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Recreation Board Minutes

June 4, 2024.

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to open the meeting.

Ann Brennan - So moved

Clare Ceballos - Second

All in favor - The motion was approved

Roll Call

Eric Acton - Absent

Ann Brennan - Present

Roger Carroll - Chair - Present

Clare Ceballos - Present

Aly DeAngelo - Arrived late

Patrick King - School Board - Present

Tyler Stanley - Present

Lori Ann Feibel - City Council Representative

May I have a motion to approve the May minutes.

Clare Celballos - So moved

Partick King - Second

All in favor - The motion is approved.

Roger Carroll - One item that was not on the agenda but I wanted to bring to everyone's attention is June 20. It is Bexley Bloomer Day for the Recreation Board. We will start around 8:30 and end at 11:30. If you can give an hour or so in the morning we will meet at the mansion.

Roger Carroll - I am sure most of you know Mayor Madison , our former Mayor, passed away a few days ago. He was Mayor for 32 years. Which is a record time to serve as Mayor in the State of Ohio.

Mike Price - We are all sad to hear about Mayor Madison's passing. I was lucky enough to work with Mayor Madison for 5 years. There were a couple things I was struck by and wanted to share with you.

One of the things was his deep love and devotion for the City. He cares about the community and the people that lived here. His commitment to service was something I saw working with him. That included his time with Charity Newsies. Many will remember him at Drexel and Main collecting and raising money for Charity Newsies.

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For Labor Day he always put on a huge barbeque. It didn't stop there he would join barbecues in the community. When a street would close down he would cook there as well. He would be out on a snow day on his snowmobile trying to find ways to help. Something that always struck me was his commitment to service, finding a way to serve our community.

And lastly his charisma. He had a way about him. People really enjoyed being around him. He had a way even when he was coming down hard on you about something he had a way of making you feel better about it. I am not sure how to put it into words but I experienced myself and saw it with other employees. He could get frustrated about something he would let you know about but he would have a way to bring it back to making it feel more like a family discussion rather than "hey I am your boss and you really messed up". He had a way about him with people from that perspective.

Over 32 years he had a profound effect on what we do as a recreation and park department. I cannot speak about all his years as mayor but in his later years he was an integral part in getting our new community pool built in 2007.

The old skatepark lived at the old city hall / service department/ police department where Giant Eagle is now. Although I wasn't involved in those conversations, he had to support it because it took a lot of time and energy for the city to pull that off. He had to support that from his perspective. And really was the impetus for the new skatepark we hope to build .

And the time and energy he put into that Labor Day Block Party was what I remember. It was a huge barbeque event. We would build a huge barbeque pit with the whole nine yards and it costs about \$3.00 for dinner. It was a cool event for the community and it was a cool event from an employee perspective because it brought employees together, all the departments. I was lucky enough to grow up in a community that was overseen by his leadership and enjoyed that as a young person. I know I am a better servant to our community having watched him. Mayor Madison's impact on Bexley is broad and immense. I thank him and his family for his service and all he did for our community.

Roger Carroll - Thank you Mike. I am sure the audience is here for the Pickleball lights and we will get to that as soon as another board member arrives. For now we will move on to the Director's Report

Director's Report

Mike Price - Obviously this is a busy time for us as a department and I want to thank all of our staff who have been working extremely hard, who have put in a lot of time and energy and passion into getting ready for the Summer. I want to thank them publicly.

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Pool Opening

Natalie Mullin - We had a soft opening on Friday May 24th for our first Volunteer Appreciation Event and it was a wonderful turnout. Had positive feedback. Mike and the Mayor cooked out.

Opening weekend was May 25, 26, 27. Open 11:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. all three days. Over the entire weekend we had just under 2,000 people come to the pool.

This was the second year of the \$50.00 individual memberships and \$40.00 for Seniors and we are currently sold to date March 1st through today we have just over 3,200 sold. At this time last year we were at 2,900 and that includes non-resident memberships. We were at 3,600 when we ended last year. So we need 400 to hit where we were last year.

Opening weekend on those 3 days we sold 557 individual memberships Overall it was a good opening weekend. We had Preschool splash days and one got rained out. On Thursday last week we had the 5th grade party for all three schools. We had the Wubit out all day for the after school hours 4:30 to 8:00.

We had an Middle School end of school year party on the last day of school. This was well attended, we had around 250 participants.

Roger Carroll - What is the status of the splash pad?

Natalie Mullin - We called Patterson Pools and there has been a little backed up because it is so busy now. But they actually did come out today. They had to order parts and hopefully they will be in by this weekend. Hopefully we will have it opened and ready to go this weekend.

