

VERMILION PARKS & RECREATION BOARD

Minutes of November 20, 2018 - 7:00pm | Municipal Complex Courtroom (687 Decatur)

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

T. Parker called the meeting of November 20, 2018 to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

B. Scholtz MOVED; B. Warden seconded to approve the revised meeting minutes of October 16, 2018. Vote 4 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

CORRESPONDENCE/AUDIENCE/COMMUNITY GROUP USE PERMIT:

Community Event Group Use Permits -

Main Street Vermilion – Event: Farmers Market; Park: Victory; Day/Date of Use: July 6 – September 7, 2019 (Saturday's); Time of Use: 7:00am – 3:00pm

J. Kernell said this is their 12th year of the Farmers Market. She said upon listening to recent concerns they have decided to shorten their market by two weeks, so instead of starting June 22 they will start July 6 (10 weeks instead of 12). B. Scholtz asked if the recent concerns seemed to escalate when somebody was in East Exchange Park and J. Kernell didn't really know as these concerns were addressed this year after they have had 11 good years.

B. Scholtz MOVED; B. Warden seconded to approve the Community Event Group Use Permit for the Farmers Market as submitted. Vote 4 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Friends of Harbourtown – Event: Tree Lighting/Caroling; Park: Victory; Day/Date of Use: November 24, 2018; Time of Use: 6:00 – 8:00pm

T. Parker noted this is a recurring event every year. B. Warden asked if this event is in conjunction with the merchants or something different and Mayor Forthofer said it's separate from the merchants downtown.

B. Warden MOVED; B. Scholtz seconded to approve the Community Event Group Use Permit for the Tree Lighting/Caroling event as submitted. Vote 4 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Friends of Harbourtown – Event: Santa House/Horse Drawn Wagon; Park: Exchange; Day/Date of Use: November 23, December 3, 10, & 17, 2018 (Wagon – 11/23-24); Time of Use: 9:00am – 5:00pm.

B. Scholtz MOVED; D. Brudney seconded to approve the Community Event Group Use Permit for the Santa House/Horse Drawn Wagon as submitted. Vote 4 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

DIRECTOR'S REPORTS:

C. Kuhns reported they are getting ready for the basketball season. B. Scholtz asked if he heard any feedback from the resident's regarding the changes in fees. C. Kuhns said he has not heard anything. B. Warden asked how many basketball games the kids play and C. Kuhns said about 9-10. B. Warden asked if coaches are required to have a first-aid card and C. Kuhns said it's not a requirement. B. Warden asked if players are

required to have physicals. C. Kuhns said not everyone has insurance to cover a physical. B. Warden said he coached in the past for 18 years and kids were required to have sports physicals from 7th grade up and all coaches were required to have first-aid and CPR training. He knows they haven't been strict about that. C. Kuhns said sport physicals are required in junior high/high school, but rec sports haven't usually required them in other communities either. B. Warden wondered if there was a way to check on what they're required to have for rec sports. C. Kuhns mentioned there is a waiver on the registration forms. *(Clerk's note: The waiver reads as follows: I (We), the undersigned parents or legal guardian of the above named player certify that all information provided above is correct and that he/she is playing at their own risk with neither the team, coach, program director, recreation director, nor the City of Vermilion or any of its employees assuming any liability for injuries occurred. By signing the form, we also agree to all the responsibilities of the athlete and the parents, as outlined by the Recreation Department and printed on the back of this registration form. I understand my child's picture may be published for publicity purposes in either print or electronic format without their name attached, nor with prior knowledge given. Additionally, they will receive no compensation for this).* B. Warden asked if there is any first-aid equipment available during the games. C. Kuhns said they play the games at the schools so everything is available as needed. B. Warden asked C. Kuhns to make sure they are up to speed as far as what everybody else is doing.

D. Corogin reported that Neil Akers worked very hard and donated his time and equipment to put in the footers at the Skate Spot for the shade feature. They included this information in the grant report which was mailed today. She is hoping they are reimbursed money from the grant this year. The shade structure has been delivered and installation will occur in the Spring, so the winter is not hard on the material. B. Scholtz asked who would be installing the structure and D. Corogin didn't know at this time. B. Scholtz said he spoke with N. Akers and they would prefer to do the installation, so it's done correctly.

