

Parks Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday August 2, 2017

Board Present: Susan Atkinson, Emily Hirschman, Charles Thomas, Jon Peer, Tim Earl, Lana Escamilla, Staci Salisbury

Kathleen Hoyle - Director of Parks, Recreation, and Senior Center Services

Rod Russell - Director of Public Services

Board Absent - Excused: Marshall Cammack, Robb Krueger, Rushik Patel - Student Member

Not Excused: N/A

Guests: Peggy Napier - Rental Coordinator; Joe Wilhelm - Parks Department

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Earl at 6:30 p.m. at Oakland Park.

Minutes from July's meeting were distributed and reviewed. Mr. Thomas motioned for approval of minutes, seconded by Mr. Peer. Motion approved.

New Business:

1) Department Updates: Working on fall/winter program currently; hoping to go out with November Portager. Lots of new programs will be introduced. Dog park remains closed while they continue to work on clean up. Welcoming volunteers from the board to help with clean up as able. Concerts in the Park have gone very well, great attendance and reviews.

Public Services Department Report: Cleaning up trees in Central Park to help preserve concrete. Lakeview has also been cleaned up recently. Hoping to have pickle ball and tennis courts resurfaced by end of August. Working on expansion of Celery Flats parking lot. Mini building plan for Eliason Trail Head continues to be worked on. Dog Park continues to be raked and resurfaced and working on turf build up before re-opening. Mr. Russell reviewed process for board members/community members to email or use See-Click-Fix app on phone to get problems in the parks fixed.

Park Updates: Parks will need to be distributed as new members arrive and present members leave including Ms. Atkinson and Mr. Cammack's departures. Hoping for 2 new members to be appointed in October. Ms. Salisbury was appointed Lakeview Park.

2) Friends of the Park Report: Will update at next meeting.

3) Friends Group Update: No updates at this time.

a. Newsletter: No updates at this time.

b. Coordinator Reports: No updates at this time.

c. Facebook update: Continues to grow.

d. Calendar of Events: No updates at this time.

e. Website: No updates at this time.

f. Adopt-A-Park: 2 1/2 Parks have been adopted. Continuing to work on Ramona Park's adoption. Will be advertised in *The Portager* again.

g: Other: N/A

4) Celery Flats Music Festival: Went well, estimating more than 500 people in attendance. Questioning 3 hour event in the future vs 4-5 hours currently and in the past. Some complaints were made that the event was moved and they did not know. Ms. Atkinson notes some concern for walking distance for demographic of this event. Food truck did not do as well as he hoped. Donations remained stable compared to the last 2 years but still low in comparison to the first year. Will continue to talk on how to improve this in future years. KFL was pleased with the event. Would like power near the food truck pad in the future also. Formal event recap/document to come from Mr. Earl. Ms. Napier would like to have planning meeting earlier next year.

5) Stuart Manor Event: Mr. Kruegger reported to Mr. Earl today. Write up needs to be completed by next week. Event is planned for August 27th. Theme may be changed at this time due to difficulties contacting the Brown Family.

6) Bicycle Advisory Committee Update: Minutes from their first meeting will be added to the packet in the future. Ms. Hoyle to send out to the board for review. They are planning to meet bi-monthly, possibly monthly during biking season. Group is very excited for this opportunity.

7) Get Active Portage: Mr. Thomas to check Stuart Manor for hole punchers for vendors. Mr. Peer notes that event "passports" will be delivered early next week and will bring to event. Mr. Thomas to bring and wear Mr. Crispy outfit at the event. Board members are encouraged to attend and help as able. Mr. Earl and Ms. Atkinson are unable to attend. Waiting to hear from Mr. Cammack, Mr. Krueger, and Ms. Salisbury. Ms. Hirschman will meet with Ms. Nappier on 8/8/17 at Ramona Park for a walk through of the event.

8) Picnic in the Parks: Westfield went well. Adopt-A-Park group did not attend, Mr. Peer to follow up. National Night Out at Lexington Green went very well, lots of attendants. Some senior citizens recommended adding a walking loop to the playground. Other requests included larger playground and inclusion of a baby seat.

9) Volunteer Ranger Patrol: Looking to get this started in the fall. Working on plans/goals at this time.

10) Recycled Art in the Park Update: Board continues to discuss future of this event. Possible move to the fall and collaborate with the Arts Council. Will need someone to head this event in the future. Ms. Atkinson recommends creation of a sub committee for this event as it has become too big for one head chair at this time. Gilmore fund has already been approved for 2018 event, prize money will still need to be established. Mr. Earl notes a new Spring event will need to be created if this is moved. Ideas were discussed and will continue to work on this throughout the coming fall/winter.

11) Hiking Stick Fundraiser: Ideas were discussed on how to go about this program. Mr. Peer discussed how Kalamazoo Nature Center's program works and Ms. Hirschman discussed how Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy's program works. They plan to collaborate with Ms. Hoyle and determine how to advance this program in the Portage Parks. Ms. Hoyle showed options for walking sticks and badges. Ms. Escamilla and Ms. Salisbury are also interested in helping to get this started and will continue to be included in the planning process. Hoping to get all materials and program kickstarted this fall.

Summary Report:

- Given by Ms. Hoyle.

Comments from the Board:

- Thanked Ms. Atkinson for her commitments to the board and wished her well.
- Discussed possibility of new meeting schedule for 2018 and only going to one park per meeting.

Adjournment: Motion was made by Ms. Atkinson, seconded by Ms. Escamilla. Motion approved, meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Emily Hirschman, Park Board Secretary