

## VERMILION PARKS & RECREATION BOARD

Minutes of January 15, 2019 - 7:00pm | Municipal Complex Courtroom (687 Decatur)

Roll Call: T. Parker, W. Warden, B. Scholtz, D. Brudney, J. Keck  
Not Present: E. Wakefield, D. Corogin, PARKS (Mtce. Operations) DIRECTOR  
*Also Present:* Brian Holmes, COUNCIL REP; Chad Kuhns, REC. DIRECTOR; Jim Forthofer, MAYOR

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G. Fisher called the meeting of January 15, 2019 to order.

G. Fisher opened the floor for nominations for a Chairman for 2019.

**B. Warden MOVED;** D. Brudney seconded to nominate Terry Parker as the Chairman for 2019. Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**D. Brudney MOVED;** B. Warden seconded to nominate Brad Scholtz as the Vice Chairman for 2019. Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**B. Scholtz MOVED;** D. Brudney seconded to approve the meeting minutes of December 18, 2018. Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

### **CORRESPONDENCE/AUDIENCE/COMMUNITY GROUP USE PERMIT:**

Homer Taft of 3972 Edgewater Drive spoke on the new rule the Parks Board implemented on audience participation. He offered a suggestion as over the years there has been a lot of back and forth with the audience and board. He said during committee meetings, City Council doesn't follow this format, only when they are formally adopting ordinances. He thought a different form of audience participation as the board used prior, may serve the board better because otherwise it could delay things. The board may take actions that may need to go to council and he feels this could drag out the process. Secondly, he stated it troubles him a little bit because it seems in the past the Parks Board has had a lot of spending authority and he isn't sure it has always been within the appropriation process as how other departments follow, and he believes the Charter requires this and it isn't an optional matter. He said he would hope they follow the Charter and that they have an appropriation process, so council is advised on what's being done; especially with the increased funds that are coming in with the new levy. It's a good time to start those procedures. He said he has expressed a lot of care on what is going on in the lakefront and the parks.

T. Parker explained the capital levy has always been under the direction of the Parks Board since it was passed in 1967. In the Charter, it says the Parks Board is an advisory board to the Service Director for the expenditure of the capital levy. On the new levy, they haven't had any of the money, but they are working with the Finance Director to create a budget which will go before City Council, and if they live within the budget then City Council has approved those expenditures. He stated that no money is spent other than what is identified in a public meeting and he understands Mr. Taft's desire for transparency.

**Community Event Group Use Permits** – No submittal for January.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORTS:**

T. Valerius mentioned that over the weekend, Brian Dalton the parks employee sent him a picture of some erosion over at Sherod Park. He said he went to the park yesterday but was unable to get out and look at it because of the snow. He noted that Brian put caution tape up and he wanted to make the board aware of this.

T. Parker said the problem lies with the high water and T. Valerius said they also have been having strong winds which beats up against the cliff side, which is like what happened at Nokomis.

C. Kuhns reported they are getting ready to kick off their basketball season as the first game will be on January 18. He has 21 players in the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> grade group and 28 players in the 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grade group. They have 11 cheerleaders registered. Last year they had 31 players in the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> grade group and 32 for the 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grade group, and 10 cheerleaders. T. Parker said there appears to be some downturn. C. Kuhns said there is a few more options as far as the travel league the high school puts on, which could be a factor.

He said he had another baseball meeting for creating a league for 8-12-year old children with Amherst, Lorain, and Sheffield to create a different competition.

B. Holmes conveyed Ordinance 2019-2 was discussed with City Council in committee on January 14. The committee had asked for the board to discuss the wages for the proposed full-time parks maintenance worker.

#### Budget/Finance Subcommittee:

B. Scholtz conveyed on behalf of D. Corogin that the ice skating rink is now open. B. Warden asked if the board ever approved the grading expense for leveling the rink. T. Parker said the board approved the grading along with the lighting. It was discussed this would be the last year for the ice rink at this location because they will break ground on the Fire Station during the construction season. B. Holmes thought the ice rink used to be at West Breeze Park in the past. Mayor Forthofer said he and T. Valerius had discussed relocating the ice rink on the east side of the Service Center driveway, but T. Valerius had legitimate concerns of it being located too close to homes on the east side. G. Fisher thought they should explore the open area on the west side of her office once the fire station plans are finalized to determine if there is enough room. T. Valerius agreed this might be a better location and they could still utilize the parking at the Skate Spot.

