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Recreation Board Meeting Minutes  
March 5, 2025.

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

Ann Brennan - So moved

Tyler Stanley - Second

Roger Carroll - Motion is approved.

Roll Call

Eric Acton - Present

Ann Brennan - Present

Roger Carroll - Present

Clare Ceballos - Absent

Aly DeAngelo - Absent

Joanne Pickell - Absent

**School Board Representative**

Tyler Stanley - Present

Lori Ann Feibel - Present

**City Council Representative**

Roger Carroll - I will pass on the approval of the minutes until the April meeting.

**Director's**

**Report State of the Community**

Mike Price - The estate of the community was held yesterday March 4th at Torat Emteori, Mayor Kessler, Dr. Fine and Ben Heckman presented for the City, Schools and library.

Included was information available about the annual report. Included was a page dedicated to some Recreation numbers driven in terms of what was in the annual report. These were the numbers we compiled for the Mayor's office which included the number of participants in recreation programming, programs that are offered to seasonal employees. All very good numbers from last year, 2024. Our summer camp numbers we already covered. In the Youth Scholarship the total Youth Scholarship dollars awarded in 2024, to make sure everyone had access to our programs, was \$37,000, that includes the Ryan Solomon Youth Scholarship Fund through the camp program through the Bexley Community Foundation for camp. This includes the preschool. The big drivers are campers and preschool..

Roger Carroll - Does preschool come out of another fund.

Mike Price - No it comes out of the Scholarship fund.

Mike Price - Aquatics you have seen those numbers as well as Seniors.

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Mike Price - It was a good event and the Mayor spent a good amount of time going over the Park projects for the last year and it was a good event and a lot of positive energy.

### **Jeffrey Woods Festival**

Mike Price - We held that past Saturday. It included the staples Wood Chop Shop, Maple Syrup Production, and sawmill demonstration. For the first time this year we combined the event with activities to celebrate Arbor Day and Earth Day. This was an effort to pull back on the load on staff to do as many events as we are doing. One of the areas we looked at was combining the Wood Festival with our Arbor and Earth Day celebrations and activities. Which is usually done in April. We worked with Elizabeth Elman and Susan Quintenz, they usually take the lead on Arbor Day and Earth Day, to combine all the activities with the Woods Festival. We had a Bird Walk, Nature Walk both led by Tom Kirker, a Falconer, Tree Climbing with Russell Tree Experts, they provided free climbing, harness and pulleys and ropes, OSU Bugbox nature display from Barb Triffon, Ohio Wildlife Center.

Attendance was at an all time high and we produced 155 bottles of Kelveden Maple Syrup. We usually have 40 people signed up for the maple syrup tapping process and 36 people signed up for the Wood Chop Shop and then people come and go. It is typically a laid back event with particularly high numbers but we saw a pretty significant increase for this event with all the additional activities.

Ann Brennan - Did they bring the birds.

Mike Price - They were bringing them then they said "Well they can't be anywhere near a fire because the birds have a very sensitive respiratory system." They would have to be 300 yards away from the fire. That would put you in the back meadow far away from the events so maybe this isn't going to work. So then they said we can make it work. And of course they pull a big crowd as they always do and people love seeing the owls and falcons.

We were able to produce 155 bottles of syrup and last year was the highest at 160.

Thank you to our sponsors Bexley Community Foundation, Yard Barbers, Russell Tree Experts, Johnson's Ice Cream and Lowes.

### **Preschool Registration - Update**

Mike Price - We are officially on a waitlist. We have 59 registered students and 2 on the waitlist. Congrats to Katie and Angela and her staff for doing such a wonderful job with registration. Preschool is going pretty well that is with another increase to the cost

Roger Carroll - So what's the charge up.

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Mike Price - It went up 7%. The year before we went up 21%. So the increase has been significant over the last 2 years. Internally we have been having discussions because the finances on the program as a result are stable right now.

