

Recreation Board Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, December 4, 2024.

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to open the meeting  
Ann Brennan - So Moved  
Joanne Pickrell - Second  
Roger Carroll - All in favor say aye  
The motion is approved.

**Roll Call**

Eric Action - Present  
Ann Brennan - Present  
Roger Carroll - Present  
Clare Ceballos - Absent  
Aly DeAngelo Present  
Joanne Pickrell - Present  
School Bd. Rep.  
Tyler Stanley - Present

Lori Ann Feibel - City Council Rep.

**Approval of the Minutes**

May I have a motion to approve the November minutes.  
Tyler Stanley - So moved.  
Clare Ceballos - Second  
All in favor say aye.  
The motion is approved.

**Senior Services - Year Ends Report- Kristen Schweitzer**

Mike Price - Thank you Kristen for being here. Kristen oversees our Senior Services. It's been a very busy year at the Senior Center, a huge thank you to Kristen and Barb, who helps Kristen, for all of their work.

As the report reflects they have a lot of things going on. They have got a lot of seniors engaged in being social and active. The Senior Center has continued to blossom.

Kristen Schweitzer - I am happy to share with you what a great year we had. I feel we really hit our stride this year. It is the third year we know what we are doing at the Senior Center, we know how to best use the space. We know when we can pivot and move classes over to Jeffrey Mansion. There are classes at the Mansion because we do not have the space at the preferred time for our instructor. The report is antidotal, we work with senior citizens. Mike likes figures, money and staticitics budgets. But I wanted to give you all a better idea of what we do day to day. I think, sometimes when I talk to people, especially those who are not members of the Senior Center they don't realize what we offer. I think there is something for everyone. I think I

am doing my job if there are at least one or two things every member can participate in and enjoy. Exercise , book club, or lunches.

Membership reached 316 people in 2024. We stopped taking 2024 memberships on December 1. Membership goes from January 30th to November 30th. We want people to have time to purchase membership for the following year. We have had a 27% increase in membership since the Senior Center opened. When we were the Bexley Activities Club we did not have a physical location. Mary Ellen Delaney was the support staff for that club. We did not have that spot where people felt they could gather. When we moved into the physical location it made a huge difference.

We provide a monthly calendar but I want to give you a weekly snapshot of what we do. If you drive by the Senior Center at any given time you might see an entirely full parking lot or might see 3 cars. We have a little bit of time between classes and most of the people are therefore programs. Chair Yoga is from 9:00 - 10:00 am goes directly into our Walking Club at 10:00 am. Usually we have 10 to 12 people in the little lobby area while Chair Yoga is going on. I drive the little Bexley Rec. Bus and then we go to various Metro Parks. Then there is Tai Chi from 10:30 to 11:30 am. One of our very popular activities is Mahjong. We have 24 ladies and 2 men. They play every Monday and are scheduled from 12:30 to 4:00. They have pushed it to 11:45 to 4:45. We have a lot of fitness classes , lunches, art classes , crafts, Happy hour, Euchre. We had 26 people at the Center playing euchre. We have tables of 4. When we have an odd person out, like today. We had 92 year old Betty who came 2 minutes late and didn't get a seat so there was another lady who played 1 round and who gave up her seat for Betty, left her husband there to play and went shopping. The person who left was in her 60's and knows that Betty is 92 and really looks forward to playing. So I love that.

When we have a break, the instructor is out of town . We always try to fill that spot. For example, we brought in a nurse, which is fantastic, once a month and provides foot care. It's not podiatry, it's not a pedicure, it is a nurse providing foot care. She does toe nails, talks about foot health, looks at peoples shoes and often recommends getting refitted for a more appropriate size. Try to convince them that your feet grow and your shoe size often increases with age.

Mike Price - You also take trips.

Kristen Schweitzer - I don't focus on that in this report, but we go on at least 2 trips a month. We always go on a mystery lunch and some sort of outing, a museum or a boat trip. Every summer we go to Cleveland Cincinnati for a boat trip. Next Summer we are going to Coshocton for a canal trip. So that is a big part of our programming.

