

Recreation Board Minutes
August 7, 2024.

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

Ann Brennan - So moved

Aly DeAngelo - Second

All in favor - The motion is approved.

Roll Call

Eric Acton - Present

Ann Brennan - Present

Roger Carroll - Present

Clare Celballos - Absent

Aly DeAngelo - Present

Joanne Pickrell - Present

School Board Representative

Tyler Stanley - Absent

Lori Ann Feibel - City Council Representative

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to approve the June minutes.

Aly DeAngelo - So moved

Ann Brennan - Second

All in favor - The motion is approved.

Roger Carroll - Everyone received the email from Mike that the School Board Representative has changed.

Roger Carroll - We will now introduce our new Recreation Coordinators.

Mike Price - I am now going to reintroduce Kevin Smith. Kevin is our Recreation Supervisor. I want to give credit to Kevin who unfortunately was taxed with replacing two employees that resigned their positions over the last couple of months in Josh and Marshall, we wish them nothing but the best. They did a wonderful job for our community and for our department and appreciate all of their work. These are positions Kevin supervisors and Kevin quickly got out to market to try to find the best replacements we could find and I appreciate all of Kevin's work.

Kevin Smith - Thank you. We had upwards of one hundred applicants for the two positions. We were able to whittle it down to Daniel Heiser and Andrew Rude. We are very excited to have them and I will now have them introduce themselves to you.

Mike Price - I would like to give kudos to Emily Buckley our new HR manager. She has been a huge asset, Lori Ann just so you are aware, from a council perspective, she has been a huge asset to the City and especially to our department. Besides hiring part time employees from time

to time she has also been involved in hiring the seasonal employees. Our Pre-school teachers, our Aftercare and Summer Camp staff.

Daniel Heiser - Nice to meet you guys. I am Daniel , the new Recreation Coordinator and very excited to get going here. A little background on myself is I grew up in the Canal Winchester area. I joined Capital University from where I graduated. While there I was on the track team. I had several internships at Upper Arlington and Ohio State Athletics in the sport and recreation field. Going in I knew that was exactly what I wanted to do. And so as I repeatedly stalked the City of Bexley website and finally this position opened up and it was perfect for me. It was everything I wanted and I am excited to get going. So I thank you for the opportunity.

Roger Carrol - Can you explain what your duties will be with the Rec. Department?

Daniel Heiser - I will be in charge of Pickleball, Flag Football and several other things around ten to twelve programs. And some other administrative duties.

Roger Carroll - Thank you Daniel.

Mike Price - Andrew come on up.

Andrew Rude - Thank you Mike for the introduction and thank you Daniel as well. Good evening everybody and I want to thank you for having me here tonight. My name is Andrew Rude. I am very appreciative of Kevin Natalie and Mike for allowing me to serve as one of the new Recreation Coordinators.

I am just finishing up my first month tomorrow. I was born in Indiana and grew up in Indianapolis and attended the University of Indiana where I pursued a Business Degree then transitioned to a Sports Media Degree where I also got involved with the campus recreation program. As a freshman I worked in intramural sports, club sports, and our facilities team and worked on both sides of that department for all four years of undergrad. Then in my sophomore year I developed a huge passion for working in recreation and decided that was what I wanted to do so I continued with my sports media degree. Then I pursued graduate assistantships working in collegiate recreation so I followed the NIRSA background , if you are familiar with that organization. That led me to Ohio State where I was a graduate assistant of competitive sports for two years with that department and with their very large program of intramural sports and sport clubs. I graduated with a degree in sport management for my masters.

I got my first job at Ohio University where I served as a competitive sports coordinator for about a year. Then I was looking for something a lot closer to home, since I was driving to Athens from Pickerington. I took a chance with this opportunity I found online since it is new: its parks and rec. It's not collegiate recreation but a lot of the things I've learned have transitioned over. I am very happy to be here.

Myself , outside of work, I live in Pickerington right now but I am trying to buy a house and I am in contract on a house in Columbus. I like to give back to the community so I officiate high school basketball for OHSAA.

Thank you very much.

Mike Price - It has been great to work with them and get to know them this past month and they have been doing a tremendous job.

Director's Report

Fall Activity Report

Mike Price - The brochure was distributed the week of July 22nd. As always Natalie did an amazing job with the brochure. But Natalie not only does the brochure she also is responsible for all the inputting all the registration information into the system.

Registration opened up yesterday for residents and will open for non residents tomorrow at Noon. The first day we did 1,530 individual registrations as compared to 1,414 in 2023. We did about \$112,000 in revenue yesterday versus \$107,000 in 2023. We saw a slight increase in revenue from last year and it is always good to see some growth. The activities in this brochure will go through the end of the calendar year. The next brochure will come out early 2025.

