

**Parks Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday June 1, 2016**

Board Present: Marshall Cammack, Emily Hirschman, Jon Peer, Roger Smith, Charles Thomas, Tim Earl, Jan Whitcomb, Susan Atkinson

Kendall Klingelsmith - Director of Parks, Recreation, and Senior Center Services

Rod Russell - Director of Public Services

Board Absent - Excused: Kathleen Hoyle

Board Absent: ~~Molly Ryan, Student Member~~

Guests: Heather [Benedict](#) - Lexington Green Neighborhood Watch Leader, [Jill White](#), [Raechel White](#).

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Whitcomb at 6:30 p.m. in Public Services Building.

Minutes from May's meeting were distributed and reviewed. Mr. ~~Peer~~ [Earl](#) motioned for ~~approval of~~ minutes, seconded by Mr. ~~Earl~~ [Peer](#). Motion approved.

New Business:

1) Department Updates:

Mr. Klingelsmith notes that Hike to the Park is coming up this weekend. Parking will be available at basic industries near Industrial Park and South Westledge Park. Approved ~~_____~~ ~~for~~ money from Gilmore grant. It is an operating grant. New Facebook page has been opened. Portage MI Department of Parks and Recreation. Eliason Nature Reserve construction is going well. The budget has passed, a new full time position has been funded. Alcohol permit information has been forwarded to Mr. Earl. Bicentennial trail rerouting is still in process, waiting on DEQ permit.

Public Services Department Report: Mr. Russell notes potential new small park on Martin Luther King Dr. Atrium has been removed from the interpretive center. Split rail fence has been removed and replaced. Oakland Dr Park tennis courts are planned to be painted by the end of this month. Ramona Park pickle ball has been going well, screen is being put up per request. Lakeview tennis park courts will be replaced this summer to be multi-use. Fountain is being placed at Millennium Park Ice Rink. Overlander Park is being ~~monitored~~ for ways to build up the ground when it rains. Assessment of park signs are being done at this time. There are around 1300 signs in the parks system. SeeClickFix for Portage is now available to Portage residents - can send in pictures to Public Services Department. It GPS tags the photo.

2) Lexington Overview: History and update given by Mr. Peer.

3) Park Updates: Westfield ~~park~~ [Park](#) looks good and well kept. Westlake trails are good. Ramona ~~park~~ [Park](#) continues to be very busy. There has been a request for more softball games to be played there. Lakeview and ~~S~~ [Chrier](#) Park swings need updates,

contractor is aware. Sign at Lakeview park has become weathered. Liberty park remains minimally used. Central park has some wear and tear that Parks Department is aware of.

3) Recycled Art in the Park Review: Ms. Atkinson is working on a tasks list for future events. Working with Mr. Peer to make some shared documents. Discussing ways to better market the event in the future. Possibly creative ways to tie in the event with Recycle Days that are being held in Portage. Notes attendance was down, but may likely be due to the weekend that it was held on. Recommend contacting artists more than once to help improve participation. Next year's event date needs to be set within the next month. Ms. Atkinson to review history of date held on and competing events in the area and talk with Peggy Napier to get it on the calendar.

4) Picnic in the Park: Mr. Cammack notes all of the equipment is ready to go. Basketballs, frisbees, football, soccer ball, burlap bags for sack races, cones, and a ball pump. Free dessert coupons, drink mix and coolers from McDonalds, gift card to Hardings, and a few other donations have been made for the event at this time. Plans are to send out postcards within the next week. National night out, August 2nd from 6:30-8:30pm, is being held at Lexington Green Park per the Heather, the Neighborhood Watch leader. Motion made to move June 22nd Picnic in the Park to Haverhill Park, partner with Neighborhood Watch Night Out event on August 2nd, and new park will be chosen for July Picnic in the Park. A motion was made by Mr. Earl to make these changes and seconded by Mr. Peer. The motion was carried by the board, unanimously. Request for help at 5:30pm at Haverhill Park on June 22nd. Notices to be send out by Mr. Klingelsmith.

5) Celery Flats Music Festival: Board was invited to meeting on June 20th from 6:30pm-?. Event will be thoroughly discussed and plans finalized. Board members requested for help at the event. Event will be longer due to KFO setting up more bands. Event will go until 5:30pm. New student liaison has been assigned, but their term begins July 1st. Ms. Hoyle is taking care of the signs. Food and beverage plan is being worked on at this time. Hope is to have food truck available at the event. Mr. Klingelsmith to look more in to the food truck availability. A food truck will reduce staffing requirements due to placement. Continue to look in to possibility of alcohol vendor at the event.

6) Glen Miller Band: Scheduled for July 5th at 6:30pm. Hoping to have Park Board presence with booth set up at 5:30pm. Members may park at City Hall. Not planning to have any vendors at this event. Board can use concrete pad at the entrance. Plan is for 1 easy-up, 1 table, and a few chairs.

7) Get Active Portage: Ms. Hirschman gave update. Invites have been sent out to vendors. Will continue to work on donations. Plans to get in contact with triathlon director. Requested vendor options to contact in Portage for this event from the board.

Will reach out to Kingdom Soccer, Soccer Zone, Jungle Joes, and Y'eOpa along with year's previous vendors.

8) Friends Group Update:

a. Newsletter: Mr. Thomas brought in sample newsletter for board review. Will add section for the 'Get to Know Your Park Rangers.'

b. Coordinator Reports: Will review next month.

c. Facebook update: Statistics were sent out to the board. Scavenger Hunt TBD.

d. Calendar of Events: Farmer's Market booth availability is an option. Board to let Mr. Klingelsmith know availability in future.

9) Fishing Fair Update: Went well per Mr. Peer. Notes we need updated materials for booth to hand out.

Summary Report:

- Review given by Mr. Klingelsmith.

Comments from the Board:

- *Lexington Green guests* note that the air conditioning unit in the lifeguard office at Ramona Park was removed and could be an issue with the heat for both the lifeguards and potential park guests in emergency situations is broken at the moment. Parks Department is aware and working on this issue.
- Heather notes that neighborhood is questioning replacement of play equipment that was taken down at Lexington Green. Mr. Klingelsmith will stay in contact.
- Bike trail system is still being worked on to be more connected to the Kal-Haven trail, will be done in stages per Mr. Earl's report from recent meeting that he attended.
- Guests were thanked for their involvement in tonight's meeting.

Adjournment: Motion was made by Mr. ~~Peer~~Earl, seconded by Mr. ~~Earl~~Peer. Motion

Respectfully Submitted,
Emily Hirschman, Park Board Secretary