

GRIFFITH PARKS and RECREATION BOARD

Minutes for the May 9, 2016 meeting:

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. at the Town Hall, 111 N. Broad Street in Griffith, Indiana by Vice President, Gina Smith. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

The meeting was attended by the following members:

-Gina Smith - Susan Hoese - Tim Diamond -Al Markut, Park Supervisor
-Leah Dumezich, School Board Liaison Pat Schaadt, Town Council Liaison

Rob Bubala was not present as he had resigned from the Park Board.

George Jerome, Clerk-Treasurer, was also in attendance.

Gina Smith announced that nominations were being accepted for President. Sue Hoese nominated Tim Diamond and Leah Dumezich seconded the motion. All were in favor and Tim Diamond accepted the nomination.

Sue Hoese made a motion to approve the March 14, 2016 minutes; Gina Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The June Park Board pre-meeting will take place at 6:00 pm; our regularly scheduled meeting will follow at 7:00 pm.

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

CORRESPONDENCE:

Tim Diamond announced that he had received one email from Keith Mitchell regarding the sand at the volley ball courts. Mr. Mitchell had some concerns about the balls going onto the street and sand getting out of the courts and had suggested getting some temporary surrounding such as a snow fence. He also had commented on the weeds in that area. Tim stated that he will investigate to see what other types of fencing are available and asked Al Markut to be more diligent about controlling the weeds there.

REPORTS:

Treasurer's report: Claims in the amount of \$4624.02 (Four thousand six hundred twenty-four dollars and two cents) were presented. Gina Smith made a motion to accept the claims as presented; Tim seconded the motion. Motion carried. Sue Hoese announced that at the next meeting she will have the revenue, fund and appropriation reports available and will talk about upcoming major expenditures moving forward.

Park Superintendent: Al Markut announced that he has his full complement of summer help of five temporary summer workers. Three have worked last year and two are new and will need training. His men will be working on keeping up the mowing. He is waiting to see what the Saturday Clean-Up will accomplish and then the men will pick up from there. Al brought up the subject of a new vendor for the bricks and stated that only 13 characters per line could be put on them instead of current 15. Al asked if he could have permission to use the vendor we used before. Mr. Diamond stated that instead of paying \$15.00 per brick we could get them from Florida for only \$5.00/brick. Thus, this item was tabled for the time being.

School Board: Leah Dumezich congratulated the graduates who will have their ceremony on June 5, 2016. She added that Middle School awards will be presented May 19, 2016 and that the top 10 awards were awarded last week. Also, she said that the schools are still looking for teams for the Volunteer Clean-up for Sat., May 14, 2016 and announced that the band will be performing on May 21, 2016 in Central Park. Lastly she stated that there will be a School Board meeting this Thursday in the high school auditorium at 7:30 pm at which time there will be discussion regarding extending the school day.

GSEC – Julie Anderson announced that GSEC has had its first meeting and has set all their dates. She will email the list of the dates and contact information to the Board to have it put on the web. She stated that the parade will be on July 4th and that they are trying to come up with a theme for the state's Bicentennial by the next meeting. Julie also said that she would like the more of the High School groups to participate in the parade as last year the swim team the only entry from the school. Leah Dumezich asked Julie to email information to her and she will make sure the superintendent's office gets it out. Al Markut then reminded Julie that he also needs the dates.

Senior Center – Pat Schaadt reported that the Center is doing fine; a Cinco de Mayo party was held last week which was well attended. She reminded everyone that lunches are still \$5.00 and must be ordered a day ahead.

Central Market –Kathy Ruesken stated that the Central Market began last Friday and was a huge success with a tremendous turnout. Pat Schaadt added that there was a great band that night and ticket sales were out the roof. She continued by saying that last year the first market made \$85.00 in ticket sales while this year the total was over \$4000.00. So far there are 36 vendors who change weekly because a 1/2 year registration is available this year. Kathy then remarked that she gets requests from vendors who want to get into the Market. She then went on to thank Tim Diamond for stepping in to help with ticket sales and added that there will be a change in ticket sales with more people selling.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD:

Tim Diamond went over the items of unfinished business:

1. Park Board Member Vacancy – Tim Diamond announced that since Rob Bubala has stepped down the Town Council is narrowing down possible candidates.
2. Painting of Central Park Playground Equipment and Soft Surface Playground Quotes – Since we have had such great success with re-doing South Park, we will be getting some quotes with the help of Sue Hoeser for the surface and painting at Central Park.
3. South Park Pop Warner Field Lighting – More quotes are needed for the electrical issues with the poles at this park.
4. Babe Ruth Field Electric and Lighting – Everything is working fine here, but an upgrade may be needed in the future.
5. Volunteer Program – Per Leah Dumezich this item may be taken off the agenda.
6. Advertising Pavilions and Memorials – The Park Board is looking to redo brochures and to update the pavilion rental advertising.
7. YMCA Clean-up Day May 14 – We expect to have a few hundred volunteers to clean up the parks and put out mulch. Valerie Wotkun added that sign-ups are being taken at the “Y” as the committee would like to know who is coming. Leah Dumezich also remarked that anyone can sign up at the “Y”'s website; there will be some kid's entertainment, a band, and food will be provided after the Clean Up.

NEW BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD:

1. Paved Path from Panther Park (Columbia Ave) to Bike Path – Tim Diamond stated that there is an effort to get this area developed. Al Markut said that some of this is actually an easement. Kathy Ruesken, 1103 E. Lake St., suggested that we use this park for a wellness initiative. This park might be one of three stations along the bike path to have outdoor exercise equipment. We might also build a larger multi-use facility. For example it might include a bathroom, a potting shed and a children's educational garden which could be utilized after school and in the summer by the schools or any special needs organizations. Kathy thought that if there is any space left a garden such as one like in Taltree

Arboretum in Valparaiso could be put in. Tim Diamond agreed that he had also envisioned an exercise park and water station there.

2. Development of a Parks Foundation – Tim Diamond then explained that most towns have foundations for charitable donations and to apply for different grants which government agencies cannot go after. Through the Legacy Foundation we have the opportunity to have a fund within their foundation. Thus, he would like to make a proposal to create a Griffith Park and Recreation Fund Public Foundation to enable us to go after different funds and grants. He is awaiting approval from the lawyer to approve this fund. Kathy Ruesken mentioned that the Neighborhood Spotlight group has talked about working with the Park Board to have the opportunities to receive more grants. Sue Hoese then made a motion to approve the fund in the Legacy Foundation once approval is received by the Town Council; Gina Smith seconded the motion. All in favor; motion passed.
3. Park Worker Job Description – Sue Hoese made a motion to approve the revised Public Works job description and qualifications (which will also be approved by the Town Council as well). Gina Smith seconded the motion; motion passed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR:

None

NEW BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR:

Valerie Wotkun, 1004 W. Elm, remarked that the idea of having a Fitness Station at the Panther Park location had also been discussed at the Imagine Griffith meeting. She has come across a program where you can win \$500.00 for a project idea towards something which is “For theLove of the Region”. The article was “Answer the question, Where is the Fun? She will be sending in an entry. She also had been researching some of the fitness stations and has passed around information at the Imagine Griffith meeting, getting a positive response from one of the senior citizens there. Tim Diamond then added that he is working on a new five year strategic plan to submit to the DNR which will open up opportunities for grants. He also added that he is working on a draft for a new survey to be filled out online; a paper survey will be available as well.

Aaron Pollock, 127 N. Rensselaer, thanked the Park Board for fixing the dugouts at Cheever Park. He also asked if his team, the Sox, could use Cheever Park one or two days on the weekend when not being used by Girls’ Softball. Sue Hoese asked that he give her the dates of the weekends he would be interested in so she could verify with Girls’ Softball if they were available.

Cheryl Satkus Wisemon, 330 N. Indiana, asked what the money earned from Central Market was used for. She wondered if any was available to get Al extra help and possibly get some landscaping done at Tot Park in the area where the sign is. Sue Hoese reported that the money made at the Market was used for entertainment, electricity and to pay workers. Rick Ryfa, Town Council President, added that some of the money is to be spent on the purchase of new picnic tables for the parks. Cheryl then asked if she could have a breakdown of the finances. Sue Hoese reported that at the next meeting in June she will have reports available. She then added that the beer tents bring in money; tips collected at Rock n Rail were donated to Shop with a Cop, and were used for pumpkins for Oktoberfest and crafts for the kids.

George Jerome, Clerk Treasurer, commented that proceeds and expenses from events are separate from the Park Budget. Rick Ryfa then added that the money for the events is from non-taxpayers dollars. He explained that George has created a fund for special events which includes each festival. George Jerome added that the Park is funded primarily by tax dollars with some miscellaneous income; special events are self-sustaining.

Meeting was adjourned by President, Tim Diamond at 7:50 pm.

Diane Kujawa
Recording Secretary

