

CITY OF VANDALIA
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

August 18, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tara Landis, Lenny Maenza, Corey Follick, Rick Scherer, Larry Taylor

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Rodney Washburn, Lydia Baker

OTHERS PRESENT: Steve Clark, Rudy Wells, Joe Dranschak, Sherry McConnaughey

- Member Lenny Maenza called the regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to order at 6:33 p.m.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- The minutes of the May 19, 2021 meeting were presented to the board. Corey Follick motioned to accept the minutes as presented, and Rick Scherer seconded the motion. Motion carried all ayes.

COMMENTS FROM INTEREST CITIZENS

- None.

FACILITIES SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Rudy Wells presented the Facilities Superintendent Report.

- The VRC annual pool maintenance shutdown is complete. Pipes in the pump room were serviced, and maintenance was done around the pool, including fixing tiles. A seven-year-old return grate was also replaced.
- Soccer Opening Day is Saturday, August 21. Field lines have been painted twice. Team benches and trash cans will be in place by the end of the day Friday. Concession maintenance work was completed.
- The seasonal staffing shortage continues to hamper daily operations and project work. At this time, there would normally be seven seasonal staff members working about 175 hours per week. Currently, there are two seasonal staff members working about 50 hours per week. Joe Dranschak asked if it would help Rudy if he mowed the Art Park. Rudy thanked Joe for the offer, but said they have a large mower that can easily do that mowing.
- There was a major failure of the HVAC unit supplying the Police level of the Justice Center. Both compressors failed within hours of each other. One is in the process of being repaired onsite, the other will be replaced tomorrow by a crane that will lift the new compressor into place. 6 temporary AC units were rented from Vandalia Rental, and are in place on the first floor. Hopefully all is operational by tomorrow.

CITY TREE REPORT

Rudy Wells presented the Urban Forest Report.

- A stump grinder was rented, and approximately 42 stumps were removed at the Helke Park disc golf area. About three or four large stumps remain and will be removed with the Public Works large loader this fall. This will complete the stumps that remained from Ash and Black Locust trees that failed or became hazards.
- Watered a few of the most recently planted trees, especially the new trees on National Rd. At this time, rain fall has been sufficient for the more established trees.
- Young tree structural pruning has occurred at the Sports Complex. Mark Collins, the Custodial Supervisor, had a couple of his Staff help with tree pruning.

BEE CITY REPORT

Joe Dranschak presented the Bee City Report

- Al Tuttle and Joe Dranschak have been attending SummerFest all summer. Al has a honey display, and Joe has a Historical Society display. Joe received four very nice books that he has also displayed, two about bees, and two about butterflies.
- Black Eyed Susans have taken over the bridge to the Art Park.
- Joe has been more proactive this year in taking pictures he will need for his end of year report.
- Lenny asked Joe if they will be setting up a display at Oktoberfest. Joe is unsure at this time.
- Rick complemented Joe on the Historical Society grounds, and said his daughter had some beautiful wedding photos taken there. Joe commented that a lot of people have been taking photos since the Gazebo has been placed in the front.
- A lot of tree wood has been split, so cleanup of that is underway.

RECREATION SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Steve Clark presented the Recreation Superintendent Report.

Recreation Report:

- National Night Out went very well. Rudy's staff gave hayrides this year. It was very popular, so it will probably continue next year.
- Neighborhood Splashtaculars were held at the Sports Complex, Helke Park, and Robinette Park. Attendance was very good. The Fire Department is a big part of this, and it will probably continue next year.
- Aaron held an All-Inclusive Recreation Day. There were 35 participants.
- The Star-Spangled Celebration was a success with a great crowd, great music, and great fireworks. After all expenses, Butler Township and The City of Vandalia each paid approximately \$11K - \$12K for this Event. There will be a meeting soon to discuss this event and Rozzi, the fireworks provider, to see if the fireworks are something we would like to put out to a bid process, or continue with Rozzi.

