



PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MONTHLY UPDATE REPORT MARCH 2025

Director's Corner

Sports Complex Wayfinding Signage Project

We are working with Geograph Industries, the new park signs manufacturer, on designing wayfinding signage for the Sports Complex. The current wood signs are original to the park, over 30 years old, so a fresh new look is desired. We are anticipating the new signs will mimic the new park signs, just a smaller version. We will be sure to share the proposed design in the coming weeks.

Robinette Park Renovation Project

We continue to work with the playground company to get a firm date for the installation of the new playground unit at Robinette Park. We are anticipating an early April arrival of the installers and an early May opening of the playground. We plan to conduct a ribbon cutting and will provide the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board a date and time as soon as we have more information.

Art Park Amphitheater Project

This project is currently wrapping up, with some asphalt work as the only remaining task that needs completed. The Contractor is waiting for the asphalt plants to open in order to complete this portion of the project. A ribbon cutting ceremony is being planned for Thursday, May 22, the evening of the first musical performance of the season. Please circle this date on your calendar as we would love to see you there!



Advisory Board Members

- Lenny Maenza, Chairperson
- Tara Landis, Vice Chairperson
- Rick Scherer, Secretary
- Lydia Baker
- Larry Taylor
- Holly Herbst
- Corey Follick, City Council Representative
- Bob Costello (Emeritus Status)

PARKS

- Baseball / softball preparations are underway. Spring soccer fields have been set, marked, and are in use. Baseball field #8 backstop, sideline, and dugout fence replacement are nearing completion.
- Cassel Hills Pool seasonal preparations have begun. Repainting of the swim lane targets is being completed.
- CPR/AED/First Aid certification training was attended by all Parks Staff. Thanks to Alicia for including our Staff in this opportunity.
- Installed the practice net at the Golf Course.
- Changing out of some of the metal signs at Helke Park. The new signs have the city blue as the background color. Thanks to Public Works for making these signs.
- The contractor is on site at the Recreation Center. They will be working on several exterior building maintenance tasks this spring starting with expansion joint and mortar joint maintenance on the east side of the center wall.
- Seven AED units were placed back in their locations throughout the Parks. Cold weather had put them in alarm, and we stored them in our Parks Garage through the cold months.

- We will be concentrating efforts at Poplar Hill Cemetery regarding the regulations pertaining to the upkeep of cemetery markers. After April 1, we will begin removing items that affect our ability to maintain the cemetery grounds in an efficient and safe manner for all visiting the cemetery grounds. Anything removed by our Staff will be brought to the Parks Garage, which can be retrieved, if desired.

An example of some of the signage that will be used to aid communicating our efforts at Poplar Hill Cemetery. Darren Davey made the signage with the new printer.



- Art Park Amphitheater work continues with concrete painting , soil work and seeding, and gravel installation in preparation for asphalt work.



New concrete apron install at the Art Park, which will aid in providing needed access to the Amphitheater area.



Concrete painting and grass seeding taking place at the Amphitheater area.

TREE CITY USA / URBAN FOREST

- Stump and soil work is complete for the next phase of tree replacement on National Road. Once the trees are dug at the nursery, the installation will take place.



Large stumps at two tree wells required the use of a stump grinder for a portion of the removal. Parks and Public Works Staff and shared equipment, along with the rental of a stump grinder, were needed in the preparation for the new trees.

- Applied preemergent to several areas that see the quickest warm up of soil temperatures. These areas included the pavers along National and Dixie, the Brown School landscape bed, and the 12 medians. Fertilizer was also applied over the plant material in these areas.
- Drilled and placed Manganese fertilizer stakes on the dripline of six Red Maple trees at the Sports Complex.
- Tilled the Community Gardens, placed identification stakes, and brought the compost pile to the Parks Garage compost area. Gardens are ready for use.
- Aerification of turf areas not completed last fall with our small unit is being completed as ground conditions permit.
- Pruning of selected trees for low limbs and water sprouts, including 20 ornamental pear trees at the Sports Complex.
- Placed the Spring tree order from our local nursery. We will be planting 11 total trees: 10 Commemorative , and 1 for the Arbor Day event. Trees are Wright Brothers Sugar Maple, 'Rogers' Lustre Serviceberry, Texas Red Oak, Early Glow Ohio Buckeye, Green Mountain Sugar Maple, and Crimson Sunset Maple.

RECREATION CENTER

FACTS

- February 2025 VRC Visits - 17,308 vs February 2024 VRC Visits - 17,402
- February Birthday Parties - 25 Total - 6 Resident / Member; 19 Non-Resident
- 209 Insurance Based Members visited the VRC 10 or more times in February.
- College Student Special - Stay in shape while on break! Buy a 3-month VRC membership (we will honor the youth rate) between May 1 and June 30 and receive a FREE VRC 20-visit punch card. Promotion valid for those ages 17-26 and currently enrolled in a college or university. For more information, contact the Front Desk at 937-415-2340.