D. Corogin said the Firehouse site was selected for Devon/Douglas Drive which will be where the ice rink is located, which will be a sad loss for the community. She wasn't certain they would have the funds or a location to build a new one as they need to have heat and a restroom available for somebody to maintain the rink. It's not supposed to affect the Skate Spot. She noted this will be the last year for the ice rink. She said when they built the half pipe in the Skate Spot they had to take down the overhead wire that hooks up the light for the ice rink, so to have the light hooked back up it will cost \$800. Without this lighting it will be hard for Tim Costello to maintain the rink, plus since it's get dark earlier in the evening most kids after school use the ice rink when it's dark. B. Warden asked if there was room at Showse Park to put in an ice rink and D. Corogin said it's too windy and there is nowhere to store the hoses to keep the ice smooth and to store the equipment in a heated storage facility, plus there is no restroom available in the winter months. Mayor Forthofer asked if there was a possibility to relocate the ice rink to the eastern side of the driveway at the Service Center and D. Corogin said she looked at this possibility and it seems further to drag the equipment, but it's not impossible. She said if they hook up the light they could possibly turn it on the pole to light up the Skate Spot, then it wouldn't be a lost expense. D. Brudney asked how much the kids use the Skate Spot when the weather turns cold and D. Corogin said they don't use it as much, but it still will be a hazard and they would need to lock the park. Originally, when they talked about hooking the light back up it would be to trench (putting it underground) which would cost \$1,000. She said it would be idea to trench it and she wasn't sure if the fire department could use the electric down the road. B. Scholtz asked if they could use the light at the Skate Spot in the summer and if so, during what hours. D. Corogin said they could put the light on timer and they could shut if off around 10 or 11pm. B. Warden said since the difference in dollars is \$200 then he thinks it's smarter to trench it and they can use it for the Skate Spot. Mayor Forthofer thought this was a good idea, but he thought they should run it by the Service Director first to make sure they aren't crossing lines at some point. B. Warden said maybe they could look at putting an outlet on the pole for any potential need for a sound system or something.

B. Scholtz MOVED; B. Warden seconded to approve the expenditure in an amount not to exceed \$1,000 for the reconnection of the light for the Ice-Rink/Skate Spot. Vote 4 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

Main Street Beach - D. Corogin said to move forward with professional drawings for the public restroom, the cost will be approximately \$17,000 as proposed by T. Bodde.

She also asked if there was any way to do a sports tournament or host a tournament for travel teams that would bring in money; she said it wouldn't even have to be through the rec department. She thought they could make money using some facilities they have available, such as Showse Park. B. Warden thought they had an adult softball event a couple years ago. D. Corogin said this is something somebody else ran. C. Kuhns said he could look to see what is available.

B. Warden asked if there will be input as far as the design aspect as he questions the concave roof as he doesn't feel it can be the cheapest way to do this if they are trying to keep the costs down. He said the initial drawing is very nice, but a lot of special features/structures may not be the most economical. B. Scholtz said if they approve the expenditure for the professional architectural drawing then they will absolutely bring it to the table for discussion and final approval by the board members. They are looking at a range of \$150,000 - \$200,000 to construct these restrooms. Mayor Forthofer said if they use capital money from the Parks fund they wouldn't need to bring this before Council for approval unless these monies come from the City's general fund. D. Corogin noted the previous drawings submitted to the Parks board was a preliminary sketch. She suggested they design something that will 'wow' people when they come to Vermilion as the lake is their best asset. They want a restroom they're proud of and something that is easy to maintain.

B. Scholtz asked the board if they wanted to determine their budget first or look at it more from a visionary standpoint as what they see this restroom looking like. B. Warden thought the concept was amazing, but sometimes the little things dealing with architecture should have a little flexibility. They should try to do this project in the most efficient and economical way. He asked if they would be looking at long-term financing for this project and it was noted the financing is preliminary at this point because they can explore grants and alternative options. B. Scholtz felt the architect would accommodate the board's feelings on the design.

B. Warden MOVED; D. Brudney seconded to approve an expenditure in an amount not to exceed \$17,000 of the capital levy money for a professional architectural drawing for the public restroom at Main Street Beach. Roll Call Vote 4 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

Conservation Easement – T. Parker asked the Mayor if J. Logue would need to report back to the Parks board on this matter and Mayor Forthofer said the easement transferred successfully for the Reisinger property. He noted City Council passed an Ordinance authorizing him to enter into a grant of conservation easement between the City of Vermilion (Grantor) and Erie Metroparks (Grantee).

Subcommittee Reports:

Budget/Finance Subcommittee:

T. Parker reported that the Budget/Finance Subcommittee (T. Parker, B. Scholtz, B. Wakefield, T. Costello, and D. Corogin) have scheduled a meeting for Tuesday, November 27 as they need to get accurate numbers and prioritize what they would like to do next year. They will report back to the board later.

