

**West Lafayette Parks and Recreation  
Park Board Minutes**

08/17/2020

The **Parks and Recreation Board** met Monday, August 17, 2020, 4:30 pm, virtually, via Microsoft Teams. Present at said meeting were Jim Pitoukkas, Brandt Patz, Linda Eales, Pat Flannelly, Karen Springer and Park Board Attorney, Andy Gutwein. Kathy Lozano, Greg Mitchell, Kevin Noe, Heather Wiltse, John Muller, Dan Dunten and Cheryl Kolb represented the department. Also present was City Council representatives, Gerald Thomas and Kathy Parker, along with guest, Anita Trent.

Jim convened the Board at 4:35 pm.

**Consent Agenda Items**

**Minutes** – provided online

**Staff Management Report**

**PARKS:  
COVID-19**

The Parks and Recreation Department has remained open to continue to serve the City of West Lafayette, with limited contact with the public. Parks and trails remain open for citizens to be able to walk or just enjoy the outdoors while using social distancing methods.

**Basketball courts, tennis courts and ball fields** are open. Recreational leagues have been playing with a shortened season and social distancing protocols.

**Shelters** may be reserved at 50% capacity until further notice.

**PROGRAMS:**

**As of the close of business, March 13 all West Lafayette Parks and Recreation programs and activities were suspended until further notice due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis.** This closure which included the Dance recital, all workshops, rental groups as well as all events at the Lilly Nature Center will continue throughout the Fall. No classes will be offered at the City Hall Community Building until further notice.

**LILLY NATURE CENTER:** Closed – may reopen after Labor Day.

The *Wednesdays in the Wild*, a program presented each week by the Tippecanoe County Parks Department, will continue with outdoor programming until further notice.

**Outside Volunteers** – Volunteers have been asked to stay home until further notice.

**Wellness Center** – Planning and preparation continues for the opening of the Wellness Center slated for the end of the year. Membership rates are set and approved. Marketing materials are being developed and will soon be deployed.

**Riverside Skating Center:** Closed. Preparation for the Opening scheduled for November 27, 2020 has begun.

**Municipal Pool:** is open at 50% of capacity for recreational and lap swimming. The pool will close for the season on **August 16, 2020.**

**Playgrounds:** Open

**Summer Daycare Camp:** Daycare Camp closed Friday August 14. It was a great summer. All COVID – 19 protocols allowed the summer to close with no children becoming ill. Camp averaged 40 children a day and the season lasted 53 days or a little over 10 weeks. All in all, a good summer.

**Park Maintenance:**

Keeping our parks clean and attractive takes hard work and diligence. Aside from normal activities like mowing, cleaning and mulching, our Parks department accomplished the following list of projects in the past month:

- All bathrooms are currently open.
- Routine maintenance of parks and trails – ongoing.
- Replacing coal bins at the shelters around Happy Hollow Park
- Fallen trees have been removed
- Landscape beds have been tended to and mulched
- Kept Softball programs, Farmers Market, Municipal Pool activities going.
- Done a significant amount of tree trimming
- Mowing activities have continued
- Watered sunflowers at the Morris Schoolhouse and provided rain barrels for them
- Repaired the fountain at the Plaza
- Pressure washed shelters, bridges, and plazas

**Claims – provided online**

Linda motioned to approve the Consent Agenda Items as presented. Brandt seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Kathy reminded everyone there is a folder in the main office, with documents from over the past several months, requiring signatures. She asked that everyone, at their convenience, stop by the office to sign the documents. Kathy thanked those that had already stopped in.

**Old Business**

**West Lafayette Wellness Center/City Hall Update**

- Kathy reported glass is being installed at the Wellness Center, which is very exciting. This means soon we will have air conditioning, which will allow us to install the flooring. Once the gym floors are down, the reality of a Wellness Center becomes evident. The pool has tile in the basin now. The locker rooms have tile. We are very excited and raring to get going! We are currently making sure we have enough equipment ordered and everything that we are going to need to open the building. We are putting policies and procedures in place. We also have 135 jobs posted on the website, so please spread the word by putting it on your Facebook page, etc., letting everyone know we'll be hiring for those positions this fall.

- Kathy reported City Hall is also shaping up nicely. We'll be moving into those two buildings at about the same time, hopefully, a few weeks earlier for the Wellness Center than City Hall, so the moves will be staggered from one another. If you haven't been by the old Morton Center, or the new Margerum Government Center, you should go by to see the differences with the new windows, the tuck pointing outside, and the new entrance on the back of the building. It's really looking beautiful. Probably around the end of September, we'll do a few sneak peek tours, so you can get a real feel for the building. We're on time, and on budget.