RECREATION

- May-August Program Guide is now available on-line and registration will begin April 2.
- Reservations for Cassel Hill Pool after-hour rentals and VRC birthday parties will now all be done online. This will streamline the process for the customers and Staff. We are very excited about this project and plan to get all Department rentals online within the year.
- Welcome Corinne Tew to the VPRD team! She is helping with the marketing of facilities and programs.
- We are looking to hire a part-time Rental Coordinator, as Jen Webb has left us to pursue a full-time position.

- Recreation Coordinators Maecie Burkhardt and Sara Moyer set up a seasonal hiring table at BHS earlier this month.
- Recreation Coordinators Maecie Burkhardt and Sara Moyer, and Facility Manager Aaron Messenger are working with the Sports Management group and Mr. Gueth at MVCTC for their annual group presentations with recreation themed topics.
- Recreation Superintendent Alicia McCracken and Facilities Superintendent Rudy Wells are working with a local Girl Scout Troop to add a Kindness Rock Garden to the Art Park. It will be located at the front of the Art Park by the brain sculpture, and will be ready sometime this spring.
- The Arbor Day Celebration will be at Morton Middle School on Friday, April 25 at 1:00pm with the 6th grade class.



Ricky the Rabbit

Ricky the Recreational Rabbit and Recreation Coordinator Maecie Burkhardt went the Helke Early Learning Center earlier this month to read to the Kindergarten class.



Art Park

The Art Park Art Box is now open for the season!

ATHLETICS

- 3rd-6th grade Youth Basketball is done for the season! Thank you to the Optimist Club for their generous sponsorship of the Youth Basketball Program.
- The Youth Baseball/Softball season is officially underway. The coaches meeting was held March 19, practices will begin March 24, and Opening Day will be April 26. We have 28 teams this year.
- Adult Softball Leagues will begin in early May.
- We have received quite a few requests for field rentals this season. We are working on getting everyone set up.

FITNESS

- April FREE Class Spotlight is YOGA w/ Cathy on Mondays at 4:30pm.
- April free Climb Day is Tuesday, April 15.
- April Inclusive Fitness Days – Friday, April 11 and 25, from 10:30am-11:15am.
- New strength equipment has been ordered and will be delivered in early May.
- Congratulations to Paul for joining our Wall of Honor! He was successful in climbing to the top of the rock wall at the VRC at over 90 years old!



PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

- Recreation Coordinator Sara Moyer attended the third Advanced Leadership Training at the Miami Valley Communications Council on March 6. This session focused on strategies to inspire shared vision across our organization.
- Over the past couple weeks, Recreation Coordinator Sara Moyer has met with Rhea from Vegan It Iz Eats and Kenyada from TheSoyala Candle Company. She is looking into offering new adult programming opportunities through both Instructors.
- Plans for Summer CampREC are progressing well. Sara is still working on hiring a few more Camp Counselors. Training materials are being developed to ensure our Counselors are fully prepared for a successful summer. Anna, our Camp Supervisor, is wrapping up plans for activities, games, and crafts for the summer.

Completed Events

- **Kids Night Out** was held on Friday, March 7, hosted by our Recreation Leaders. 25 kids participated in this program. During their night out with us, participants were able to experience a night full of fun while they participated in rock climbing, gym games, crafts, swimming, and more! Pizza and snacks were provided.
- **The Snow Creation Contest is complete! Congrats to our winners!**



Upcoming Events

- Spring Break Camp - Monday, March 31 - Friday, April 4 - 7:30am - 5:30pm
- Adult Easter Egg Hunt - Friday, April 4 - 8:00pm
- Underwater Easter Egg Hunt - Saturday, April 12 - 10:00am
- Vandalia Easter Eggstravaganza - Saturday, April 19 - 11:00am - 2:00pm

SENIOR CENTER

- Through February, there were 646 Members, with 26 being new in February.
- The April Newsletter is now available, and can be found on the website.
- VanTran - 170 one-way rides in February.
- Recreation Coordinator Toni Williams has secured First Light as a sponsor for Lunch and Learns for 2025. They haven't sponsored since 2016.

CASSEL HILLS POOL

- Pre-season work is being completed.
- Cassel Hills Pool Passes go on sale Tuesday, April 1.
- Opening Day is Saturday, May 24.

2025 PARK BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

The 2025 in-person Park Board Meeting schedule is as follows:

- Wednesday, February 19, 6:30 PM - Senior Center
- Wednesday, May 21, 6:30 PM - Cassel Hills Swimming Pool
- Wednesday, August 20, 6:30 PM - Sports Complex
- Wednesday, November 19, 6:30 PM - Recreation Center

If you have any discussion topics for the May 21 meeting, please let Steve know!