

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

01/25/2021

The **Parks and Recreation Board** met Monday, January 25, 2021, 4:30 pm, virtually, via Microsoft Teams. Present at said meeting were Jim Pitoukkas, Brandt Patz, Pat Flannelly, Karen Springer, David Purpura and Park Board Attorney, Andy Gutwein. Kathy Lozano, Greg Mitchell, Kevin Noe, Dan Dunten, Heather Wiltse and Cheryl Kolb represented the department. City Council representatives, Gerald Thomas and Kathy Parker, attended. Additional guests included Mayor Dennis and Samy Tindel also attended. Absent was staff member, John Muller.

Jim convened the Board at 4:31 pm.

Oath of Office – Mayor Dennis swore in the newest Park Board member, David Purpura. David introduced himself, providing some background information to the Board members and staff.

Consent Agenda Items

Minutes – provided online

Staff Management Report

PARKS:

COVID-19

Happy New Year!!! While the Parks and Recreation Department has remained opened to continue to serve the City of West Lafayette, with limited contact with the public, we are hopeful that the new year will bring us closer to a more active interaction with our constituents.

Parks and trails continue to remain open for citizens to be able to walk or just enjoy the outdoors while using social distancing methods. Watch for new amenities and trail upgrades in 2021, including the new Salisbury-Grant Street extension! According to trail counts, the citizens of West Lafayette are enjoying our trails approximately twice as much as last year, currently. We, here at the West Lafayette Parks and Recreation Department, look forward to rolling out new activities and events as the year proceeds. Here's to an active 2021!!

Basketball courts, tennis courts and ball fields are still open. Please use responsibly and practice social distancing where appropriate.

Shelters Reservation for the 2021 Spring and Summer season are now open. You may reserve a shelter online at:

<https://secure.rec1.com/IN/west-lafayette-in-parks-and-recreation/catalog>

PROGRAMS:

All West Lafayette Parks and Recreation programs and activities remain suspended until further notice due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. This closure which included all workshops, rental groups, as well as all events at the Lilly Nature Center, continues. No classes will be offered at the Sonya L. Margerum City Hall Community space until the COVID-19 vaccine is widely available. The Parks and Recreation Administrative Office has settled into a new home at the City Hall building 222 N. Chauncey Avenue, West Lafayette, IN 47906. The phone number remains (765) 775-5110.

LILLY NATURE CENTER: Lilly Nature Center remains closed until the vaccine is widely available.

VOLUNTEERS: Outdoor volunteering continues to help improve our beautiful parks and nature areas.

WELLNESS CENTER: Planning and preparation continues for the opening of the Wellness Center slated for the end of January. Membership rates are set and approved. Marketing materials are being developed and will soon be deployed. ***Membership Sales have begun. Please consider becoming a founding member!***

Apply online at:

<https://www.westlafayette.in.gov/department/division.php?structureid=278>

NOW HIRING: Wellness Center continues to seek staff members to work part time in the following areas: lifeguards, swim instructors, water safety, water exercise, group exercise instructors, personal trainers, fitness coaches, front desk, housekeeping, childcare and many more. Apply online at: https://www.westlafayette.in.gov/egov/apps/document/center.egov?eGov_searchDepartment=106&eGov_searchType=92

RIVERSIDE SKATING CENTER: The skating center is now open. Please reserve your skate time online at:

<https://secure.rec1.com/IN/west-lafayette-in-parks-and-recreation/catalog>

PLAYGROUNDS: Open

DOG PARK: Stay tuned. The fence is up – more amenities coming... Work will soon begin on an off-leash dog park at Happy Hollow Park.

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:

- Preparation for winter is the major activity right now for our grounds crew.
- Trail cleanup is ongoing
- Tree maintenance continues
- Preparation to move into the new facilities is also a primary focus.

Claims – provided online

Karen motioned to approve the Consent Agenda Items as presented. Pat seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Old Business

WL Wellness Center/City Hall

- Kevin reported tomorrow is a big day for the department! The Wellness Center is opening for City Employees tomorrow, Tuesday and Wednesday. Founding members are invited Thursday and Friday, 4:00 – 9:00 pm, to use the facility. In addition to the fitness area, the Clubhouse

and the pool will be open Thursday night. Saturday will mark the opening for the public, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm. We are busy getting everything cleaned and shined for the opening.