### **Cason Family Park Update**

- Kathy noted this is also very exciting. On Wednesday at the Redevelopment Commission meeting, 8:30 am, we will be extending an offer to the Veridus Group, Inc. to become the Owner's Representative to help us build the Cason Family Park. This group has done an excellent job with the Wellness Center and Margerum Government Center, it will be good to work with them on this project. So, it's full speed ahead, and hopefully we'll get the planning construction documents late this year, and then sometime late next year, we'll start construction on Cason Family Park.

### **New Business**

#### **Cason Family Park – Foundation's Role**

Jim introduced Chris Bradford, President of the Parks & Recreation Foundation and thanked him for joining us. Chris noted the Foundation would like to be involved and supportive with fundraising for a segment of Phase 2 of the development of the park. The interest lies in helping with a possible water feature to be installed at the park later. Chris provided information he has received from a couple of communities nearby that have splash pads. Discussion followed. Andy noted a resolution of some sort should be created to present to the Foundation, showing the Park Board's support for this project. Andy noted that would be fine, and Chris agreed. Andy & Jim suggested Chris send a copy of Monon's Master Plan to Kathy or Cheryl to circulate to the Board members, and then we'll address it at the next meeting.

#### **Special Requests - Classes (Rates & Requirements)**

- Jim introduced, and thanked, Anita Trent for joining us. There were technical difficulties, so Kathy spoke on her behalf, presenting her request. Due to the ongoing COVID situation, Anita, part-owner of Be Moved Power Yoga, Inc. is requesting permission to offer Yoga in the Park, at George E. Lommel Park, as an ongoing event on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 9:00 am and 5:30 pm, both sessions for one hour each. As we understand it, there will be 5-15 people per class. It is also our understanding there will be a \$5.00 fee charged per person, per class. She is one of many fitness classes requesting to be run in our parks, all COVID-related, wishing to continue with their business, outdoors, rather than inside to keep things safer for everyone. We want to support these individuals, all while making sure we are doing the right thing for the citizens of West Lafayette. It is up to the Park Board to decide how they would like to have these requests handled. This program is presenting as on-going. We would like to see some type of an end date, rather than a carte blanche agreement allowing someone to go on forever. We also think it might be better to pull

these out of the neighborhood parks and move them more into the community parks, such as Cumberland, Happy Hollow and Tapawingo Parks. We are working on a policy, which we plan to present at the September meeting. Another big item, we need to know these groups have insurance and they name West Lafayette Parks and Recreation as insured. We want them to know we support small businesses in West Lafayette, we just need to know who is where and what they are doing in the parks. Anita did type in the comments, they can give us an end date, if that is helpful. Discussion followed. We will work with Anita on a plan that will work best for her, until we can we can come up with a policy to be voted on at the September meeting. Brandt motioned use of Lommel Park for the yoga classes, for the next 30 days (until the September meeting) following all the restrictions and guidelines we put together, including both parties reaching an agreement to the fee structure that would be paid to the Parks Department, or not charging a fee, and having the event open to the community, until the next meeting. The agreement will need to be reapproved once the new policy and guidelines are accepted at the next meeting. Also requested, is for Anita to add the West Lafayette Parks and Recreation as additional insured on her Certificate of Liability Insurance. Anita agreed to the insurance request. Pat seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

- Kathy presented another request from Pure Barre West Lafayette, noting this request is a little different. They are requesting to do a one-day event for the members of their business, for no more than 25 people, at Tapawingo Park. But again, we have no real policy in place for this, and we can come to an agreement with her. Kathy gave this person credit for doing everything right, requesting the event six-weeks ahead of time, providing insurance, etc. She is not charging for the one-time event. We believe it is being used as more of a marketing event for the studio for her members to do it and to bring a guest for free. Discussion followed. Linda motioned to approve the Pure Barre West Lafayette Pop-Up at the Park as presented. Karen seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
- Kathy reported right before we came in for the meeting, we received a request from the Alzheimer's Association. They were told we would try to bring it to the Board today, so they can begin their planning process. They normally do a walk to raise awareness about Alzheimer's. However, this year they are doing a virtual event. During a normal year, they place plastic, whirly-gig flowers along the walk, showing donors names along the walk. This year, they would like to do a drive-thru garden at Tapawingo Park that people could drive by to see the flowers, not getting out of their cars, Saturday, September 26. They are expecting there to be approximately 300 plastic whirly-gig flowers to show how many people support Alzheimer's research. The group will take care of all the clean-up from the virtual event. Also requested, are for the fees to be waived, due to their non-profit status. Linda motioned to approve the event, waiving all fees, as presented. Brandt seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