We moved our monthly lunches to the Mansion in January of this year and it has been great . They love staying in Bexley. We have had great feedback and participation. We average between 40 and 50 per month. Tuesday, December 10 we are having our Holiday Luncheon. We have raffle prizes and everyone dresses in ugly Christmas or Hanukkah sweaters.

Our preschoolers will be singing jingle bells for the group. We do move the lunches to the Senior Center because of Summer Camp.

Looking to 2025, memberships opened on December 1, and already have at least 50 for 2025. My focus is that we have good retention and get all 316 people back and want to grow to 350 members. That may not seem like a huge increase in the nature of seniors if they move to be closer to family, may pass away, have different needs and go to assisted living facilities or nursing homes.

Some new programming is our "International Cuisine Mystery Lunch" . When we go on the "Mystery Lunch" I always try to find a location that is very palatable for everyone. We are going to try out the best ethnic restaurants I can find. To give some parameters we will do it in alphabetical order.

We are doing "Bingocize" . It is a program in conjunction with OSW Extension that they are providing. A new art class called Zentangel which encourages mental clarity.

Our community partnerships , among others, are with the Bexley Police, Ohio Department on Aging, and the Library. We want to continue to build on those.

When we moved in we knew it was temporary and now we are trying to figure out what to do next. We are in a holding period . The Community Builders have a meeting at the Library on Monday to unveil the new plans that will include space for the senior center on the first floor of their proposed apartment building. I will be there and a lot of our members will be there to see what that looks like. We talked that in the interim we will need a place to rent or lease so we have been mindful of looking at places that might work. Some of the programs can be moved to Jeffrey Mansion but not all of them because we have our other recreation programs there. We are hoping to find a space during construction.

We are also hoping the plan they unveil Monday night is suitable for us. The biggest concern we have heard from the members is parking. I remind our members the Senior Center has the best parking in the City and so if we lose a few spaces we will have to be mindful of that. We want to make sure it is a place where members feel welcome and safe as we continue to offer all of our programs. To that point we have asked in our budget for \$12,000 for leasing an interim space for a time in 2025. If all things go according to plan according to the Community Builders they should start construction in the fourth quarter of 2025. So we have set \$12,000 aside to cover costs through the end of the year. It will probably be a multi year building process. So we will have to add money to the 2026 budget for that space.

Ann Brennan - Will you be looking for space wherever you can find it ? And I am assuming at some point you will want to know when the new space will be available

Mike Price - At some point we will, there will be some lead time on this  
Until we go through the process we won't be renting a space until we are shovel ready

I suspect when we know when it is shovel ready, There will be some time between ,  
A small group of administrative staff including Kristen and the seniors met with the Community Builders. The biggest concern is parking. There are positives to the new space. It would be built out to what we are looking for , more square footage . Potential multiple rooms. I have always wanted is a space where people can just hang out. The present building is not ADA accessible. There are lots of pros to the new space.

The biggest drawback is parking. In terms of what the Community Builders want to accomplish with their foot print they are going to maximize that land and minimize parking as a result of it . That has been a real issue that Kristen and Barb have been on the forefront of working with the Community Builders understanding there is going to have to be give and take as Kristen said. There is no better parking lot like the one at The Senior Center in the City of Bexley . Unfortunately we have been spoiled by it. Parking is a real concern and rightfully so for Seniors. We don't want to be in a space where parking is an issue and therefore the Senior will not use it. We will see what happens everyone is trying to be creative.  
So that is where we are.

Ann Brennan - Yes parking I can see as an issue. Maybe thinking how seniors can be transported other than driving.