Year of The Park - Update

Bexley Skate Park

Mike Price - We received one bid from Hunger, the pricing was in line with our expected project costs. We had a meeting last Friday with the Board of Control at which time we recommend accepting the bid from Hunger. The Board of Control had some additional questions they wanted to have answered relative to that we ended up with one bid and not multiple bids.

They asked us to reach out to some of the firms that we had sent the bid information along to. Specifically the firms that were involved in the first proposal for design efforts for the skate park. We had about seven firms that responded to that original proposal. We sent all the information about the bid for the construction of the project to all those firms and again we received one back. I reached out to the other six just to see if there was something with the way it was bid or is there anything that we need to learn from the process that prevented additional bids. The feedback was consistent: they were just swamped and did not have the time to take on another project.

I sent that information on to the Board of Controls. We will have another Board of Controls meeting on Tuesday after Council, I believe it's this coming Tuesday. Hopefully we will get approval to move forward with Hunger at that time. Then we will start the process of getting the Skate Park built at Schneider Park.

Commonwealth Follies

Mike Price - We should have electricity back on the site, they have gotten to the point that they can accept electricity at the site. We have been told that they should be completed by the end of the month.

We also set a meeting, for a working group, of which Eric and Aly are sitting, regarding the closure of Columbia and combining of the two Commonwealths. I think the meeting is scheduled for the end of the month. As soon as the follies wrap up we will be in the process of developing

a plan for the combining of the two parks. The next stage will be starting to tear up the asphalt and removing the brick curbing and prepare for filling that back in and then figure out what the design will look like. That project continues to move forward and the folies look very nice. Hopefully we will have a usable restroom there in the near future. Commonwealth Park project is really coming together.

Mike Price - Just a quick update related to that as part of that project they are pulling electric to service robotic mowers that we are going to try out at Commonwealth East. We are hoping to have that in some time this Fall. As soon as the electric is there and is live we can start installing those. The advantages, and this is sort of a test for us, we are going to see how it goes. We will see how it goes and we will see if we roll it out in other locations. The mower there will focus specifically on the athletic fields and not necessarily around the trees or on the perimeter there is still much that will be done manually. The advantage is a greener approach, it is fully electric. They will mow at night. Obviously they are quiet and will mow every night. So instead of taking an inch or two of grass they will be taking off a millimeter of grass, which is healthier for the grass. We have to look at what kind of maintenance goes into it, what kind of issues come up. We are excited about a much more green approach to mowing, it is less disruptive.

Eric Acton - Where do you store it?

Mike Price - It will have a housing unit they drive in to and charge.

Carroll - They close the door afterwards so they don't get stolen?

Mike Price - We have discussed theft. They are connected so we can track them. Concerns we may have in the Fall we have to look at the leaves and branches and see if they get stuck. Having done a demonstration if there is a branch on the grown it drives up to it turns and goes around it

Mike Price - One of the advantages I see is that during the growing season if we cut on a Friday it is ready to be cut again on a Monday. If you play field hockey, if you are playing soccer on the last day of the mowing schedule it can be a bad experience. This is mowing every night. The field conditions will be much better.

Schneider Park Restrooms

Mike Price - We met with a potential contractor to install a permanent restroom at Schneider Park. If you are familiar with the park we have a barn looking structure there that is for storage. We realized we do not need quite that much space. That is where we are looking at building a permanent restroom. We would take about a third of that building and turn it into a restroom. It's in our budget for this year so we have the funds to do it, assuming pricing comes in where we want it to. Hopefully we will get that done. The hope is we can get it constructed this Fall. We will then have a permanent restroom at Schneider Park which will be a really nice improvement. Any questions?

Sign Package

Mike Price - We continue to work to refine details of the design and the content of the signs. We are meeting regularly and are nearly ready to provide Columbus Sign all the information they need to begin fabrication. Hopefully we will have some signs installed this Fall. It will be a nice improvement and located mostly at Jeffrey and Schneider for now.

Splish, Splash and Dash - Youth Triathlon

Mike Price - Splish Splash Dash will take place next Saturday. As of today we have 285 registered. Last year we ended up with 330 total. We continue to need volunteers. It takes over 100 volunteers to pull this together. We greatly appreciate the school's teams, Bexley cross country team Coach Acton and Coach Landis. Have been large supporters of this event since it started. We really do appreciate all that support. We are also reaching out to the boys and girls soccer team and hopefully we can get some student athletes as well. Lori Ann has also been involved in our volunteer effort. Natalie takes the lead on this event and she does an amazing job.