### **Northwest Greenway Easement**

Andy presented background information on the Northwest Greenway Easement, stating the easement is area of the trail system that runs from Cherry Lane to Lindberg Road. It is a pretty popular section of the trail system and was also one of the earliest parts of the trail

system. It's an easement that sits on property owned by Purdue University and it was originally granted twenty-five plus years ago. It was granted for a period of ten years, clearly stated on the document, and has long been expired. This came to our attention recently when talking with the homeowners and the fencing issue along both sides of the trail, on back of Blackbird Farms subdivision, the Purdue Golf Course and off the Purdue Research Turf areas. We contacted Purdue University and spoke with one of their staff attorney's, Adrian Allen. He has gotten it through their approval process to make that essentially, same easement, a permanent easement, so we won't have to go back and renew this again. We did have some discussion about the language of the fencing, and how we maintain the fencing. We are recommending accepting the language as it is, which states we will maintain the fencing in areas agreed upon, and if Purdue wants additional fencing, they can put more up. We want to be agreeable with them, and cooperative, so we will have some obligation to repair, or replace, some of the existing fencing. Kathy added we will need to come to some agreement with Purdue in the next couple of years, deciding on what we do with their side of the fence, but it will be our responsibility for whatever that agreement ends up being. The fencing on the residential side has come down and is gone. Discussion followed. Pat motioned to approve the permanent easement with Purdue, and accept the responsibilities, as presented. Linda seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

### **West Lafayette School Board**

- Karen reported school is starting this week. Teachers report back tomorrow for Development and meetings Tuesday and Wednesday. The students will return to school on Thursday.
- In K-6, 62% have chosen on-site instruction, while 38% have chosen eLearning. At the Jr./Sr. High School, 70% have chosen on-site instruction, with 30% choosing eLearning. Teachers, staff and administrators have worked very hard leading up to this. Both on-site and eLearning classes will be taught by West Lafayette teachers. A lot of teachers have taken additional assignments in order to accommodate this. Also, particularly important for the Jr./Sr. High School, all AP classes, except for AP English, and Honors classes, will taught on-site, as well as for eLearning classes. Parents have two weeks to determine if they want to switch either to on-site or to eLearning classes.

### **Wabash River**

- Kathy reported there is nothing new to report., Jim reported the Promenade is open, noting he was on it the other day. Kathy agreed it is very nice.

### **Other**

- Jim wanted to take this opportunity to introduce any new hires at this meeting, noting maybe at our next meeting, we can introduce any additional new hires. With that, he turned it over to Heather Wiltse, Membership and Marketing Director, who took a few moments to tell a little about herself. Heather proceeded to provide some information about her position, thanking everyone for their cooperation with different social media posts, etc. She also noted the new Facebook page for the Wellness Center was launched today.

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Kathy Parker asked Kathy if she was able to clarify any about the Private Property signs at Amberleigh Village. Kathy noted we are talking with the Homeowners Association regarding this. There is another instance of a section of our Trail System, that we have always claimed as part of our Trail System, that we really do not own, or have an easement for it. Andy will probably be talking to you soon about this, so we can try to obtain an easement with the Homeowners Association. We had a successful meeting with them, and we will continue to work on this. We are asking them to post a less aggressive sign. Their concerns are about the increased usage of the trail and fishing in their pond. These increases have occurred since COVID, with people looking for more to do. There have always been signs posted, such as No Fishing in the Pond, No Swimming, No Wading, etc. The signs were facing outward from the pond, not directly on the trail. There has been more traffic through there with the trail closures from the Wellness Center construction, along with the other new development across from their subdivision. People have been using the subdivision as a shortcut. With the increased traffic, litter has also become a problem throughout, so they are asking us to place trash cans in the area. I think we will plan to place some trash cans on the border of their property and the border of ours and will provide the service of emptying them. We will continue negotiations, hopefully coming to an agreement with some less aggressive signage. There are other frustrations, but we will continue working with them and will report back in the future. Bryce Patz also did a great job with them, with them soaking in all of the information Bryce provided to them. Discussion followed.

**Adjourn**

- Linda motioned to adjourn the meeting. Pat seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 5:34 pm.

**Next Meeting Date**

- The next Park Board meeting will be Monday, September 21, 2020, 4:30 pm, at the Happy Hollow Complex.

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Presiding Officer

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Secretary