T. Parker said the finance subcommittee will meet with the finance director prior to the next council meeting, so she can present them with an accurate budget.

#### Harbor View Subcommittee Report:

T. Parker conveyed the committee met in regular session on December 11 and for a brainstorming meeting on December 17. He noted that Tom Bodde created a concept sketch for the museum property. However, because half of the committee was absent the day of the regular meeting, this hasn't been shared and they would like the committee of a whole to review the sketch and give input.

#### Park Use Fees:

T. Parker said the subcommittee rehashed the issue of park fees but thought they could discuss this more in-depth once B. Wakefield is present to be a part of the discussion. He said with moving this discussion later into the year, they would probably be looking at implementing these fees in 2020. B. Warden thought they went on record in previous meetings by advising these groups that upon approval there could be a potential fee. T. Parker said pavilion registrations begin the first of January and those people wouldn't have necessarily received that message. B. Warden said the Beach Market and the Highland Games were already approved with the understanding that a fee may be implemented this year. T. Parker asked the board what they wanted to do as they still won't be discussing the fees until March. B. Warden said if they approve the fees then why wouldn't they implement them this year. T. Parker said they would need to go back and track each reservation. B. Warden said the only ones that would be affected are the weddings because they have a fee of \$35 in presuming they would use the gazebo or Main Street Beach. He said they suggested no fees for the residents and non-profits at this point, but encourage a nominal donation, which basically would be what these people think is fair perhaps based on the previous charges. He said the subcommittee couldn't come to an agreement on what would be fair

based on the fact the residents voted on the parks levy, and for the 'for profit' people, D. Brudney came up with an interesting alternative. D. Brudney explained for profit ventures and corporations it would be \$200 for the first day; \$125 for the second day in a row, and \$75 for the third day in a row. Anything beyond three days requires further Park usage approval. B. Warden said previously they had discussed charging \$250 per day, so he thinks they made it more than equitable. T. Parker said they would also need to look at a policy change because they have not allowed reservations in the past for weddings; people are welcome to come to a park to have a wedding, but they can't use it exclusively unless they fill out a park use permit request. He said they approved a wedding in East Exchange Park last fall, but that person filled out a form and came to the meeting for approval. B. Warden thought they would be mainly talking about the gazebo if they tied that area up for a few hours; with utilizing the grassy area around it as well. T. Parker referred this discussion to the March meeting.

### **Financial Reports:**

T. Parker reported they are waiting on the year-end financial report. Once they receive the year-end report it will be shared at next month's meeting.

### **OLD/NEW BUSINESS:**

#### *Ordinance 2019-2 – Parks Maintenance Worker*

T. Parker conveyed that city council gave Ordinance 2019-2 a second reading on January 14 for the full-time Parks Maintenance Worker. He said Councilwoman Brady asked why they changed the hourly rate of \$18 to a salary range of \$14 to \$18. He explained in the event they had to hire a replacement they would have a range in place rather than being stuck with a dollar figure. Other questions pertained to benefits as it relates to the other employees of the city that are non-union. He said it was their intent when creating this position that this employee would indeed follow what the non-union employees receive in terms of benefits; vacation days, etc. This is the way the ordinance currently reads. One point of clarification, is that this is a new position and this person will start at \$18 per hour retroactive to January 1, 2019, with no percentage increase for 2019 since it's a new position. Also, longevity will not become an issue until five years in and they can anticipate and budget for this as they go. He said overtime was discussed and he advised council they are authorizing 40 hours per week and they are not authorizing employment beyond 40 hours. G. Fisher said as she and D. Corogin worked on the job description it was noted under 'Qualifications - #13' that the person would be available on a flexible schedule, including weekends and holidays to accommodate park needs. So, for example if this person worked on a Saturday, then he would take a day off the next week to stay within the 40 hours. T. Valerius said under emergency circumstances he would like to be able to bring this person in for certain things, so they would need to pay him overtime. G. Fisher said they could make it where overtime is granted contingent upon approval of the Service Director or the Parks Operations Supervisor. T. Valerius said he would make it contingent upon approval of the Service Director.

