

**Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes**  
**April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024**

Chair Kazmira Herberger called the meeting to order at 5:29 p.m. on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 at Mayor's Riverfront Park.

**Roll Call:**

**Members Present:** Kazmira Herberger, Isabela Ballez, Rachel Hughes-Nilsson, Katelyn Bekken, Chris Bol, Riley Nilsson, Bjorn Nelson

**Members Absent:** Joseph Buckman, Jarrett Blackmon

**Staff Present:** Patrick McVerry, Shannon Keene, Deidrean Barrett

**Commissioner Liaison:** Chris Praedel

**Introduction of Guests:**

1. Neeve Ryan, Milham Park Adopt-A-Park Applicant

**Changes to the Agenda:**

**Special Presentations:**

**Approval of Minutes:**

Rachel Hughes-Nilsson motioned, seconded by Kazmira Herberger for unanimous approval of the March meeting minutes.

**Old Business:**

1. National Go Skateboarding Day – Kazmira Herberger requested supplies from the Parks & Recreation department for the event. Patrick McVerry let her know some of the requests will be difficult to accommodate since Lunchtime Live is the same day. It shouldn't be an issue to borrow the PA system, generator, tables, chairs, and extra trash cans. The yard games and canopy are dependent on what's used at Lunchtime Live and summer camps. The department could assist with ordering the portable restroom, but it would need to be paid for with sponsorship money. The website information, pre-registration link and flyer can be created by the city's marketing team. The request for a sign stating the park is closed exclusively for the event isn't possible since the park is open to the public. Kazmira also let the board know they're seeking 5 to 6 volunteers. Registration for the event will be from 5-5:45pm with the competition starting at 6:45pm and will be broken into different age categories.
2. Youth Paddle 101 – Bela Ballez has water for the event and is getting an additional donation. The kayak rentals are \$900 for the day leaving her with an extra \$200 from her first donation. She got a quote for a sandwich tray from Artisan Sandwich Company for \$250. She plans to get cups, chips, and any extra supplies with the rest

of the money. The Kalamazoo Nature Center and the Kalamazoo River Watershed Council will be at the event.

### 3. PRAB Goals

- a. Money – Bela Ballez asked if there was any more discussion about the parks millage. Chris Bol will talk to the Strong Towns Kalamazoo group to see how this can happen. He also mentioned that his company awards grants to organizations so that could be a way for the Parks & Recreation Department to get additional funding. Ashton Anthony will send him the Friends of Recreation Tax ID.
- b. Events – No update.
- c. Volunteers – No update.

### **New Business:**

- 1. November Meeting Date – The meeting date needs to move since the first Tuesday of the month is election day and the second Tuesday is the City Commission meeting. The board agreed on Monday, November 4<sup>th</sup> as the new date. Chris Bol motioned to approve the change, seconded by Katelyn Bekken for unanimous approval.

### **Event Recommendations:**

### **Adopt-A-Park Applications:**

- 1. Milham Park, Delta Sigma Pi at Western Michigan University, Neeve Ryan – Chris Bol motioned to approve the application, seconded by Kazmira Herberger for unanimous approval.

### **Comments:**

**Citizens:** None

**Commission Liaison:** Chris Praedel explained how the commissioners are given their board assignments. Each commissioner is given a ranking sheet and then the mayor assigns the roles. Chris has wanted to be on the Parks and Recreation board for a while and asked the board what they expect from him as the new liaison. While he was on the Planning Commission, the group liked to provide recommendations for Chris to take to City Commission and then he would come back the following month with an update on the recommendation. Kazmira Herberger said she wants to see more funding for the department. Rachel Hughes-Nilsson wants to have more contact between all the city boards, especially the Environmental Concerns Committee and Planning Commission.

**Friends of Recreation Liaison Update:** Ashton Anthony let everyone know the date for this year's Kalamazoo Oddlympics will be on Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup> from 2-5pm. The Parks & Recreation Advisory Board participated as a team in the event last year.

**Parks and Recreation Director Monthly Report:** Patrick McVerry let the board know about the Kalamazoo River Cleanup happening on April 20<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers can either walk the trail or use their kayaks to pick up trash. All the organizations are planning to host another river cleanup in the fall. Gloves and trash pickers will be provided. The river drop-ins are at Mayor's Riverfront Park, Verburg Park and Merrill Park. Registration for summer programs opened on April 1<sup>st</sup> for City residents. Non-resident registration opens on April 8<sup>th</sup>. City Commission voted to allocate an additional \$30,000 to the original \$30,000 they committed towards a van to use as transportation for the Police Athletic League programs. Purchasing a used van didn't work out last year so the additional funding will be used to purchase a new discounted van through the MiDEAL program. Upjohn Park, LaCrone Park, Spring Valley Park, Southside Park, Milham Park and Henderson Tot Lot are getting Wi-Fi this year. Arcadia Creek Festival Place is undergoing construction in 2025 and will be closed until 2026.

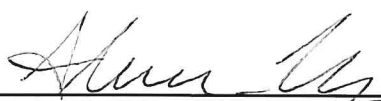
**Staff:** Shannon Keene let everyone know how the Egg Hunt went on March 30<sup>th</sup>. Despite the rainy weather, there was still decent attendance and families seemed to have a good time.

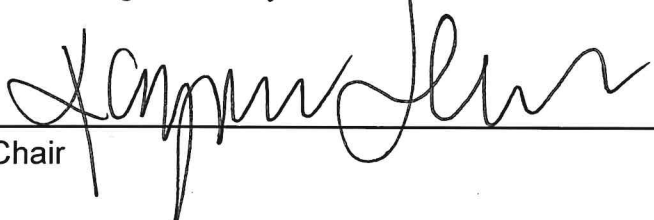
**Board Members:** Katelyn Bekken said the Farmers Market is opening May 4<sup>th</sup>. Chris Praedel and Katelyn have been working on a policy with the City Manager's Office for petitioning at the market. The policy will also include Bronson Park & Arcadia Creek Festival Place. Bjorn Nelson talked with his school's volunteering department to try and get students to help at the Kalamazoo River cleanup. Bela Ballez asked if there was a way to partner with the Kalamazoo Audubon Society for a migration event next year. She also asked to have their current events shared on the Kzoo Parks website and social media.

**Adjournment:** 6:39 p.m.

The next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. at Mayor's Riverfront Park.

Respectfully submitted by Shannon Keene, Recording Secretary

  
Recording Secretary 6/5/24

  
Chair 6/4/24