

GRIFFITH PARKS and RECREATION BOARD

Minutes for the May 13, 2019 meeting:

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 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 Dudlicek -Dan Perez -Christine Wroblewski -Tim Diamond
-Kathy Ruesken, School Board Liaison -Al Markut, Park Superintendent -Jim Marker, Town Council Liaison

John Dudlicek made a motion to approve the April 8, 2019 minutes. Kathy Ruesken seconded the motion; minutes were approved.

Christine Wroblewski presented claims 23005-23025 in the amount of \$9991.33. She then made a motion to approve the claims as presented. John Dudlicek seconded the motion; motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Tim Diamond announced that the next Park Board meeting will be held on June 10, 2019 at 7 PM. A study session will be held at 6 PM, and a follow-up meeting will take place after the regularly scheduled meeting if necessary.

He reminded residents to please call the police non-emergency number at 911 if any graffiti, damage, or questionable behavior is seen in any of the town parks.

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

CORRESPONDENCE:

Tim Diamond went over a couple items of correspondence:

Handball Tournament – A group will be hosting a handball tournament in conjunction with the Rockopella music fest on June 15, 2019.

Tri Kappa Donation – Communication was received from Tri Kappa. They are asking for areas to which they can donate for park related activities and will be meeting this month. We hope to be hearing from them soon.

Woodland Playground Drainage – There have been concerns about this playground because of the large amount of rain which we have had recently. Because of the amount of trees here, the playground doesn't drain quickly. We did put mulch to help build it up and hope to eventually put a soft surface there. Al remarked that this is the worse he has ever seen Woodland Park. He and his crew had to pump it out for 7 days.

REPORTS:

Park Superintendent: Al Markut reported as follows:

He stated that he has leveled out the circles, and a couple of trees have been planted there.

All 16 benches on the trail have been reconditioned and stained and boards on 6 of the benches have been replaced.

Al thanked everyone for their help on Clean-up Day. Tim Diamond and John Dudlicek gave a big hand and Rich Leber did a great job. He said that a lot was accomplished which helped the Park Department out this year.

Because of all the rain, his department is running a bit behind in mowing and is concentrating on Central Park and the ball fields at this time.

Al suggested putting rock on the islands in Town like around Town Hall and the heating company instead of mulch which often gets washed away. Kathy Ruesken suggested he wait to do this as she is pushing to get the landscaping on these bump-outs redone. The volunteers often do not follow up on maintenance. Jim Marker commented that the Girl Scouts have adopted a couple of sites at Central Park which they regularly maintain; he suggested that possibly businesses or people in Town could adopt a spot. Kathy then added that she is the one who cleans the beds as volunteering is not sustainable. She feels that if the sites can be redone, Al's college help can keep them up. Tim Diamond remarked that it comes down to which requires more maintenance -mulch vs. rock. John Dudlicek remarked that there may be more types of streetscape surfaces that we could check out.

Al will be picking up flowers for planting in the downtown pots; the girls have filled them with dirt today. He has held up putting geraniums at Central Park because of the weather.

Al said that a shed is really needed at Central Park; the area of storage for the market is really full. John Dudlicek has sent out emails for a meeting on May 22 to discuss this subject.

Al then added that he had received a call from the Little League about water coming up the drain again even though it had been routed out. He did call TLC and is going to meet with them tomorrow.

He stated that he is waiting on the weather to fix the ruts at Central Park; Kathy Ruesken added that the tall food trucks couldn't stay on the path because of the wires and had to drive over the lawn. In addition, Al stated he had to send his crews home a few times because of all the rain.

Al had talked with Rick Kuna to find out if we could clean out the ditches on Broad St. by the soccer field; he thought this might help alleviate some of the problems with the wet soccer fields. Jim Marker added that the county should dredge the ditches.

Lastly, Al commented that he was impressed by all the trees planted. Tim Diamond remarked that 27 had been planted with help from Nick Biancardi (who owns Acorn Fence). He had gone with Kevin from Nipsco to make sure the trees were planted in the appropriate locations. Tim then thanked Al and his crews for their help on Clean-up Day.