Mike Price - They were scheduled to come out before the pool opened and actually the splash was working before that. Mechanically it was working the controls were failing

Mike Price - Over the opening weekend the Guards made 8 to 10 saves, All of them were "run of the mill" but those can turn into something more serious. The guards did a great job of responding. It was reassuring to see the training take hold. But Natalie also sent out a reminder to members that parents are the first line of defense, especially with young kids. There are rules about how old a child can go in by themselves based on age and how close a parent must be based on their age.

Ann Brennan - That was a great email you sent. I spend a lot of time in the deep end and there have been little kids and parents are nowhere around. Eight saves in a weekend is scary. I think that email was so good. They just can't let little ones get in where the water is over their heads.

Natalie Mullin - I received positive feedback. Management did say when they made the save they explained why the save was made. Some of the parents questioned it and then received an explanation as to why.

Mike Price - We train them to error on the side of caution.

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Lori Ann Feible - I didn't receive the email. Can you post it on the Blast and may I have a copy for City Council.

Natalie Mullin - I sure will.

Park Signage - Update

Mike Price - We received 3 bids on the project. The Columbus Sign came in the lowest. We went before the board of control and they approved Columbus Sign. We are now working with Columbus Sign on details of scope. Fabrication can take 12 to 14 weeks. Hopefully we will see signs going in and this will be focused on Jeffrey and at Schneider. And then we can pull from the pallet for future signage.

Special Event Season

Mike Price - Memorial weekend we started out with the Bexley High School graduation party at Jeffrey Mansion which went well.

We had the memorial Day service on Monday. The Mayor's speech centered around Bill Harvy and all his service to our community and country and was a nice tribute. It was a great way to honor all those who serve.

That evening we had Jazz in the Park and Food Truck Festival. It was an unbelievable turn out for that. It was a great event and the weather was perfect . Thank you to all who worked on those events.

We had our first Main Event this past Friday May 31. Again another great turn out . We felt good about the time and energy put into it with all the community members that enjoyed it

We are having our make-up Main Event from the COSI Festival on Friday, June 21. We will show Honey I Shrunk The Kids and Shazzbots will play music. We also have another Jazz In The park that weekend. And of course all the July Fourth celebrations

Volunteer Appreciation Event

Mike Price - Thank you again to all our volunteers. It was a wonderful event and we can't thank the volunteers enough for all that the volunteers do.

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Jeffrey Mansion Preschool Graduation

Mike Price - The Jeffrey Mansion Preschool graduation was held on May 23 and we had 34 Preschoolers Graduate. Thank you to Angela and all the teachers who did a phenomenal job for this school year. We have 1 Pre-K spot open but we will be working through the waitlist.

Clare Ceballos - You had an interim director. Did you fill that position?

Mike Price - Yes Angela Buddendeck was hired.

Josh Hester Resignation

Mike Price - Lastly Josh Hester, who is one of the Recreation Coordinators and oversees Youth Sports, Adult Sports and various activities. Resigned and his last day was this past Friday. We are very happy for his next opportunities. We posted the job. The hiring process is on the way and going through our HR Department. Applications are being accepted through June 7. We hope to interview next week and want to fill it as quickly as possible.

Pickleball Lights Discussion

Roger Carroll - We will now return to item 4 the Pickleball discussion.

Roger Carroll - Before we get into any discussion about what the next steps are I just wondered if anyone had any questions for Mike.

Rodger Carroll - Today we have several different options. We can table it and decide at a later date. Our next meeting is in August. We can vote on it in terms of yes or no, are in favor of pickleball lights or not.

Roger Carrol - Before we open it up for discussion I want to give you my thoughts. We gathered a lot of information and had the public forum and heard from a cross section of the community so I think we can make a decision one way or the other. I don't think we gain anything by delaying it.

There are a couple approaches we can take. It seems like a consensus among everyone that there needs to be new tennis courts lights. We could vote on that today and vote on pickleball lights seperately.

My thoughts are I think we should vote to approve the pickleball lights. I think it is good for the community. I think there is a way to do that without too much disruption. The community forum showed that there are people with different interests that are willing to compromise. I think doing the pickleball lights and the tennis courts at the same time makes a lot of sense to me. That is going to be economical and efficient

The pickleball lights will be a less intrusive lighting situation. The environmental issues will be much better. Much less and better for the people living there.

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One other thing if we approve the pickle ball lights, along with that approval ,we set the time from 7:00 a.m. start to 8:00 a.m. and have the lights go off at 9:00 p.m.

In terms of the summer having them go off at 9:00 p.m. would coincide with the pool.

Everyone involved seemed to be supportive of that. That would help the residents nearby early in the morning and also make sure the lights are not on later at night.

