

FAIRFIELD PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES
July 16, 2019

The monthly meeting of the Fairfield Parks and Recreation Board was conducted on Tuesday, July 16, 2019 at 6PM at the Fairfield Community Arts Center. Chairman Doug Meece called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Board Members in attendance were: Doug Meece, Don Carpenter, Gwen Ritchie, Dale Paullus, Christine Zboril and Paul Assum. A motion was made and seconded to excuse member Craig Keller. Staff members in attendance were Tiphonie Howard, Parks and Recreation Director; Brad Williams, Recreation Superintendent; Heidi Schiller, Arts and Hospitality Superintendent; Bob Schappacher, Park Maintenance Superintendent; Lucinda Lewellyn, Events and Programming Superintendent and Cyndi Kreke, Board Secretary. Audience members in attendance were Cincinnati Off-Road Alliance representative, Alex Maier and volunteer with the Literacy Program of Greater Cincinnati, Amy Starkey.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS & CITIZEN COMMENTS:

None

REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The request for executive session listed on the agenda was redacted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Doug Meece requested a motion to approve the Parks and Recreation Board meeting minutes from June 18, 2019. A motion was made and seconded and the June 18, 2019 minutes were approved as written.

REPORT OF OTHER BOARDS & COMMISSIONS / AD HOC COMMITTEES:

Planning Commission: Dale Paullus informed the Board that he had nothing to report due to the fact that there was no meeting last month of the Planning Commission.

Environmental Commission: Gwen Ritchie stated that the meeting of the Environmental Commission scheduled for July 3rd was cancelled due to the Red, White & Kaboom event.

Cultural Arts Advisory Commission: Staff member, Heidi Schiller reported the CAAC continued their preparations for the November Crossword Puzzle Tournament. Ms. Schiller also stated the Commission approved another artist for the August 2020 gallery. She also said that a "call to artists" had been advertised for the remaining two open slots.

School Board Report: Christine Zboril reported that preparations are beginning for the upcoming school year. Clean up has begun in the school buildings. On August 10th, there will be an event held at the Crossroads Middle School called the "Back to School Bash". This is an excellent program which is open to everyone and offers a host of information as well as the opportunity for students to receive vaccinations, obtain supplies, etc. for the new school year.

Golf Course Ad Hoc Committee: Doug Meece informed the Board that there are great things happening at the golf course. Mr. Meece stated that Keith Crutcher, golf professional, has started a chapter of the National PGA Junior League for ages 6 to 11 year olds. The Mid May Chamber Outing was a huge success and the City Championships will be held this month.

Mr. Meece reported that from his experience, the conditions at the golf course are definitely improving and that he had spoken to Derek Baxter about the steps the maintenance crew are taking to combat the weed problems.

Tiphonie Howard, Parks Director, reported on the plans for the pond. Ms. Howard stated that they obtained reviews from four companies regarding the conditions of the ponds. The biggest issue the golf course is facing is the depth of the ponds caused by the thick layer of sediment at the bottom of the ponds. This prevents the installation of a fountain in such shallow water. The plans are that by next spring, this issue will be resolved and a fountain will be installed.

Brad Williams, Recreation Superintendent, informed the Board that the revenue for the Golf/Aquatics division was down by 2% compared to last year. Mr. Williams attributed this mainly to the extensive amount of rain in the months of May and June. So far, the month of July has been very good for both the Aquatic Center and the Golf Courses. Mr. Williams updated the Board on the usage of the new software that was implemented this year. The software is proving to be an asset to gather and track data for determining trends and usage.

City Council Report: Councilman Craig Keller was not present at the meeting. Board member, Don Carpenter stated that at the last Council meeting the Parks Department was complimented on the Red, White & Kaboom event.

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Project Updates:

Ms. Howard told the Board that a survey from Survey Monkey went out today by email to patrons of the golf courses. The survey is intended to obtain customer feedback relating to their experience with our courses. Ms. Howard explained that mid-season is the ideal time to release the survey. By the end of the day, Ms. Howard had already had 58 responses which were mostly positive.

The bid advertisement for the Harbin Park Trailhead project has been publicized. The bid openings will occur on August 5th. Ms. Howard stated that she would like to have an emergency meeting scheduled for Tuesday, August 6th, to discuss the results of the bids (if needed). The Board agreed and made a motion and seconded that motion. An emergency meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, August 6, 2019 at the Community Arts Center.

Marsh Lake is now into its third week of allowing hand powered boats on the water. So far, there have been 58 boats launched. Most of these are also obtaining fishing permits. Board member, Gwen Ritchie asked if there had been any “kinks” in the process. Ms. Howard stated the only issue has been out of state boaters (Kentucky) who do not need to license their boats. Therefore, out of state boaters who do not have licenses on their boats just need to prove their place of residence.

Ms. Howard met with Pete Groh, citizen, about having some kind of tribute to “Goose Pond” as part of the new Dog Park project. Mr. Groh provided Ms. Howard with the history behind the manmade Goose Pond and how it got its name. It was discussed that a plaque explaining the history could possibly be one way to pay tribute. The Board supported the idea.

Ms. Howard stated that a late summer, early fall opening of the Dog Park is still on track.

Ms. Howard informed the Board that the Fairfield Aquatic Center recently had another surprise Ellis and Associates audit conducted. Once again, the Aquatic Center received an “exceeds” audit.

Little Free Library Presentation: Ms. Howard reintroduced Amy Starkey from the Literacy Program of Greater Cincinnati. Ms. Starkey explained to the Board the process of how the Free Library project would be implemented. Ms. Starkey would be the designated volunteer steward in charge of maintaining and supplying the library. The structure is not permanent and could be removed at any time. The proposed location she would like to see would be at Huffman Park near the edge of the parking lot closest to the Community Gardens. Board members stated it would be nice to also have park benches close by for patrons to sit and read if desired. The overall concept was favorably accepted by the Board. It was agreed upon by Ms. Howard, Director, and the Board to discuss the concept with the city attorney before making a final decision.

OLD BUSINESS:

The position of Parks Board representative to the Cultural Arts Advisory Commission still needs to be filled. Since the position had yet to be filled, Don Carpenter volunteered to serve as the Parks Board representative to the Cultural Arts Advisory Committee. However, Paul Assum stated that he would really be interested in serving as the Parks Board representative to give him experience with the other aspects of being a Parks Board member. Mr. Carpenter agreed and a motion was made and seconded to appoint Mr. Assum as the Cultural Arts Advisory Committee representative.

NEW BUSINESS:

The location of the August 20th Parks Board meeting was discussed. It was agreed by the Board that the August meeting would be held at Huffman Park with the contingency that if the weather was bad, it would be moved to the South Trace Golf Clubhouse.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion for adjournment was made and seconded. The Parks and Recreation Board meeting adjourned at 6:50PM.

MEETING SCHEDULE:

The next regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Board is scheduled for Tuesday, August 20, 2019, 6:00 PM, at Huffman Park (weather permitting).

Cyndi A Kreke
Board Secretary