

GRIFFITH PARKS and RECREATION BOARD

Minutes for the March 12, 2018 meeting:

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. at the Town Hall, 111 N. Broad Street in Griffith, Indiana by President, Tim Diamond. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

The meeting was attended by the following members:

- John Dudliceck -Tim Diamond -Christine Wroblewski -Dan Perez
-Al Markut, Park Superintendent -

Jim Marker, Town Council Liaison, and Jennifer Dildine, School Board Liaison, were absent.

Dan Perez made a motion to approve the February 12, 2018 minutes. Christine Wroblewski seconded the motion; minutes were approved.

John Dudliceck presented accounts payable vouchers numbered 16679-16692 in the amount of \$4675.73. He then made a motion to accept the claims as received. Dan Perez seconded the motion; motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Tim Diamond announced that the April 9, 2018 Park Board meeting will be held at 7 PM. A study session will be held at 6 PM before the meeting; one will follow if necessary.

He reminded residents to call 911 if any graffiti, damage, or questionable behavior is seen in any of the town parks.

General comments regarding the Parks Department or bike paths can be directed to griffithparks@griffith.in.gov

CORRESPONDENCE:

Tim Diamond reported that he had received email from the Diocese of Gary regarding a Pilgrimage on our bike paths on August 4, 2018. More information will be forthcoming.

He also announced that May 12, 2018 will be Clean-up day. John Dudliceck inquired as to whether or not Rich Leber is still helping organize. Tim Diamond thought that he will be, but that Carl Zurbriggen has moved on to Whiting YMCA and but hopes to still be involved. He is recruiting some new people for this town-wide cleanup.

Tim then added that we have received a proposal to redo the signage on the bike paths. More information will be given under New Business.

Lastly, he mentioned the Rails to Trails Celebration. Chris Wroblewski added that this is a National Kick Off for the trails. Even though this is the 6th annual celebration, we have not participated before but wanted to do this in conjunction with the opening of Panther Park on April 7. Included are events such as a National Bike Challenge and Bike to School Day.

REPORTS:

Financial Report: None

Park Superintendent: Al Markut had a few items to discuss:

1. He commented that the ice rink has been taken down; it had taken 3 ½ days to pump the water off. The liner is not reusable. He recommended putting a border around the volleyball court and possibly put a drain in the center.
2. Al then stated that the tree at Panther Park has been removed. He has called a gentleman to take care of the mole issue at Broad Street and to re-do Cheever Park, which is again getting infested with moles.
3. Al is also waiting for A&E to finish the panel boards and then they will help Al level off the ground. He is not sure if they are done digging and believes they are waiting for NIPSCO. He wants to get the work done there for opening day of Central Market.
4. There was an issue with cars parking at Central Park. When the ice rink was open the people not only parked on the black top but were also parking in the grass. He thought we should be doing a better job of enforcing the parking restrictions in Central Park.
5. He then asked about the status of the new mower; this is the 3rd month in which he has brought this subject up. He was hoping to get a decision. Tim Diamond said that there was a question of where the

funds would come from to purchase this item; he asked if recycling funds could be used to pay for this and Al replied that he thought they could. Al added that the cost would probably be between \$7000.00-\$9000.00, and that this mower would be used to cut the soccer fields and the grass around Cheever.

6. Al and his crew have started reseeding the Central Market area grass south of the roadway that goes through the Park and had used quite a bit of seed. He wanted to get it growing as soon as possible.
7. Al then brought up the subject of painting the Central Park Pavilion. He didn't know the exact date that it was last painted, but thought that it had been done 6-8 years ago. It might be time to start thinking about doing it again; he does have the name of the person who painted it last time and thought it might cost about \$4000.00
8. Another subject brought up was the washroom doors at the softball building which he believes to be unsafe. Al had asked the building commissioner if he could help with this project in getting the doors changed. Steve McDermott is supposed to get back to him.
9. Al also reminded the Board that they should start thinking about replacing his trucks as they are getting old and have quite a bit of miles on them.
10. He went on to say that the shed by the Little League should be patched on the back side because it is such an eyesore. We may need to make it bigger or perhaps knock it down and rebuild it. Tim Diamond mentioned that Central Market was interested in expanding the shed as well.
11. Al mentioned that he heard that Little League had a tractor for sale, but he was informed that it was already sold.
12. He then recommended that we add more sand (possible 50 yards) to the volleyball court unless work is to be done on the border.
13. Woodland Park could use 50 -60 yards of mulch; this could be a good project for clean-up day. It could be delivered and dumped to be ready to spread if he gets the okay from the Board.
14. Al has two names for back-up people for summer help; his same four that worked last year are coming back.
15. He has 5 bricks that need to be put in but the weather has been too cold.
16. Three benches are in the yard at Colfax and Main which will have to have concrete bases poured. The Cheever water fountain also needs concrete. He thinks one bench will be put in on Oak by the water fountain and the other two put on the clock walkway.