I think if we approve this today, Mike and the department can continue to investigate and work on ways to diminish the sound of pickleball. I think there are a lot of things out there in terms of getting the money to put in the pickleball lights. If we approve it it is not going to happen overnight. And this gives us additional time to explore disruption of the current noise.

I know there are strong feelings of many people in the community about the disruption of the park. I am very sensitive to that. I think we all agree the park and the woodlands is a very important part of our community and needs to be protected. I think with the additional hours to play pickleball any disruption would be minimal. I know some disagree with that and I am very sensitive and appreciate their opinions and respect their opinion.

Those are my thoughts. I now open it up to the board for discussion on this issue.

Ann Brennan - One of the issues I worry about, and I know Eric has a strong opinion about it but he is not here. I know he feels very strongly about it and I would hate to have us vote without him to express his concerns. .

I am opposed to the lights and expressed my view as to why. It is not just the impact on wildlife, although that is a concern dear to my heart. It's not just the impact of the lights on the wildlife It's the noise. I know you all feel strongly in favor of the lights and I appreciate that. But the noise really impacts the wildlife as well as it does on leisure park users. It certainly impacts the residences that live nearby. I thought their concerns were quite compelling and should be taken quite seriously. I tried to put myself in their position, if I lived there. I would feel very strongly about it as they did and would have opposed the lights if I were a resident living nearby, So my vote will be no. I do think Eric not being here is a concern of mine. I don't know if we could postpone until August.

Roger Carroll - Obviously we will do what the majority of the board wants to do. If we keep pushing it down the road the chances are great someone won't be here.

Ann Brennan - I understand.

Clare Ceballos - I hear what everyone is saying. One thing I thought what I didn't hear from the residents was an adamant oppositions to the lights when they came to the public forum. I heard a spirit of compromise, and maybe I misinterpreted it, but that made me feel more reassured that this was something that we could potentially move forward with. I didn't hear absolutely no. Really had a great spirit of compromise as to how we can make this work for everyone.

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To me that was compelling as to why we could move forward from a resident perspective. I know we didn't hear from every single resident, but the ones we did hear from I wasn't a huge opposition.

Aly DeAngelo - I agree with Clare. Limiting the hours and modernizing the lighting in general on the tennis courts will go a long way for those residents nearby.

Tyler Stanley - I piggyback on that. I agree. I think Roger, I think if we can group the tennis courts lights with one vote that would make me feel a lot stronger about it. Because, like Clare was saying, I didn't hear a hard no but other problems, like the tennis lights that need to be addressed and the noise. Which I think are somewhat unrelated to this specific topic but also related to everyone is to take this opportunity to vote on lights but make a promise to ourselves and the community to continue to work on those things. So if we can group the two lights together and vote on that it would make me feel less strong as far as we are going to help the people with the pickleball lights and we are really going to help those residents that want the tennis court lights fixed.

Clare Ceballos - I like the hour restrictions. I was really surprised that the people were out there at 6:30 a.m. It is reasonable to say 8:00 a.m. start or whatever that is. But I was really surprised by the early hours as well.

Patrick King - I agree with Clare, Tyler and Aly.

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to group the pickleball and tennis court lights and also include within it the limitation of the hours.

Mike Price - May I make a suggestion also to include continued efforts to minimize the impact of sound as part of our ongoing effort. Looking at increased landscaping or different equipment or sound damping materials. That this is going to be part of this process. Not just for residents but for park users.

Ann Brennan - And I think the Recreation Board needs to continue to monitor the residents' concerns. I spoke to some of the residents and they were not comfortable coming here publicly and professing strong opposition. Personally I spoke to several and they are very concerned about it. I believe it is an ongoing concern and needs to be monitored

Roger Carroll - I think as with everything with the park it's impossible for us to monitor everything.

Ann Brennan - Yes but this is a lot of noise though

Roger Carroll - In terms that is part of our responsibility.

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Ann Brennan - Sure . I hope it is going to be a fluid policy going forward. Monitor it and be sensitive to it.

Mike Price - We hold regular public meetings and if people are having concerns they can reach out to me or come to a public meeting.

Roger Carrol - They can reach out to any of us on the board.

Ann Brennan - Monitoring the number of tournaments and at times when the residents are going to enjoy their summer. There are certain things we are going to have to stay on top of in order to mitigate their concerns because there are some pretty compelling concerns out there and they could grow. I know that is one of your concerns Mike. We just need to be aware of that.

Roger Carroll - Would anyone want to present a resolution? You can say something like "The Recreation Board is in support of the tennis court and pickleball court lights along with the hour restriction and and there will be continuing efforts by the Recreation Department to explore things that will minimize the noise."