Harbor View Subcommittee Report:

T. Parker reported the Parks board received the Harbor View Subcommittee minutes and they are proceeding ahead with the concept they approved last December, which is a complete demolition and they are waiting for a concept drawing on a structure that would be a gathering place for this property.

Sherod Playground Concept Proposal:

T. Parker reported that he, D. Corogin, and B. Wakefield met with Katie Lalonde at the end of October and an initial letter has been drafted to submit to potential donors that says they will be pursuing this project and as people plan their giving for 2019, please keep them in mind. He said K. Lalonde is beginning the fundraising

with the help of her committee and they will narrow down concepts for the different pieces and parts of the playground design.

Park Use Fees:

T. Parker reviewed the suggested fee schedule for use of the parks as drafted by the Park Use Subcommittee as follows:

Resident fee rental: \$25

Non-Resident fee rental: \$35

Wedding rentals (shelter): \$35 for 4 hours

Commercial business rentals: \$250 per day

Non-Profit organization rental: \$40 per day

Additional discussion topics include: Should rental of the smaller park systems be the same price? Should on-going weekly rentals be on a “good will”, i.e. Beach Yoga where \$250 per day is more than the instructor is bringing in. Additional suggestions were to have the park fee schedule/request form put on the city website, along with photos of the individual parks, including information regarding whether there are restrooms, picnic tables, grills, playground equipment, etc. with each park.

T. Parker said a concern was raised last month from an audience member from the Friends of Harbour Town that as a non-profit, if they have 10 events scheduled for the summer and it’s \$40 each time, this puts them in a bind. B. Warden said they have their own property too which is something to think about and T. Parker said their property is not down in the thick of things.

D. Corogin asked if the Farmers Market put their event on for 10 weeks then would they have to pay \$400 and T. Parker said yes. B. Warden said they do bring in money from their vendors. T. Parker said Main Street, the Chamber, the Lions Club, etc. falls into this as well. He said in the case of a multiple park use, would this \$40 cover each park. B. Warden said almost every community charges these fees, but they don’t want to alienate the people who are doing things for the benefit of the community, but at the same time the upkeep of the parks doesn’t get any cheaper for paying wages for people mowing the grass and making them presentable.

B. Scholtz asked if the goal of the park use fee is a revenue generator and B. Warden said to some extent and to help offset the expense of the lack of support for the wages of the people maintaining the parks, and other expenses the city incurs. Mayor Forthofer said it’s also bringing it up to the standards that other communities already do. B. Warden said they are not trying to set a precedent, but it’s more of bringing it up to speed with other communities.

B. Scholtz asked if they checked other communities to see what their fees are, and T. Parker said G. Fisher did a lot of research and many communities have fees and some are \$40 - \$50 per day for a pavilion. B. Warden said if somebody wanted to use the entire Showse Park as opposed to Friendship Park would it be fair to charge \$40 for a whole parks vs the smaller park.

B. Scholtz said in the fall they asked for the public’s support and this is what they gave them, so he feels they are going back and asking them again. He had no issues with charging the businesses that come in (“for profit organization”) as most would probably be thrilled with this type of price to use the parks, so he thinks this would be more than reasonable, but for residents he personally struggles with this because the support they got for the levy was amazing!

D. Corogin said they want people using the parks and enjoying them. She asked if the subcommittee talked with the finance director to see logistically how this would work – how would the money be collected and what account would it go into. T. Parker assumed the money would be collected when the reservation is made with

A. Maiden. D. Corogin asked which fund this money would be deposited in and T. Parker said it would need to go into the Parks Operations and Maintenance Fund (1404). B. Warden asked if the board is leaning strictly towards charging fees for profit organizations. B. Scholtz said this was just his own opinion. C. Kuhns felt \$40 was a lot of money for residents to be charged to rent a park. B. Warden said the charges help insure the parks are in usable condition year after year to repair damage to grass and to mow the grass.

D. Brudney asked D. Corogin if the parks maintenance employees go overboard to clean up after some of these larger events as it may take extra hours to do so.

