** at the Vermilion Municipal Complex, 687 Decatur Street,  
Vermilion

*Transcribed by ~ Melanie Wood, Building Clerk*