Tim Diamond asked what the target date is to open the restrooms and Al replied that it is weather related. He relies on TLC for that. The coldest spot is between the two restrooms at Central, and that is where the water comes in. He hopes that they will be open for the Egg Hunt.

School Board Liaison's Report –John Dudlicek announced that the Robotics Team gave a presentation at the last School Board meeting. They will be competing this coming weekend in the North Super Regional (along with 72 other schools from 13 states) for three days, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. If they win, they can then move on to the World Championship. Tim Diamond added that the Pantherettes took third place in the state competition.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD:

1. Handball Court - John Dudlicek reported that the court had been paved last year. Painting will get done this year, and we are planning on a grand opening and partnering with the "Y" to start leagues.
2. Panther Park – Dan Perez stated that decisions have been made as to where the 4 exercise stations (including a chin-up and push-up bar) should go. He will get a quote for the installation and plans on meeting with Al, hoping to get this done by April 7 for the Trails to Rails Celebration.
3. Cheever Playground – Tim reported that a couple of the old pieces of playground equipment from Central Park have been moved to the north end of Cheever near the pavilion to make a small toddler playground. A couple of the old pieces of equipment have been removed.

NEW BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD:

Sports' League Leases – John Dudlicek announced that the general lease agreements went out about one month ago and will be signed tonight. He made a motion to grant the president, Tim Diamond, to enter agreements with Griffith Youth Baseball, Griffith Girls' Softball, Griffith Soccer, Griffith Pop Warner, Illinois Fire and the NY Sox Fast Pitch. Dan seconded the motion; all in favor. Motion passed. John Dudlicek then reminded everyone present that the lease does mention that all must follow the rules and regulation of the Parks, and that includes no parking on the pavement and no vehicles in the Parks. Tim Diamond added that equipment and deliveries can be dropped off but no parking is allowed.

John Dudlicek expressed his opinion that although he loves the ice rink he feels that until we have improvements related to the borders and drainage and how it functions, he feels it is too costly and too much of an effort for the Parks to be doing the rink. Al commented that his crew spends a lot of time working on it. Tim also added that we only get 2 years out of the liner at a cost of \$2000.00 plus. Public works and Parks employees spend a lot of time moving the sand around. As the ice thaws, animals run in it and air pockets form underneath.

John also wants to address the subject of the new mower and truck. Tim agreed and suggested that the use of recycling funds be looked into. Dan said that he looked over the data on the list of vehicles and agreed that we need to look at the purchase of a truck and forecast for future purchases. Tim Diamond then stated that the mower is a more immediate need as the mowing season is soon beginning.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR:

None

NEW BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR:

Mitch Barloga of Northwest Indiana Regional Planning, who has been working on the trails in this region for 14 years, handed out descriptions of the signage project (which show signage and mile markers) to all Board members. He explained that over time as the trails have developed people using the trails do not often know which trail they are on, what street they are crossing or what city they are in. He has worked with 10 different entities, eight on the Erie Lakawanna Trail and 2 on the Prairie Duneland Trails. A catalogue of signage has been accepted, and an interlocal agreement has been signed, a copy of which was forwarded to Tim Diamond. Mitch wants to be sure there is enough federal funding assistance for all the communities. The total cost is approximately \$800,000.00, \$66,862.00 of which is Griffith's share. With the federal funding (which comes to 80% of the cost) all the Town would be responsible for would be \$13,500.00. The project will be bid in August and completed by this calendar year. Tim Diamond asked if the contents of the signage are specific to businesses or just general as in "Griffith this way". Mitch replied that there are pedestrian directional signs available pointing people to specific destinations. Every community does need entrance signs and mile markers (every ½ mile north to south). The Council had some input on directional signs but did not opt for them. Rick Konopasek interjected that there was a kiosk at Broad by the railroad track by the gunsmith and one welcome sign with Highland and one with Schererville. He also stated that street signs at each crossing will be named. John Dudlicek commented that he would like a pedestrian directional sign at Main or at Panther Park. Tim Diamond asked if there was a strong base around the signs to mow around or weed whack around. Mitch Barloga replied that the signs are easy to maintain and prevent vandalism.

Rick Konopasek asked what the timeline was for the Town to pay the funds. Mitch replied that he will be in touch when all is fine-tuned—possibly in 4-6 weeks.

Dan Perez asked if any one community opts out, will the project still continue. Mitch replied that all were on board for the engineering and that, yes, it would continue. Rick Konopasek then asked if the community opts out, will they at least get the mile marker signs. Mitch Barloga replied that there would need to be some compromise.

In conclusion, Rick Konopasek stated that it comes to the matter of the Park Board finding \$14,000.00 for the signs to keep the timeline going; a decision needs to be made by the April or May meeting.

The meeting was adjourned by President, Tim Diamond, at 7:48 pm.


Diane Kujawa
Recording Secretary