B. Holmes asked if the Parks Board is going to continue to have a Parks Operations Supervisor if D. Corogin leaves, or will this person fall under the Service Director. T. Parker said this is one of the cases they made for the new levy; is that they would have a full-time Parks Operations Director. Therefore, ideally, they would like two full time people year-round and then seasonal part-time people when the mowing is heavy. This is the long-time goal moving forward. This would be a position that would need to be created by ordinance for approval by council as well. T. Valerius said there will also be situations where they would need this person to come in and plow snow for not only the parks, but parking lots and side streets if they aren't stepping on the unions toes. T. Parker said he would like to be clear that when this person is mowing vacant lots or plowing snow that's not on parks property, then this should not be a parks expense. T. Valerius agreed and said they would keep track of this. T. Parker said if this puts this person over 40 hours then it shouldn't come out of the parks department either and T. Valerius concurred. T. Parker said it still represents a loss of the availability of their employee if he would be over 40 hours and must take time off, or get overtime authorized. Again, this must be tracked and accounted for. T. Valerius said these are rare situations but they would track this on his timesheet.

B. Scholtz asked if they could mow the vacant lots by utilizing the subcontractors as he is more concerned with the time. If they only have 40 hours available for their employee and they take away 20% of his time and it's a sunny day, then they could be doing other things in the parks as the parks could end up suffering. T. Valerius recognized this and would speak with the finance director to see what they could do. B. Holmes said in the parks district they would close off sections of the parking lots during the winter because it's not used a lot.

T. Parker asked the board if they wanted to make any changes to Ordinance 2019-2 before it goes to final reading on January 28. B. Holmes said if T. Parker could answer Councilwoman Brady's concerns at the next council meeting, then he would assume there would be no issue. G. Fisher thought B. Brady's concerns were addressed tonight as it relates to overtime, insurance, longevity, and vacation as it is covered per the ordinance as these items follow the Local 860. She noted that B. Brady just wanted to make sure the board was okay with approving the ordinance as written. B. Holmes agreed with the range instead of one flat hourly rate. He thought they should have a yearly performance evaluation of the employee, so they could base wage increases on this, even though the city doesn't do this with the other employees. He said this way the Parks Board could then give additional raises if they wanted. G. Fisher explained this employee falls under the non-union employee and any raises given follow any wage increases of the Local 860. Any wages above and beyond the Local 860 raises, must come before City Council for approval. T. Valerius said the Parks Board could always expand the range from \$14 - \$20 and G. Fisher said they would then need to amend this ordinance to reestablish the salary.

**B. Scholtz MOVED**; J. Keck seconded to recommend to Council to proceed with the third reading of Ordinance 2019-2 as written. Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

*Sherod Playground Concept Proposal:*

T. Parker said the Playground Subcommittee consisting of Katie Lalonde, Dana Corogin, Betsy Wakefield, Lynda Wakefield, Reenie Rak and Elaine Carlin have been meeting to discuss the upgrading of Sherod Park with new park playground equipment. He noted that Executive Director Amy Bowman-Moore of the Erie County MetroParks has been involved which opens the opportunity for them to seek some grant money. In addition to getting ready for this, Erie MetroParks offered their inspection person to come look at the playground equipment at Sherod Park and they received a complete report with pictures. The good news is that there isn't major safety issues and things can be easily repaired for the time being; cleaned up, painted and hardware replaced. Therefore, they are requesting the board to support them applying to the Erie County Foundation for a grant about \$5,000 to do the immediate repairs. The deadline is February 1 to apply for the Erie County Foundation grant. He believed Amy Bowman-Moore would be writing the grant.

**J. Keck MOVED**; B. Warden seconded to authorize a motion of support to apply to the Erie County Foundation for an amount not to exceed \$5,000. Discussion: G. Fisher asked who would be advising Amy Bowman-Moore of the approval and T. Parker said he would follow through with contacting her. Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

*Beach Restroom Subcommittee:*

B. Scholtz reported the restroom subcommittee has met several times since they learned they would not be able to build next to the pumphouse as it isn't feasible. He noted they are exploring options with a 'blank canvas' to determine the optimum long-term placement for the "beach" restroom. They will stay in contact with the Harborview group as their plan evolves. They are investigating improving the quality or at least the cleaning frequency of the current porta john. They are actively pursuing this matter and he will report later.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**D. Brudney MOVED**; B. Scholtz seconded to adjourn the meeting. Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

**NEXT MEETING:**

February 19, 2019 @ 7:00 pm - Municipal Complex Courtroom (687 Decatur)

*~Gwen Fisher, Boards and Commissions*