- Kathy reported we have been working on the Community Room portion of the facility, setting up room rental rates for those rooms, which will be published on our website. We have booked our first rental for the Bean Room and the Warming Kitchen for February 16 to a local engineering firm having a staff retreat. We'll be able to see how everything works out, with the different technology in the room and the kitchen features. Kathy also noted she has been corresponding with some of our past regular renters. We're moving slow on scheduling the rooms until COVID is a little less prevalent.

Cason Family Park

- Kathy reported construction documents are 90% prepared. At the Redevelopment Commission (RDC) meeting this month, it was given permission for a RFP to be released, to build the project in a BOT (Build, Operate, Transfer) delivery system. This will allow us to do Phase I and Phase II together, which is very exciting. If you know anyone interested in bidding on the project, please let them know. Hopefully, we will break ground on this project and will have a new park in West Lafayette by this time next year!

Happy Hollow Dog Park Update

- Greg presented an update on the park, noting the fence for the dog park at Happy Hollow Park was installed in late December. Currently, it is being heavily used. The dog bowl/fountain for dogs to use has been delivered and will be installed in the spring. The "dog playground equipment" (agility equipment such as platforms, tunnels, etc.) is on order with an early March delivery. It, too, will be installed in the spring. We will get it seeded, do some concrete work and finished up later in the spring. Currently, it is a muddy mess and we plan to address the issue the best we can. With it being a nice open space for dogs to run, people have loved it so far. We see it as being a great addition to what we offer the public in West Lafayette, and hopefully we can do a few more. Kathy added, if anyone asks, there will be signage with some etiquette rules for dogs and their owners. If anyone asks, please let them know it is not finished. Work will continue once the weather breaks and conditions allow the construction to take place.

New Business

Cash/Change Fund (WL Wellness Center)

- Kevin presented a request to establish a Cash/Change Fund in the amount of \$200.00 for the Wellness Center. Pat motioned to approve the request as presented. Brandt seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Consideration of Special Request – Sammy Tindel

- Kathy presented the request due to a previous commitment for Mr. Tindel, providing some background to the request. Mr. Tindel's property butts up to the Wellness Center property. He is requesting to be allowed to plant his own tree screen on the Wellness Center property. He would pay for the trees, but he wants to do it on our property, and not his. He has been told we have a tree screen planted there, which should block the Wellness Center completely, but it will take a couple/few years for it to happen. He would like to add additional trees, in which he was told would require Park Board approval. Kathy's recommendation, if allowed, would be to let Mr. Tindel know the trees would need to be approved by the City Arborist, Bryce Patz. In addition, once the trees are planted, they become the property of the City, and should something happen to one of the trees, it becomes our decision to how the issue is handled. Mr. Tindel joined the meeting, but there were technical difficulties on his end. Discussion followed. It was agreed the item will be tabled until next month to allow more time on both sides, and for pictures to be distributed by both parties.

West Lafayette School Board

- Karen reported the James R. Guy Academic Wing is due to be open next month, which is way ahead of schedule. It holds new science labs and the new library, as well as other classrooms, located on the corner of Grant and Leslie Streets. The Bob Kelly Performing Arts Center is on schedule for a June completion, so it will be operational for the students and staff next fall.
- The School Corporation has entered into a Memo of Understanding with the Tippecanoe County Commissioners for Happy Hollow to continue with the COVID testing site and as a possible vaccine site.

Other

- Greg presented some background information regarding the User Agreement with Blessed Sacrament, noting we have not used the softball area once or twice within the past two years. We are requesting to submit, in writing, our request to terminate our agreement with them, which includes the agreement of maintaining the area for use of the field. Discussion followed. Brandt motioned to approve the termination of the maintenance agreement with Blessed Sacrament (includes use of the ballfield), with the intent of reaching out to the Church Administration prior to sending the termination letter. Karen seconded the motion, and the motion carried. A vote followed with 3 Ayes and 1 vote of Abstinence.

Adjourn

- Pat motioned to adjourn the meeting. Brandt seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Next Meeting Date

- The next Park Board meeting will be a virtual meeting, Monday, February 22, 2021.

Presiding Officer

Secretary