Kristen Schweitzer - Yes, that is part of the process. I will say when we moved our monthly lunches to the Mansion we have 28 parking spots there. All I do is send an email and say if you are physically able to park on Parkview please do and if you are able to carpool please do. And people take it to heart and we have parking spaces available close to the Mansion. It's part of the community looking out for 92 year old Betty. I am not as concerned as long as we have some parking spaces . We have considered some shuttles

Ann Brennan - Do you have a number of spaces you want

Kristen Schweitzer - Not only because I feel everyone is very far apart, no one is willing to compromise .

I try to stay out of it as much as I can . We have members of the community say we need 40 spots and I remind them we have 28 spots which is a lot. I remind them that based on the number of parking spots that would drive how we program the space. So if we have 6 spots dedicated for seniors at the Senior Center I would have a hard time having euchre there because our group of euchre players are older with mobility issues . Tai Chi ,Yoga fitness classes could still be there with fewer spaces

Ann Brennan - Where would you move Euchre ?

Kristen Schweitzer - We are able to program at the mansion quite a bit during the day. It will be a challenge. I spoke to Mike about how we have a group of Euchre players who play twice a month for ever and ever on Wednesday. We may have to move to Tuesday. Everyone will have to be flexible.

Roger Carroll - Any questions. Thank you for the great job you are doing.

Kristen Schweitzer - Thank you everyone. Feel free to stop by the Center any time you see cars parked.

## **2025 Recreation Board Schedule**

Mike Price - We try to stick to the first Wednesday of the month and at least gives us a starting point since they are public meetings, but there are some dates we will need to change. The schedule we have accounts for New Years day is on the first Wednesday. The OPRA conference is always the first week in February, which impacts the first Wednesday. We try to adjust to the second Wednesday of the month for the day and month the first Wednesday is impacted. Yom Kippur is another one we are scheduled to be off. We are in recess in July. if something comes up we will adjust it another time. This is a good base line for our schedule.

### **2025 Schedule**

January 8 (New Years), February 12 (OPRA Conference), March 5, April 2, May 7, June 4, July Off, August 6, September 3, October 8 (Yom Kippur), November 5, December 3.

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to approve the 2025 Recreation Board Meetings schedule  
Ann Brennan - So moved.

Aly DeAngelo - Second

Roger Carroll - All in favor say aye. The motion is approved.

## **Memorial Tree Policy - Review**

Mike Price - The Mayor has asked that we take a look at a potential draft for the Memorial Tree Policy to formalize when people ask to potentially plant a tree in recognition of a loved one . We have this occurring in our parks and also have this occur on street trees and in other settings that we don't oversee or have purview over .

The Mayor would like us to consider a unified Memorial Tree Policy. This is the draft of that. I would ask the board to take a look at it, digest it, ask if you have any questions and then take a vote in January as to whether there is support for this or if there are any admendments.

There are a couple things they want to formalize. Generally speaking, a tree is selected by the City and not by the person who wants to donate, so it meets the goals of the City in terms of tree speceies and location. There is a donation piece of that to underwrite the costs associated with the planting.

Those trees will be planted specifically in the Fall. The donor will have to understand it will be done in the Fall because of the success rate of tree plantings in the Fall rather than Spring, especially when you have a drought like we had this Summer.

It lays out a standard for plaque recognition for the trees as well .

Included is some general understanding on warranty of the tree. If a tree does not make it it is not necessarily the responsibility of the City to buy another tree.

There are different things in there to make sure that everyone is on the same page.  
Are there any general questions?

Roger Carroll - Can you explain what the \$5,000 donation provides for someone, I guess when you say a series of tree plantings , what does all that mean?

Mike Price - This is not something we come across from a Recreation side generally speaking. I think they have had situations where they say let's take the City from a street tree standpoint where someone wants to donate a row along this section of Columbia that seems to be light. So I think the idea is when they have a desire to do a bigger project of tree planting that would be the level you're talking about there.

Roger Carroll - The thing about the longevity of the plaque , is that something we need to talk about in January ?

Mike Price - Do you have any thoughts about that , about what that is? The longevity of the plaque, the length of the tree. One of the things that becomes tricky is as you know , you have a tree, and obviously the people are emotionally connected to it. If the tree needs to be replaced we may not put another in the same spot, maybe the plaque is turned over to the family. From a policy standpoint the Mayor is very open and welcomes feedback on that.