Natalie Mullin - We are using a new volunteer software in the office. Krisen Schweitzer is heading that up. She has done a great job of just getting in there and seeing how it works. We used it for the first time for the July Fourth 5 K Run. She has been able to use it for this event. In the past Lori Ann used the sign up Genius to manage volunteers for this event since we started. We so greatly appreciated Lori Ann's role of managing all the volunteers.

I will send the volunteer platform to Rec. Board and City Council by Friday.

The volunteer program is simple. It just asked you to set up an account name and email. Once you are in the system you can go back in and see any opportunities to volunteer. This is one of our largest volunteer events. Kristen is also looking into the platform to see how to expand the "Neighbor Helping Neighbors" program. Seniors or people who have difficulty getting around would need help with snow removal or leaf raking. We will use this program to connect older adults or people who have a need to volunteers that can help them.

Labor Day Block Party Mike Price - It is September 1st from 3:00 - 8:00 p.m. Again, it is a joint effort with the Bexley Brewfest located on Main Street and Capital's front lawn. There will be activities going on in the field at Capital. Activities in the street including "Touch a Truck." The Brewfest will be located on Main Street east of Drexel Ave. Bands will be playing on Drexel at Main. There will be food vendors.

Pool Update

Natalie Mullin - We have made it to August. The Pool staff has been great. Swim Safe has improved every year. This has been the best year by far. The staff seemed to be excited to be there. They were willing to pick up extra shifts. Working evening events and rentals. We had a lot of Birthday Tent rentals. The Pool has been very busy. Getting into school hours coming up they are still confident they will be good on staffing. We do in our contract they are able to drop down to nine guards, if needed, but that is the minimum. They are contracted to get 12 every day. As we get into August our hours are going to lessen. On school days we will be open 3 ½ hours in the evening. And we have less people at the pool as it relates to weekdays for sure. We will be fully staffed.

The pool splash pad has , unfortunately, the entire season. We had Patterson Pools come look at it. We called Water Odyssey that works on the jets part of the splash pad. A variety of things accrued. The button wasn't working, the pump inside wasn't working, Made all these changes and the button still wasn't working. We had a couple of solenoid valves that were not working. So Patterson now has it working.

We switch the fence so after we close we can keep the splash pad open. There is a gate we put on the outside there. We will have a sign as to when the splash pad will be open. Hope to have it open through early September.

WE had a really good year as far as memberships. And I think people really appreciate this model. I have enjoyed it as has the pool staff. We have less daily admissions. People realize really quickly they only have to come 4 or 5 times and the membership is paid for.

Roger Carroll - Has concession wired well this year.

Natalie Mullin - Yes concessions have done well. I haven't heard any issues. Maybe some staffing things I brought up to their attention. Nothing very negative. I haven't heard that they did not have a good year, they stayed busy.

Ann Brennan - Thank you for the adult swim time. The adults know it will be available every night even if they can't make it. It has been fantastic and the guards have been great about enforcing it. When we start school hours Monday Wednesday will be closed. But on those evenings from 7:00 - 8:00 pm we will offer lap swim.

Aly DeAngelo - Did the issues you had early in the summer get resolved?

Natalie Mullin - Yes I haven't had to send an email since the last one. I think the community came together to correct it. It was a group effort.

Mike Price - Lori Ann this will come before council as capital improvements. We have run into issues with the sand filters.

Natalie Mullin - Jacob with Swim Safe, he is our top guy we go to regarding maintenance issues. He had asked the past couple of years how old are the sand filters? They have been in use since the pool was built in 2007. He stated in the next couple years you will need to switch them out. It's called a sand media filter. Inside the filter house there are 2 huge sand filters with 2 big cylinders and they are next to each other. They have sand in them and that is what filters when water comes in goes through a little basket then it goes into the sand filters then it puts the water back out as fresh. Over time it deteriorates or just gets so dirty. When that happens the water can become a little more cloudy and murky. We started to experience this in the comp pool and the dive pool. There were a handful of days in mid June we had to close the dive well.

Jacob ran some tests and consulted with some others as to what we could do. There is a chemical solution we could try outside of what we were already doing. We were back washing several times a day and we should only be doing that once a day. The chemical we put in basically reset that water and helped clear it up. It's been fine since. We have a quote for getting it switched out at about \$17,000 or \$18,000.

Budget Season - Board Initiatives

Mike Price - We are coming up on badger season. We have already started internal discussions with staff about capital items we need for next year. What are program initiatives that would impact our budget? I want to invite the board if there are things that you think about from your perspective or your neighbors perspective. You may have something we should consider that would have a budgetary impact. Just reach out in the next month or so and give me your suggestion. We are early in the process and we haven't even received our budget sheets yet.

