

GRIFFITH PARKS and RECREATION BOARD

Minutes for the July 8, 2013 meeting:

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. at the Town Hall, 111 N. Broad Street in Griffith, Indiana by President, Rob Bubala. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

The meeting was attended by the following members:

-Rob Bubala -A.J. Lewis -Scott Sutton -Al Markut, Park Superintendent
-Pat Schaadt, Town Council Liaison

Gina Smith and Rich Muha, School Board Liaison were absent.

A.J. made a motion to accept the June 10, 2013 minutes. Scott Sutton seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

Claims in the amount of \$7062.65 (seven thousand sixty-two dollars and sixty-five cents) were presented. Scott Sutton made a motion to accept the claims as presented. A.J. Lewis seconded the motion. Motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

At the last meeting on June 10, the Park Superintendent was named. The Town Council has received our recommendation.

CORRESPONDENCE:

The Park Board has received an email from Aaron Pollock of Griffith Girl's Softball requesting that dogs be banned from the Park. The matter was discussed at the pre-meeting. A.J. Lewis recommended that during the team's leased time signs can be posted to keep dogs out during the games. Scott Sutton seconded the motion and it carried.

Rob Bubala also was contacted regarding the possibility of a wedding being held in Central Park with alcohol being served. He will put them in contact with the proper people.

A.J. Lewis added that a registered letter will be coming regarding a zoning variance at 1717 N. Elmer and the opening of a day care, Love of Learning. The meeting will be held July 24, 2013 and the Board needs to give input because of its proximity to the park. A.J. Lewis recommended that we let them have the variance since the property had once before been a day care. She will let the BZA know we have no issue with the variance.

REPORTS:

Treasurer: Rob Bubala reported that the first infusion of tax funds has been received. All funds are in a favorable balance at this time.

Park Superintendent: Al Markut announced that his men are keeping up with their weekly duties. They have also cleaned up five trees damaged by storms. He asked to have permission to buy chains and seats for swings at South Park. A.J. Lewis motioned to allow the purchase. Scott Sutton seconded. Motion passed. In addition, Al asked for the okay to line up Midwest Painting to get the pavilion painting done at Central Park after our Central Markets on Fridays. Rob Bubala made a motion recommending the painting be done. A.J. Lewis seconded it. Motion passed.

Finally, Al Markut requested permission to purchase the mulch for Central Park and Woodland Park. Rob Bubala made the motion recommending this purchase. Scott Sutton seconded the motion. Motion passed.

School Board: No report

GSEC – Julie Anderson reported that the parade went on without a hitch (except for a small issue with barricades). She has send an email asking how she pays the bands and float winners. A.J. Lewis responded that Ms. Anderson needs to submit an invoice with name, address and amount each winner is receiving. She will let Ms. Anderson know if a W-9 is required and the cut off amount is for receiving one.

Rob Bubala will post the winners on line.

Julie then added that the Symphony will perform in Central Park on July 26. GSEC will be there in the morning to help decorate the pavilion. The symphony members will determine by noon if they will perform outside. Otherwise the concert will be held in Griffith High School auditorium.

Senior Center – Pat Schaadt reported that all is fine at the Senior Center. They have just had their “Steak and Shake” lunch of cheeseburgers, hamburgers and shakes, have had potlucks and will be hosting a Luau on July 12, 2013.

Farmer’s Market – Kathy Ruesken reported that the Market is going well and continues to grow. She has visited other markets and feels ours is one of the nicest. Many vendors are requesting to be a part of our market. A. J. Lewis mentioned that she saw it advertised in Panorama Magazine.

Ms. Ruesken said that there was a decline in the numbers in the garden area this past week, probably due to Highland’s festival.

A.J. Lewis voiced her concern about all the trucks and trailers in the Park taking away from the atmosphere. Kathy Ruesken explained that some of the problems arise because of the need for electricity. Rob Bubala asked that Kathy attend a study session with the Park Board to plan for next year and suggest any changes that can be made.

Pat Schaadt extended thanks on behalf of her and Ms. Ruesken to the police for their coverage at the Family Beer Garden.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD:

A.J. Lewis reported that she is still working on the cell tower lighting for the flag at Cheever Park.

A.J. then made a motion that the Board hire Acorn Fence for the new perimeter fencing at the 39th Street Park. This would include three sides with a 6 foot galvanized fence for \$4150.00. Scott seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Rob Bubala thanked everyone for speaking in regard to the matter at Tot Park and introduced Lt. Gang who had information for everyone on this matter.

