

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes
July 9th, 2024

Chair Kazmira Herberger called the meeting to order at 5:42 p.m. on July 9th, 2024 at South Westnedge Park.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Kazmira Herberger, Katelyn Bekken, Isabela Ballez, Rachel Hughes-Nilsson, Jarrett Blackmon, Riley Nilsson, Bjorn Nelson

Members Absent: Joseph Buckman, Chris Bol

Staff Present: Patrick McVerry, Deidrean Barrett

Commissioner Liaison: Chris Praedel

Introduction of Guests: None

Changes to the Agenda: None

Special Presentations: None

Approval of Minutes:

Kazmira Herberger motioned; seconded by Isabela Ballez for unanimous approval of the April meeting minutes.

Old Business:

1. National Go Skateboarding Day – Event was well-received with good participation from various age groups. There were groups that skated and were judged on their tricks. Prizes included skateboards, trophies, and medals for various categories. The park provided shade and amenities, making the event pleasant. Plans to repeat the event next year with more support and sponsors.
2. Youth Paddle 101 – Event scheduled for July 11th. Setup begins at 9:30am, includes setting up tables and kayaks. Kids will paddle for about an hour and a half, with instructors guiding them. Activities include teaching kids how to maneuver kayaks and understanding the use of life vests. Additional activities include watershed education and potentially making bracelets or doing a cleanup game. Food from Jimmy John's will be provided.

New Business:

1. Adopt A Park Questionnaire Development – Discussion about the requirements for adopting a park. Proposed seasonal cleanups and reporting issues. Development of a survey to gather feedback and ensure compliance. Considering using Survey Monkey for distributing the questionnaire. Goal to have all parks adopted with regular feedback from adopters.
2. Audubon Event – Possible partnership with Audubon Society and Nature Center. Ideas include bird watching, building bird feeders, and educational activities.
3. Fall/Winter Park events- New business for next meeting.

Event Recommendations: None

Adopt-A-Park Applications: None

Comments:

Citizens: None

Commission Liaison: There was an incident involving a shooting at Kik Pool, though the actual shooting did not occur within the pool premises. The management decided to shut down the pool once conditions were deemed unsafe due to confrontations. Public safety managed the situation efficiently, recovering both weapons and apprehending one individual. Increased patrols by public safety are now in place to ensure better monitoring and safety around the pool area.

The city has approved a grant just under half a million dollars to enhance behavioral health responses. 38% of calls in 2023 were behavioral health related. The grant will fund two full-time mental health practitioners to co-respond with public safety on behavioral health calls. Additional training for crisis intervention will be provided, particularly focusing on youth scenarios. This initiative aims to improve the handling of mental health crises and provide better support to those in need.

The city is providing shuttle services to support local businesses affected by construction. Shuttles are helping transport customers to areas like Park Street Market and Midtown Fresh. The initiative aims to mitigate the impact of construction on business revenues and maintain customer access.

The city is writing a grant to integrate Placer AI into more public services, potentially expanding its usage city-wide. This tool helps measure the success of events and the impact on local businesses. Pride Fest was highlighted as having the highest attendance in terms of concentrated square footage in Kalamazoo County. The geotagger provides data on the number of attendees at various events by analyzing cell phone data.

Friends of Recreation Liaison Update: None

Parks and Recreation Director Monthly Report: Two break-ins occurred over the Fourth of July weekend at Rockwell and LaCrone Park buildings used for summer camps. The stolen items included food and a Keurig machine, but no major equipment was taken. Public safety has been informed, and measures are being taken to enhance security in these areas.

Wi-Fi at Milham is not going to happen because of the storm, will be done at Upjohn Park instead. Will do one at LaCrone, Rockwell, and South Side Parks if the trial goes well at Upjohn. Wi-Fi will eventually be at Spring Valley Park.

South Side is pretty much done. Must wait until September to seed. Drinking fountain will be installed in September. Emerald Park will have to wait until after Labor Day for seeding.

Milham Park's project involves significant clean-up and redevelopment, including insurance and budgeting considerations.

The Farmer's Market event building project is moving forward, with construction drawings completed and bids expected soon.

Staff: None

Board Members: None

Adjournment: 6:47 p.m.

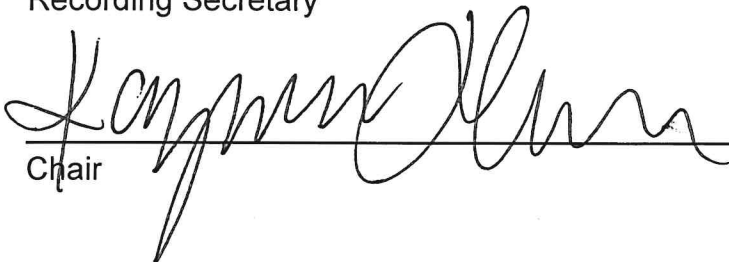
The next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 6th, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. at Blanche Hull Park.

Respectfully submitted by Deidrean Barrett, Recording Secretary



Recording Secretary

9/10/2024



Chair

9/10/24