I think our original call was for a 4 year increase. We are having discussions and will review it, but it might be worth reassessing whether we need that significant increase going forward. Obviously we are set for the 2026 / 2027 school year.

We talked about that this year, that we were arguably in the black revenue over expenditures. We got there earlier than I thought. If we see it again it is appropriate to reassess our need based program fees.

Natalie Mullin - Currently it is \$528.00 half day for a resident for a resident per month for the 2025-2026 school year. That reflects the last jump. \$1,054.00 for 5 day full days.

Ann Brennan - Do the scholarship needs go up with increases.

Natalie Mullin - I think we have had some inquiries but not any more than we had before. Maybe one or two families, usually partial.

### **Hiring Party Event**

Mike Price - The now annual Hiring Party was held at the Senior Center on Saturday, February 22nd. Kudos to Kevin Smith and Emily Sweet and their staff for organizing the event. The event included games, prizes, food and an opportunity for prospective employees to talk with staff about jobs at Bexley Rec. It provides a great opportunity to engage with potential new employees. Hiring efforts are going well and we are still in the early stages. We are on pace.

### **Senior Center - Redevelopment - Update**

Mike Price - We continue to keep in touch with the Community Builders (TCB) ; they do not yet have final approval on the development of the site alone with Livingston Ave. They feel things are going in the right direction. We scheduled a follow up meeting with TCB to discuss a timeline. We are going to push back a little bit to maintain the space during the Summer. The April brochure will have the Summer program dates in it and we do not want to be switching locations around. We want to be sure we have the space through August and evaluate as the process moves forward.

There is an impact on our budget as it pertains to rental space. Now we have \$4,000 per month for 3 months and \$12,000 in the budget for that. We may have to adjust depending on a location. We may have to have a discussion with City Council if we may need more funds. I reached out to a commercial real estate agent. Kristen has also been reaching out to store fronts.

Last Friday I met with Bexley School officials to go through the assisted living facility they purchased on Cassady to see if there was a possibility of using that space for a temporary

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Senior Center. They plan to tear them down. It didn't turn out to be an option as it would involve too many factors.

Roger Carroll - This may be too expensive but have you looked at the second floor of the bank on Parkview ?

Mike Price - That was one of the calls Krisren made. We are also looking at Swan Cleaners.

Roger Carroll - Will they take out all the equipment?

Mike Price - I think so.

Mike Price - we are also looking at the warehouses across the tracks to see if there is any space there. We are actively searching now that we see a time line.

Roger Carroll - Do you think the people who challenged it before will challenge it again?

Mike Price - I honestly do not know.

### **AED In The Parks**

Mike Price - Our first pilot AED went to the corner of Cassidy Ave. and Main St. the southeast corner at the Library. It has been a process but we have it working as far as the software, accessing it for maintenance, understanding where the alarm goes, We bought one with the intention to employ 6 in total. I am talking about the housing of the AED.

The five additional ones will be going in at Commonwealth Park, Jeffrey Park (by the Tennis/Pickleball Courts) Schneider Park, Main and Parkview , Kindness Park by the Drexel Theater. We hope to have all of these online by early April. We have also had conversations with the schools about adding them at Montrose and at Maryland outside. Right now we have one outside by the Cassingham complex to service the stadium.

Roger Carroll - Does the school have them in the Middle School and High School Gym?

Mike Price - They do have them inside the buildings. The only place they have one outside is at the stadium

Roger Carroll - Does Capital have one at Clowson Field?

Mike Price - Arguably Columbus needs to add one whether Capital has one or not. Capital has a trainer on site so he probably has all the equipment.

Roger Carroll - The High Schools plays there so does the Recreation Department have a responsibility to have one there.

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Mike Price - No not any more. Technically Columbus has the responsibility to make sure the athletic spaces have access to one.

All the municipalities are working through what the State has put out without any funding to figure out and to understand what the requirements are not super clear but we should be in a good position on that.