Lt. Gang had a discussion with Rob Bubala and Glen Gaby, Town Council President and did some research on the Tot Park problem. He found that since the 1997 there have been 95 calls for that Park, usually 4, 5, or 6 annually. In 2012 there had been 37 calls, two thirds of them were park curfew issues. One drug related arrest was made; three calls were regarding profanity and two for littering. Per Glen Gaby’s request, the officers were polled as to whether or not the baskets should be returned. 69% of the police felt they should, 31% felt they should be left off. Lt. Gang feels there needs to be some kind of compromise in this situation.

A suggestion was made to put hours on the use of the basketball goals. Lt. Gang encourages everyone to keep calling when they see things that are not right. He feels that the hoops give this age group something to do and they are out in the open where the police can keep an eye on them.

Debra Fizer, 746 N. Lafayette, commented that the hoops be put up temporarily to see what occurs and that more immediate action be taken.

Cheryl Satkus reiterated that almost 70 residents near the park signed the petition to leave the hoops down and wondered why no one is listening to them. She suggested that there are other areas where basketball can be played.

Lt. Gang responded that this a very sensitive social issue.

Ms. Satkus commented that some of the seniors at the center won't come forward when they feel intimidated by the youths hanging out near the Senior Center. They are afraid of retaliation.

A.J. Lewis asked if any name is given out when calls to the police are made and she was told no. Aaron Pollock, 127 N. Rensselaer suggested that a sign be put up near the Senior Center for Senior Center Parking only. Pat Schaadt added that the property there belongs to the railroad who had given permission for the parking lot. She doesn't think the parking could be restricted.

Cecil Wright, 207 N. Lafayette, stated that before the hoops were down there was more of a mob action at the park and no one took their kids there. It is now quiet and more families are using the park.

A.J. Lewis then agreed that this is a sensitive issue and that a compromise needs to be made. She made a motion that the nets be put up when school starts in mid-August (August 15) and then the issue would be re-addressed in six months. Scott Sutton seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Cecil Wright then asked if basketball is still played at Franklin and was told yes. South Park, St. Mary and Wadsworth all have basketball nets. He would like to see the hoops lowered at Tot Park for the younger children to play.

Lt. Gang said that the residents should not hesitate to call the police and should urge their neighbors to call if there are any problems.

Rob Bubala reminded everyone that the tip line is also available.

Pat Schaadt asked if the bicycle patrols go to Tot Park and was told by Lt. Gang that they patrol there as well as Griffith Park Plaza, the east side of Town, Central Park and the Bike Trail. These patrols are funded by the Crime Prevention Funds.

Cheryl Satkus then asked if there was going to be any time limits on when the basketball hoops could be used when they are put up in August or if they would be able to be used until the park closes at dusk. A.J. Lewis responded that the ordinance says the parks are open until dusk and that perhaps this issue could be addressed at the six month review.

NEW BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD:

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR:

None

NEW BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR:

Mr. Gonzales of the “Y” was present to sign leases; these will be signed immediately after the meeting.

Aaron Pollock, of Griffith Girl’s Softball, requested a one day lease to host a Police vs. Firemen charity softball game in September or at the end of August (when the “Y” doesn’t have any games). He also would like to host a 3 on 3 invitational tournament as a fundraiser for his league. He might need to use more than one court if he gets enough entries. Rob Bubala stated that he must verify insurance coverage with his insurance agent.

Aaron also added that his Softball League Board is discussing the possibility of a land contract to purchase property that the School Board is looking to sell. He needs to talk to the Town Council and address the School Board regarding this issue. If the land is sold to the Town, he would like a year round lease.

Valerie Watkun, 1004 W. Elm Place, Chairperson of the Imagine Griffith Committee, brought a list of things that need attention in Town. She would like to have different groups adopt an area and clean it up. Deb Fizer, 747 N. Lafayette, has cleaned up the welcome signs but she hopes that the Park Dept. can address some of the issues on her list.

Rob Bubala suggested that the 4H Griffith Gridders may be able to tackle a couple of projects. He asked that he be kept informed if any items on the list are picked up.

Ms. Fizer, 746 N. Lafayette, added that she has been taking care of three flower beds at Central Park and that the park workers should be trained so as prevent further damage. She also added that the pear trees near Franklin need to have the Christmas lights taken off of them.

The Imagine Griffith group also has their bicycle project going on. Ms. Watkun hopes to have at least ten decorated bikes around town; a couple of them are out already.

The meeting was adjourned by President Rob Bubala at 8:00 p.m.

Recording Secretary

Diane Kujawa