D. Corogin asked Ann Nagle if she would choose to go to another community or venue if she had to pay \$250 a day. A. Nagle understood everyone's opinion and said it was not a deal breaker for her because she is a Vermilion resident and she wants to do something to promote Vermilion, but she went into it knowing that if there was any damage to the park then she was financially responsible. Therefore, she knew she would have to make repairs. She said they do all the cleanup, so nobody is cleaning up for them. She said it already costs her \$2,000 to put the show on, plus she has been giving back to the community by donating two pet weigh stations, which she enjoys doing. She promised that she would give back to the community because it's appreciated. She would almost rather them say, "This is what we need, would you donate this to us?" One of the big draws for her vendors is that she keeps her vendor rates low compared to other communities. The lower the vendor rates, the more vendors; the more customers, the more trickle down to local businesses. She understands the grass mowing aspect but isn't this done on a regular basis and not necessarily just for her. The community really did come together for this levy and then to charge them anyway won't go over well. B. Warden said that's like the city taking away their maintenance fee. A. Nagle said she is willing to pick up barrels/garbage cans and she hires her own security (Erie County Sheriff's Department) for traffic control and overnight security. They also clean up the picnic pavilions which she hires employees for. She is torn as she understands there is a need and she doesn't mind contributing, but she would rather give back rather than being charged a set fee. D. Corogin said other people have not given back, such as the Scottish Games or the Triathlon.

T. Parker said he is torn about this whole issue because their vision going forward is to expand their ability to maintain things because they are way behind on facility maintenance, and because of the city's financial situation they are going to have to be operating their whole budget almost out of the entire levy. This will reduce their ability to add personnel, so this was part of the thinking when discussing this issue. They aren't trying to gouge or make anybody miserable, but by the same token they must be able to continue to maintain and improve the parks they have, and the capital levy has not been enough to do that. The operating levy passed last fall was to give them the ability to hire personnel (some seasonal) and this is where they are coming from. What is going to put them in the best position to keep the parks safe, attractive, useful, and clean. They must get the money somewhere and this might not be the best way.

B. Warden asked if they lost maintenance person last year from the Parks Department. D. Corogin said yes as they only had two people for three months. B. Warden said there were piles of mulch chips at Showse Park all summer and they never got spread. D. Corogin said they are still there. B. Warden said if they would have one more person, then something like that could be addressed. He said this is where they are coming from; it's not like they're trying to rake in all this revenue. The promise of the levy was to possibly build restrooms or hire a full-time parks supervisor and all of this can't take place unless they try to make up some of these losses. D. Corogin said two full time employees make a big difference.

B. Warden said at this point they should have more board members present before final decisions are made on this issue. He thinks it's inevitable that they will need to do something like this to maintain and make basic improvements. D. Brudney said they need to catch up on what hasn't been done. T. Parker said they also lose time and service when parks personnel must mow vacant lots, which the city pays for them to do. He agrees it would be better for the entire Parks Board to be present before voting on this issue. He proposed tabling this issue until the December meeting. B. Scholtz agreed and thought it should be part of the finance committee as well in understanding the big picture of their finances, so they have some control of where they are going and

where they are spending money. T. Parker said the finance director has been very helpful and they are getting up to date financial reports, so they will be in a better position going forward. B. Scholtz said there may be some things to cut out to trade for another person.

B. Warden said more than likely he feels there will be something charged for profit groups and the figures may change, but he thought this could be expected in 2019. T. Parker said this wouldn't be a huge cash cow because they only have about three 'for profit' events.

This issue was tabled to the December meeting for further discussion.

Financial Reports:

T. Parker reported that as of October 31 the ending balance in the Park Capital Levy fund (204) is \$216,418.08. The Recreation fund (205) is in the red by \$16,391.85. The general fund unencumbered balance was \$15,500, which is basically two months of wages. Additionally, there is a balance of \$2,200 in the general fund for the pool. They have enough in the Pool Donation fund (217) to open the pool in 2019. D. Corogin asked if they were going to need to do something with the pool deck and pump because if so, they need to figure this out in January/February before the pool opens. Mayor Forthofer said J. Pajk of the Planning Commission is in the cement trades and has offered to look at what needs to be done. T. Parker said there is the possibility of a serviceable used pump for the pool, which is being explored.

NEW BUSINESS:

Parks Board Meeting Policies:

T. Parker said he sent meeting policies to the board members to review as they have had a lot of things going on and they are trying to make their meetings effective since they meet once a month. He read the policies into the record which are attached hereto and incorporated herein as reference as the official record of proceedings. He said he would like to put some policies in place and noted that City Council has specific guidelines at their meetings as well.

B. Warden asked if they could table this issue until the time they can act on this as a full board. This issue was tabled to the December meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

B. Scholtz MOVED; D. Brudney seconded to adjourn the meeting. Vote 4 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

NEXT MEETING:

December 18, 2018 @ 7:00 pm - Municipal Complex Courtroom (687 Decatur)

~Gwen Fisher, Boards and Commissions