Aly DeAngelo - I make a motion that the Recreation Board supports efforts to add lights to the Solomon Pickleball Courts and modernize the Hoffman Tennis Court lights. The Recreation Board supports an adjustment to the tennis and pickleball court hours of operation to 8:00 am – 9:00 pm daily. And that the Recreation Board will continue to monitor the impact of noise and light pollution with the goal of working toward mitigation for the betterment of neighbors, park visitors, and park wildlife.

Mike Price - I have a question about the pickleball court time. Will that go into effect when the lights are installed or now?

Roger Carroll - I am open to changing to hours now.

Aly DeAngelo - Now

Mike Price - Just to be clear. The board has approved moving forward with lights. There is no funding for lights. It would be impactful for redoing the tennis courts incorporating a new lighting system and it would be part of the discussion with the city as we go through budgeting process or any private dollars that may go into new implementation of that. It will be a process we will go through from a funding standpoint. The lights will have to go through architectural review.

Aly DeAngelo - We support you moving forward with the caveat of the hours and will continue to monitor any changes that are made.

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Ann Brennan - When they go through the review they take into consideration the migration of birds in the spring. Try to consider the wild life and environmental factors not just the people factors. When considering what kind and how high the lights are when they put them up. When I spoke to the wildlife expert she said any lights are bad for a park even if they are mitigated. Migration should be considered when putting up lights. Mike, did you speak to that when discussing the lights? Placement , how high they can be , what is the lowest impact. She probably told you the same thing.

Mike Price - I spoke to a handful of people, to be transparent, just from a light pollution perspective and they felt very good about this approach relative to bird migration.

Ann Brennan - The OSU Extension lady?

Mike Price - Steven Matthews with OSU.

Ann Brennan - She was the wildlife expert.

Roger Carrol - I think we can go ahead with the motion

Ann Brennan - You can go ahead with the motion but I want those factors considered , just from a personal perspective. We are passing the motion, but we are passing it just as a motion. I want to express those other factors that are going to be considered when the lights are put up.

Mike Price - My take away from my discussion, from a lighting perspective, they felt very good about it. I am not speaking from a sound perspective.

Ann Brennan - So the lady I spoke with was a wildlife expert. She said there are ways you can think about positioning lights to mitigate it. So perhaps we can consult with her .

Mike Price - So your point is when we go through the process make sure we are doing everything we can to minimize it.

Ann Brennan - Consult with the ones that have the most expertise about the actual impact it is going to have on the wildlife you are talking about.

Roger Carroll - Is there a second to the motion.

Clare Ceballos - Second

Roger Carroll - We will take a roll call vote.

Eric Acton - Absent

Ann Brennan - No

Roger Carroll - Yes

Clare Seballos - Yes

Aly DeAngelo - Yes

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Patrick King - Yes

Tyler Stanley - Yes

Roger Carroll - The resolution passes five to one.

Roger Carroll - I know sometimes when we pass resolutions they get lost in the shuffle. Is there some way you guys can write something up ?

Mike Price - And have it read back at the next meeting. Yes

Roger Carroll - So it is a written record.

Lori Ann Feibel - Is there a chance it can be written up before the next council meeting?

Mike Price - Yes . It wont have signature on it

Clare Ceballos - I received an email this morning about a June 21st workshop ?

Mike Price - Yes I just found out about it this morning. It is June 21st at Capital's Student Union from 8:30 to 1:00 and lunch is included. . You all should have received an email this morning. The meeting is around the Land Use Strategy as well as Sustainability Action Plan. They have invited commission members to be involved. Ought she should get recognized

Roger Carroll - As I get older I decided to join the Bexley Senior Center. I want to comment on all the activities that Kristen has put together. The news letter comes out every week and it just seems like she is doing an amazing job. A lot of variety , luncheons, outings to hikes. I thought she should get recognized for the work she has done. Perhaps in September she could come and talk to us. It is really an outstanding program. A real benefit to a significant portion of our community.

Mike Price - I will pass that along and see if she can come to the September meeting.

Mike Price - It came in front of council . The Senior Center land is part of a development that includes the work on Livingston. Some aspects of that project got challenged in court , the challenge was upheld. The city recently reviewed their zoning and made some adjustments and are now working on with the developer and see if they still want to do the project. Still have to go through the process through a new zoning code. I say this because we may be back in discussion of what has always been a senior center space and may be a permanent space as part of a redevelopment but it will be something we will keep our eye on.

Roger Carrol - We do not meet in August. And just a reminder Rec. Bd. Bloomer Day is June 20.

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Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to adjourn.

Clare Ceballos - So moved

Patrick King - Second

Roger Carroll - The motion is approved.