Roger Carroll - I know there is talk about replacing the playground and I know parts of the existing playground were donated . If that is replaced by something new what happens to the plaques commemorating the playground that exists.

Mike Price - The City developed a naming rights policy which would be more in line with something of that scale in terms of naming rights.

We don't have a great policy on this. I can tell you what the practice is going to be, which is to reach out and say we are planning to replace the playground and see if they want to at all be involved in it and have them have the first opportunity . I think the expectation would be that if they don't we can also talk about the plaque going back to the family

Roger Carroll - But at the site it would be whoever was instrumental in providing money for the new playground.

Mike Price - Potentially there could be yes. Someone could make a donation and that could be, not naming rights but recognize the gift in memory of whoever it might be.

Joanne Pickrell - I just see one thing in here for the \$500 one you don't get a plaque you get an online map ? Does that online map exist currently?

Mike Price - It is in the process of being developed.

Joanne Pickrell - Do you get on the online map with the other ones too?

Mike Price - Yes and the plaque

Joanne Pickrell - Do you think you should add that I also think that if somebody is going to donate \$500 for a tree they probably get a plaque too.

Ann Brennan - I agree.

Mike Price - Then maybe it's a discussion about the dollar amounts. A plaque and a tree might be frankly more than \$500 Also depending what kind of tree it is

Joanne Pickrell - It would be interesting to see at the next meeting because I just think that the designation here too is the tree will be planted in a park for \$1,000 versus maybe a street as I read it.

Mike Price - I think the intention is in parks as in public spaces not necessarily a park. But that is a good point to clarify.

Joanne Pickrell - Because also the \$500 one says park or street. I am trying to figure out the difference between \$500 and \$1,000. You are going to have a problem with people saying where it is instead of being part of a park just say okay that doesn't go into a park. For me it is just have questions and I would think that the plaque would last the life of the tree and I think people would understand a natural occurrence and the tree is no longer viable

Joanne Pickrell - How many people ask for these things

Mike Price - I can't speak to the Street Parks Department but we get requests three to four times a year.

Joanne Pickrell - I was trying to think how big this program would actually get.

Mike Price - On the street side it might be more frequent.

Joann Pickrel - Just to be more clear when people are deciding which one they want to choose.

Mike Price - I might be wrong. There are times when people just want a tree planted and pay the \$500 donation but not necessarily doing it in memory of someone therefore the plaque is not important to them . That might be where that is coming from on the street side

Roger Carroll - Does the plaque cost that much

Mike Price - I believe it is not to the best of my knowledge, they are not inexpensive,

Tyler Stanley - Do we have a Bench policy? I was just wondering if we wanted to take this opportunity to look at that.

Ann Brennan - We talked about that briefly along with the naming piece with the Jeffrey Park Preservation Committee.

I think we decided to leave it to the discretion of the Recreation Board.

Mike Price - Then there is a question if it should be just a uniform policy in the City.

Roger Carroll - We will discuss again at our next meeting,

### **Directors Report**

Budger

Mike Price - The 2025 Budget had its third reading on November 19th. And was tabled and likely to be voted on December 10th. I presented the Recreation and Parks budget on November 19th. I don't anticipate any issues to come.

### **Pancake Breakfast**

Mike Price - The Pancake Breakfast will be this Saturday, December 7 from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. If you can volunteer, great if not try to come by for some pancakes.

We are encouraging people to buy a ticket in advance

### **Tree Lighting**

Mike Price - The Tree Lighting is the following day Sunday December 8 at 5:00 p.m. at Drexel Circle.

The Bexley High School Ensemble will be signing along with alumni. We will have hot chocolate and cookies and you can visit with Santa.

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

Ann Brennan - So moved.

Aly DeAngelo -Second

Roger Carroll - All in favor say aye.

The motion is approved.