Aly DeAngelo - Are the Pickleball lights being considered.?

Mike Price I would suspect the Pickleball lights would be in there.

Roger Carroll - has the Four Season Shelter already been budgeted?

Mike Price - It has not. That would be the big one if we budget for it. We have another meeting with the design team. We are getting close to a schematic design that we will bring in front of the board to review and suggest any adjustments. We are getting pretty close. We think from a programmatic standpoint it's meeting the needs that we want. We are still tweaking some things. And then there is the aesthetic piece of it too. Some of you may have a stronger opinion in terms of materials used and the color. That is the most significant form of a cost standpoint. We don't have a dollar figure yet but we think it will be over a million dollars. That will provide us a lot of support for our camp program and provide additional opportunities and nature opportunities outside of camp season. Also it will replace the very aging Park Cabin restrooms that are not doing so great.

Aly DeAngelo - Are you going to rent it out?

Mike Price - That is a good question. I am guessing we will. We will have to be sensitive to the amount of rentals going on at the same time in the park. We have the Memorial Shelter, and the Mansion. We have to see what the parking can handle and what the neighbors can handle relative to rentals. We have to look at how they all interact with each other. But yes I do think we will rent it out in some situations.

It will be located across from the Pickleball courts where the Summer Camp tents are located. We are still working on the orientation of it.

I think by the next board we will have something to show the board to get feedback.
The goal is to have an estimate on costs so we can incorporate it into our budget discussion.

Ann Brennan - Mike how about the woodlands plan and the park plan. Is there going to be funding? The Mayor said there would be funding for that earlier.

Mike Price - Any costs associated with woodland management improvements, yes there would be. We already have an invasive species part but we haven't finished as we discussed. We haven't finished the woodland management plan. Hopefully I will be getting a draft of the woodland management plan. We will then take that draft and put that committee back together to give feedback and thoughts on it. Hopefully as part of that draft we will have direction on invasive species removal. Hopefully it will give us a road map for different projects within the woodlands that are tied to costs. We would incorporate some of that into our budget. As with the entire master plan enhancement preservation plan with Jeffrey Park we will do projects within it

Mike Price - Natalie is heading up a Playground group to begin discussion about replacing the playground. The playground is over 30 years old. The master plan calls for improvements to natural play areas. The master plan also talked about the pool parking lot improvements. That may be part of next year's budget. That project may be partially funded for a street project. Hopefully we will be doing invasive species removal at the end of the season. We have the funds for this , the estimate was in the \$20,000 range. That is for the entire park.

Ann Brennan - That would just be for the killing of invasive species.

Mike Price - Yes not replacement material.

Ann Brennan - The plan calls for replacement material too, right?

Mike Price - Yes we talked about putting some understory growth back in.

Roger Carroll - The pond at Commonwealth is the landscaping complete or still a work in progress.

Mike Price - 85 - 90% complete.

Roger Carroll - Is there a thought to put more benches in?

Mike Price - Furnishings have not been finalized. Adirondack chairs are going to go there. They are navy blue. There will be more sitting areas.

Old Business

Ann Brennan - A few people contacted me about the hours. Mostly leisure park users. They asked me to offer an amendment maybe take it up at the next meeting because I do not want to belabor at this meeting. I think it is a reasonable request . The hours to be changed 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. It gives leisure park users, especially the bird watchers that love spring migrating birds That give the morning park folks an hour more and the residents nearby an hour more of quiet time in the morning routine.

That is what I am going to offer next month. I just want to give you a heads up on that.

Roger Carroll - We can have a discussion about that. I just want to add that I heard from people playing pickleball that because of the heat -that they would like to go back to 7:00 a.m. especially in the summer because we have had such an excruciating long year. Their time of playing is limited and modified at 8:00 a.m. instead of 7:00 a.m. So I raise this just to say that there are people on the other side that would be interested in playing at 7:00 a.m. since it is cooler. Essentially taken away an hour away on each end to benefit something that will not take place till the spring of next year at the earliest.

Ann Brennan - I would obviously oppose that for the residents who live nearby .

Roger Carroll - I was just pointing out people in the other direction. And pushing it to 9:00 would make it even more difficult.

Ann Brennan - I understand that but I am still going to offer the amendment.

Roger Carroll - Sure that is fine

Mike Price - Since the board is aware since we did not meet in June since then we posted the updated times for both Pickleball and Tennis. We got some push back .We received calls about 8:00 am. starting time.

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

Ann Brennan - So Moved.

Aly DeAngelo - Second

All in favor - The motion is approved