- John Myers is offering an Esports League through Vanta online. Three games will be offered, and it will be \$120 for 12-weeks. There is a possibility of an end-of-year party for all the participants.
- There is currently a Little Free Library outside the VRC, and we are looking into adding four additional Little Free Libraries in other parks around the City. Parks being considered are Copperfield, Helke, Warner, and Brown School Woods. For this project, the Optimist Club has committed to a donation of \$1,000, and the Dayton Metro Library has committed to a donation of \$500. Jeff will be working with the Octagon Club to see if they would be interested in painting or helping install the new libraries. A discussion followed about Helke Park, and recent vandalism that occurred. Steve reported that the cameras at Helke Park did not capture the vandals.
- The City is going to be receiving an estimated \$785K in 2021 and \$785K in 2022 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). \$20K of this is planned to go to the Youth Recreation Scholarship Fund. This will expand the Scholarship Funds to include not only sports, but also, camp and other recreation programs. A discussion followed regarding the ARPA funds and what is proposed in the plans.

Athletic Report

- Youth Baseball has concluded. 19 teams participated in the Tournament of Champions Tournament. There were 450 total participants in 2021.
- Youth Soccer practices have kicked off with 371 participants. Games begin Saturday, August 21. B&J's Shaved Ice went very well in the baseball concession, so we are continuing that in the soccer concession.
- Pee Wee Football is using the Sports Complex for practice again this year.
- There are 115 participants so far for Flag Football. Games will begin in September.
- For Adult Softball, there were 9 teams in the Men's Monday League, and 9 teams in the Co-Ed Friday League. Registration is currently underway for the Fall Leagues.

Recreation Center

- Summer CampREC ended last Friday. It went very well. Aaron did a great job of finding new activities for the kids. The 11-week program was sold-out almost every day with 55 campers.
- The 19% off membership special ended on August 6 and resulted in \$17,450 in sales. Staff is looking at final quarter promotions to boost membership. Daily admissions are doing well, but memberships remain low after Covid. Monthly EFT's are around \$17K/month vs. \$23K/month before Covid.
- The Fall Program Guide is now available on the website. This is September through December programs.

Senior Center

- Daily attendance continues to increase to around 75 visitors per day. It is thought that most visitors are vaccinated, so the new rise in Covid cases might not affect the Senior Center as it did before.
- A new ice machine will be installed in September.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Cassel Hills Pool
 - Now open only weekends through Labor Day. The Soggy Doggy event will be held on Labor Day from 6:00PM-8:00PM. Last year 80 dogs attended.
 - It was highly documented on social media that there were issues early in the summer with Cassel Hills Pool. Jeff did a great job immediately addressing the issues. SwimSafe improved their willingness to hold patrons accountable, improved cleanliness in and around the pool, and addressed communication issues between SwimSafe and the Managers they had in place at CHP. There were less and less issues as the summer went on.
 - Discussion followed regarding admission cost and Resident and Non-Resident Memberships. Corey commented that Staff has done an amazing job on the pool, and you would never know it is 50 years old.
 - Beginning July 1, CHP staff were asked to track the zip codes of patrons. Since July 1 there have been 45 different zip codes.
 - A big thank you to Public Works for additional signs at the pool and running their street sweeper through the parking lot.
 - Also, a big thank you to the Police Department for parking an extra police cruiser in the parking lot and additional walk throughs. A few patrons were also trespassed for 2 years for having drugs in the parking lot.
 - Steve and Jeff have met with SwimSafe to negotiate an extension to our Agreement. It was originally a 2-year agreement, but with Covid, it wasn't used last year. Both sides are making an addendum to the contract, so that it can be extended another year. SwimSafe and Dayton Pool Management are the only 2 companies in the area that service pools. And during the last bid process, Dayton Pool Management came in considerably higher.
- Parks Master Plan Process
 - Steve is getting the RFQ ready that will ask Consulting Firms to submit their bids for coming in to do a Master Plan.
 - A lot of involvement is expected from the Park Board and the public, with some questions directed toward the future of neighborhood pocket parks.
 - We are seeking grant assistance with playground equipment. The "newest" playground in the City is at Helke Park, and it is 20 years old.

- Facilities HVAC/Roof Projects
 - The emergency Justice Center HVAC issue was an unexpected \$25K-\$30K, but not surprising due to its age and the fact it runs 24/7. Four companies submitted bids for the large HVAC project. Steve, Rudy, and Chris Mastrino will begin reviewing the RFQ's soon, with possible interviews with the companies. The estimate for the HVAC work on the Justice Center, Municipal Building, and the Recreation Center is \$4M.

OLD BUSINESS

- None.

NEW BUSINESS

- None.

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, Larry Taylor made a motion to adjourn and Lenny Maenza seconded the motion to adjourn. Motion carried all ayes. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Tara Landis, Chairperson

Rick Scherer, Secretary