

FAIRFIELD PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

MINUTES

January 5, 2021

The monthly meeting of the Fairfield Parks and Recreation Board occurred on Tuesday, January 5, 2021 at the Fairfield Community Arts Center. Parks Board Members in attendance were Doug Meece, Gwen Ritchie, Christine Zboril, Leslie Besl, Paul Assum and Craig Keller. A motion was made and seconded to excuse member Don Carpenter. The motion passed and board member Don Carpenter was excused. Staff members in attendance: Tiphonie Howard, Parks Director; Brad Williams, Recreation Superintendent and Cyndi Kreke, Board Secretary.

Note: Board member Don Carpenter entered the meeting at 6:10pm

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS & CITIZEN COMMENTS:

None

REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes from the Parks and Recreation Board meeting held on Monday, December 14, 2020 were presented for approval. A motion was made by Gwen Ritchie and seconded by Craig Keller to approve the December 2020 minutes. The motion passed unanimously and the December meeting minutes were approved as presented.

REPORT OF OTHER BOARDS & COMMISSIONS / AD HOC COMMITTEES:

Planning Commission:

Last meeting cancelled – No report

Environmental Commission:

Last meeting cancelled – No report

Cultural Arts Advisory Commission:

Paul Assum reported there has also not been a recent meeting of the CAAC. Mr. Assum deferred to the website for information on current programming and events. Mr. Assum stated the programming for the youth classes has been delayed until next Monday.

School Board Report:

Christine Zboril stated the schools altered their quarantine rules. The school year is now halfway done and the second semester begins next week.

The Show Choir has continued performing and have implemented the use of cardboard cutouts for the audience.

Overall, the schools are doing the best they can and looking forward to continued progress.

Golf Course Ad Hoc Committee:

Doug Meece informed the Board that there has not been a meeting of the Golf Course Ad Hoc Committee recently. He asked if Director Tiphonie Howard or Recreation Superintendent Brad Williams had any information for the Board.

Ms. Howard reported that the results from the golf survey were in and the information was being compiled. Ms. Howard hoped to have the results to report at the February meeting.

Mr. Williams stated that the maintenance crew at the golf course have been able to execute quite a few projects. These include drainage issues that are being improved and extensive tree work between hole number 8 and Huffman Park. The tree removal project will allow for the reforestation plans at Huffman Park.

City Council Report:

Leslie Besl informed the Parks Board members that Dan Wendt, the Assistant City Manager is leaving for a position as City Manager in Vandalia, Ohio.

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Director Howard stated that by this meeting being moved up by two weeks, the end of the year financials have not been distributed yet. Ms. Howard did inform the Board that the golf operations brought in \$1,232,000.00 for the year 2020. This is only \$140,000.00 less than the previous year. These numbers include the pool and the fact that we were not capable of holding several of our golf outings. Expenses were lower so overall, 2020 has been a surplus year for the golf enterprise account. Mr. Meece complimented the staff on this achievement and stated the numbers are impressive considering the loss of the pool revenue and concessions. Ms. Howard informed the Board that the golf course acquired many new golfers this season. Her hope is that this trend will continue for next year. As of now, nobody knows what the summer will look like.

Ms. Howard asked the Board if they had any thoughts or concerns about the proposed resolution with the risk management group. Ms. Ritchie wanted clarification of the year out clause. Ms. Howard informed her the contract was for three years with the option of opting out if unsatisfied after the first year.

Mr. Williams clarified that this would be a partnership and not a complete turnover of pool operations. The Parks Department would be maintaining security with the police and fire department. Maintenance would also be a collaboration. The risk management group will be doing the routine opening and closing maintenance, which alleviates this burden from staff.

Ms. Howard distributed hard copies of the Operating Budget. Ms. Howard shared this information via slide at last month's meeting.

Ms. Howard informed the Board that the State Capital funding was approved last week. We were approved \$150,000.00 for the trail project and \$550,000.00 for the Harbin Park Pavilion. Director Howard discussed with the Board her concerns for the current concept plans. Ms. Howard would like to step back and reevaluate the concepts to something not quite as elaborate as the final design plan. The final plan would incorporate the concepts from the studies that were done with the community involvement.

The February 16, 2021 Parks Board meeting will be a lengthy meeting due the amount of legislation, CAPRA accreditation and other topics that need to be discussed. Ms. Howard would like the meeting to begin at 5:30 and a light dinner will be provided. Board member Paul Assum volunteered to provide drinks for the Board.

OLD BUSINESS:

Ms. Ritchie asked if there has been any progress on the land lot acquisition between Waterworks and Marsh Lake. Ms. Howard stated not at this time. We are still waiting. Director of Public Works, Ben Mann, is still in discussion with the owners.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Ritchie stated that recently, Hamilton County implemented a policy that anyone having a photographer take pictures in a park will have to obtain and pay for a permit. Ms. Ritchie wanted it known she would not be supportive of this process in Fairfield's parks and hopes that we do not have any plans to follow suit. The Board discussed this procedure and none of the members were supportive of this policy.

Mr. Assum complimented Ms. Howard on the magazine article about the Dog Park. He stated the staff and Parks Board members involved did an awesome job and the result is a beautiful park for our City. Ms. Besl stated concerns about the issues involved with maintaining the park. Many nonresidents also utilize our park. She had thought of possibly charging nonresidents to come into the park. After the discussion above, she assumes the Board would not be responsive to charging. The other Board members voiced opinions on not being receptive to charging to use the park. Ms. Howard stated it is not a bad idea but it would be difficult to implement and maintain such a procedure. Ms. Howard shared with the Board her goal to start a Park Foundation in the future for donations to our parks. This fund would help maintain our parks. Ms. Howard thinks the public would be very receptive to this plan.

Ms. Besl has seen numerous reports on the coyote issues in Fairfield. Residents have reported numerous sightings and that the population of coyotes is out of control. Ms. Howard stated the City has an Animal Control Officer that handles these issues.

Resolution 2021-01: Be it resolved by the Parks and Recreation Board that the City Manager is authorized to enter into an agreement with a Professional Pool Management Service for the comprehensive aquatic risk management program in accordance with the bids on file in the office of the City Manager. Chair Doug Meece read the resolution to the Board members and called for a vote. The resolution passed unanimously.

MEETING SCHEDULE:

The next scheduled meeting of the Parks and Recreation Board is scheduled for Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at the Fairfield Community Arts Center. The meeting will commence at 5:30pm.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Parks Board meeting adjourned at 6:48pm.

Cyndi A Kreke,
Board Secretary