

FAIRFIELD PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES
August 27, 2019

The monthly meeting of the Fairfield Parks and Recreation Board was conducted on Tuesday, August 27, 2019 at 6:00PM at Huffman Park. Chairman Doug Meece called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM. Board Members in attendance were: Doug Meece, Craig Keller, Gwen Ritchie, Dale Paullus, and Christine Zboril. A motion was made and seconded to excuse Board members *Don Carpenter and Paul Assum. Don and Paul were excused. 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 and Cyndi Kreke, Board Secretary. Audience members in attendance were Cincinnati Off-Road Alliance representative, Alex Maier and Fairfield citizen, Jack Wesseler.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS & CITIZEN COMMENTS:

None

REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

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

REPORT OF OTHER BOARDS & COMMISSIONS / AD HOC COMMITTEES:

Planning Commission: Dale Paullus informed the Board that the next Planning Commission meeting would be held tomorrow evening (August 28th).

Environmental Commission: Gwen Ritchie reported to the Board that Dave Butsch, Public Works Director, was present at the last Environmental Commission meeting as a guest speaker. Mr. Butsch gave an update to the commission about what has been happening in the Public Works Department.

Ms. Ritchie also stated that Bob Schappacher, Park Maintenance Superintendent, would be acting as a liaison for the "Taking Root" 2020 program. This project will look into energy saving trees and choosing which trees to give out to residents. The City of Fairfield will be working jointly on this project with the City of Hamilton. The Environmental Commission will be hosting the City of Hamilton at their next meeting and sharing with Hamilton projects that are being developed in the City of Fairfield, such as the Dog Park and the Little Library.

Ideas for 2020 were also discussed at the EC's last meeting. One idea is to recognize businesses that are doing something green. It was recommended that possibly a plaque would be awarded to such businesses. The commission is still in the preliminary stage of deciding the particulars of this program. Also for 2020, the commission would like to talk to the schools about a tree planting program.

Cultural Arts Advisory Commission: Staff member, Heidi Schiller distributed a brochure to the Board showcasing the 2019/2020 Fairfield Community Arts Center season performances in the theatre. Ms. Schiller stated that tickets for the new season will go on sale beginning Tuesday, September 3, 2019. The next meeting of the CAAC will be a working meeting. The members will be judging the artists' entries in the Community Showcase artist event.

School Board Report: Christine Zboril reported that the schools are on day 5 of the new school year. The first home high school football game is Friday night and it will be a military tribute event. Ms. Zboril stated next year at the Academy building, they will be adding a middle school component of thirty spots to their alternative program. They went to the Board last week with the presentation.

***Don Carpenter entered the meeting at 6:15pm.**

Golf Course Ad Hoc Committee: Doug Meece informed the Board the City Championships were held in July at the golf course. Overall, the turnout was good save for the Ladies division which had a small turnout.

Mr. Meece stated that he has noticed improvement in the condition of the greens and the water hazards are steadily improving. Ms. Howard shared with the Board the procedures in progress to deal with the water hazards and the procedures for the addition of electric for water features and future development. Mr. Meece stated the negative he has seen is the overtaking of crabgrass in the month of July. After the meeting, Mr. Meece told the Board there would be a tour of Huffman Park as well as the golf course if they were interested.

City Council Report: Councilman Craig Keller reported that City Council swore in a new Fire Lieutenant at the previous council meeting.

Councilman Keller stated that Councilman, Ron D'Epifanio brought his team from the Joe Nuxhall Miracle League to the council meeting. In recognition, the Mayor gave each member of the team a key to the City.

A proclamation was awarded to the two individuals who saved the life of a gentleman who collapsed after a 14 mile bicycle ride.

Mr. O'Brien from the Fairfield YMCA presented City Council with an update.

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Project Updates:

Harbin Park Bids: All bids came back over budget. The bids came in 175000.00 over the projected cost of the project. Ms. Howard stated that we would revisit this project in the spring of 2020 during the Capital Improvement discussions.

Goose Pond: During research, it was discovered that although the city owns the land where the pond is located, it is not part of the Dog Park property. The pond resides on the land which is earmarked for the boat launch project. Ms. Howard suggested that we will keep this on the table for discussion when we get to that phase of development.

Budget: A meeting with Finance is scheduled for Wednesday to discuss the budget for 2020. Overall, Parks is requesting about a 5% increase. Ms. Howard distributed financials for the revenues and expenses for the Parks Department through July 2019 and discussed the numbers with the Board. Ms. Howard also presented participation statistics.

Dog Park: Bob Schappacher stated that the timeline is still on track for the projected September 21, 2019 opening of the dog park. The fencing will be starting soon.

Ms. Howard told the Board that invitations will be sent as soon as we are definite of the date and time of the opening.

Marsh Park: This year, due to addition of boat rentals, we are expanding the hours for Marsh Lake to include weekends in October. Previously, the Fishing Lake was only open weekends in September and then closed until next season.

Founders Park: Ms. Howard stated that she considers Founder's Park a "gateway park" to the City when coming into the city on Nilles road. She informed the Board that they will notice work being done to give that location a facelift.

Leadership Summit: A leadership summit is being held in Dublin, Ohio for two days in November (the 19th and the 20th) that Ms. Howard would like her staff leadership team to attend. Ms. Howard is requesting

that the Parks Board meeting for November 19th be moved to another date or cancelled if there is no pressing business.

Survey Monkey: Ms. Howard distributed the “Customer Satisfaction Survey” results (questions and answers) to the board members. This was an online survey that was sent to 346 individuals late July with two weeks to respond. The response rate to the survey was 31 percent. The responses that came back were from a variety of zip codes. Ms. Howard went through the survey and discussed the responses with the Board. She stated that the negative comments were elements that were already being addressed. Overall, Ms. Howard was very satisfied with the results.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

The location of the next Parks Board was discussed and decided the meeting will be held at Marsh Fishing Lake.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None

COMMENTS:

Mr. Jack Wessler, Fairfield Citizen, inquired about plans for a proposed “walking trail” that would be around the perimeter of Harbin Park. Mr. Wessler questioned as to why this path would be ten feet wide and he shared his concerns about vandalism and trash that could be the result of paving this path. The Board conveyed to Mr. Wessler that the width of the path was due to being ADA compliant and for future use for events. They also stated that the proposed path would connect three neighborhoods to Harbin Park. Preliminary surveys and feedback by residents of Fairfield were favorable to this project. This project has been part of the Master Plan. The Board thanked him for coming and sharing his concerns.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion for adjournment was made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 6:54pm.

MEETING SCHEDULE:

The next regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Board is scheduled for Tuesday, September 17, 2019 at the Marsh Fishing Lake.

Cyndi A Kreke
Board Secretary