School Board Liaison's Report – Kathy Ruesken reported that the Unified Bowling Team was recognized at the last school board meeting. General Ed and Special Ed students make up this team and they won state. Superintendent Michelle Riese has decided that the participants will get rings for their achievement. Kathy then asked John Dudlicek to report on the robotics team. He stated that the team fared well, in the middle of the pack, winning their first three matches. John added that it was a tremendous experience as the students got to interact with kids from all over the world. Al Markut asked how robotics got started at Griffith and was told that John Dudlicek's son had found out about it and, with the help of John's wife, the program began. Tim Diamond then added that last year the entire robotics team won the STEM award at Griffith.

Imagine Griffith Report – Dan Perez commented that although the Clean-up day went well, another day is really needed to finish the trail by the school. The high part of the trail by Wiggs needs to be done. He then said that the Town Council has approved the artwork for the banner project. Sixty pieces of art will be going up. There are twenty locations in Central Park available and they will check downtown for placement of the other banners. He commented that when the Park Full of Art banners go up in July the softball banners come down. Dan continued, saying that Rich Ramirez is working on this art project. It was planned that the banners would be up by May 15, but there will be a few days delay. The Arts initiative is the other program being worked on as the Legacy Foundation has money for art on the trail. Jim Marker then recommended that Dan Perez take care of scheduling the banners so there is no confusion. He suggested that John Volkmann let Dan know who got approval from the Town Council to put banners up.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD:

Tim Diamond went over the items of unfinished business:

1. DNR Grant – We are waiting the final approval from the DNR for the \$100,000 matching grant. We should have more details next month. This money will be used for parking, sidewalks, pavilion and a washroom. With the help of Rick Konopasek NIPSCO has installed a light by the fire stations, but it needs some adjusting. Once it is completed, we will determine if we need more light there.
2. New 4 x 4 truck – Al Markut asked if the purchase was approved by both the Park Board and the Town Council. He was told yes and Al stated he wants to get a Silverado 4 x 4 with a plow package. Jim Marker told Al to talk to Rick Kononpasek to see if he could speed things up.

NEW BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD:

1. Bike Trail Trees – Twenty-seven trees have been donated by NIRPC and were planted last Saturday. Nipsco has also been relocating and planting trees, with the majority being put in on the north trail near 45th. Dan Perez said that more need to be planted on the south end of the trail. Tim Diamond added that Badger Pipeline may also be taking trees down closer to the fence line of houses on that trail; it is best to wait to plant more trees. Tim had gone to a meeting of the Lake Michigan Coastal Conservation where a discussion was held on alternatives to trees. Some suggestions were pollination plants or bushes and benches and artwork.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR:

- a. Youth baseball facility issues – The Board has been looking into the different locations and their issues. Drainage was still an issue as is the electrical system. Al Markut remarked that the electrical system at the Babe Ruth field is scary. Tim Diamond asked if it was worse than the Franklin field and Al thought it was. Tim suggested that we get a quote for fixing that electric.

NEW BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR:

Zach Baines, 8345 5th St., Highland, Indiana, appeared before the Board with a proposal for a sign for Firefighter Park which would be his Eagle Scout Project. He is willing to provide everything including a permit, but needs a location for the sign (which should mimic the one at South Park). John Dudlicek had met

with Al Markut and Zach at the Firefighter Park. John explained that although a sign is needed there, we weren't going to be starting the project at that park until school is back in session this summer. We wouldn't be ready for the sign until the end of September. John didn't know if Zach wanted to wait that long so he suggested moving his project to Panther Park, which only has a makeshift sign at this time. Tim Diamond then added that he would like the sign to be seen from both the street and the bike path.

Zach agreed to changing his project for a sign for Panther Park; John Dudlicek then made a motion that we accept Zach Baines project for a Panther Park sign. Dan Perez seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

The meeting was adjourned by President, Tim Diamond, at 8:02 pm.


Diane Kujawa, Recording Secretary