### **Tennis / Pickleball Lights**

Mike Price - We are beginning to focus efforts on the potential install of new lights at the tennis/pickleball courts and the funding associated with it. At this point it is more whether the funding would be in place. We had conversations with the community foundation and the Solomon Fund which actually funded the Pickleball Courts and has some funds which may be accessible for lights.

There is still some work to be done on the funding piece. We are going to have conversations to put an RFP together. We are basing our numbers on the quotes from Musco, which in the industry is the Cadillac of lights, so probably on the highest end. More likely it will spec out on a style that gives us the illumination that we want and is on the perimeter and deals with reducing its directional light and reduces light bleed. That is probably what the bid will read.

We are looking at \$180,000 total what we think the max will be on the project. The lights may be a little higher because of some electrical work. The City in the capital budget has \$95,000 for lights out of the Rec. Fund balance, that is half of what we need. Private dollars will make up the rest. This may be private dollars at the Community Foundation and or a fundraising effort and then ask the Pickleball community to make up some of the difference and work out exactly what that might look at.

Roger Carroll - Is there any ability to reach out to the tennis community?

Mike Price - We have our youth tennis program but our pickleball program is much more robust than our tennis program in terms of the amount of individuals and families that it impacts. On the pickleball side there is much more adult driven than the tennis side .

Roger Carroll - Do you have any dates ?

Mike Price - No not at this time. We are having some communication issues with Sheedy who is the contractor we awarded it to. The Mayor asked the City Engineer to look at it. He gave some feedback. We contacted Sheedy and have been going back and forth about the engineers' recommendations. I was on the phone with him Monday and said he would have something today.

I asked for a copy of the conversation, in writing we had regarding the engineer recommendations. I expressed to him we really want to set a date and get it finished as soon as possible. We need to know what the project will have on our program.

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Currently our Spring Tennis program has been moved to Wolfe Park Courts. I do not want to bleed into Summer and Fall.

Roger Carroll - Does it take a couple of days or longer?

Mike Price - A week to two weeks plus a 30 day curing period.

Roger Carroll - What does that mean?

Mike Price - You cannot be on it. I can't remember if that is the painting of it as much as the asphalt. From the time it is finished it is a 30 day delay. If we can get them started in March or April it would be good.

Roger Carroll - Will that affect pickleball in any way ?

Mike Price - The two lights on the west side, the pickleball side, are on the outside of the tennis fence, in the pickleball space those are meant to be taken out. There will be patch work, now it is not in the foot print of pickleball but a little more encroaching on their space. The intent is not to disrupt pickleball access and use.

We are also going to look at when we put back the lines whether we can put back lines for six pickleball courts. The advantage is when we do a pickleball ladder league we will use the tennis courts. We constantly have a wait list for ladder league.

Ann Brennan - The board walk do you have an update.

Mike Price - They have started to put the posts in for the board walk and tore out the old damaged stuff.

Ann Brennan - You're just replacing what was damaged, the rest will remain. The top part is damaged.

Mike Price - Two things. One , a portion of that boardwalk is being covered by insurance because a tree came down on it. A portion of that boardwalk was not impacted by the tree but was impacted by heaving, likely by the floods over the last four or five years. They are supposed to do 200 plus feet of that board walk. An Eagle Scout project added the board walk, the extension that goes to the north , almost all of that is being replaced. And that came in under budget I think.

### **Commonwealth Unification**

Mike Price - The curb work should be finished in early spring so it connects east and west They did the storm sewer work they need to take the sidewalk across and the curb across so we have a finished edge on both ends I still have not received any information about scheduling with the group to actuarial work through the design of that space

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Roger Carroll - Is the bathroom functioning now?

Mike Price - Yes the bathroom is functioning. It's designed to be a four season bathroom. It has our security system so it locks down at sun down essentially , it's based on time. It is a one person bathroom. That is the building that will house the AED for Commonwealth

### **Jeffrey Park Playground**

Mike Price - In the near future we are going to have a small group really focusing on the playground. We are starting to have the bandwidth to be able to do that.

### **Pool Parking Lot**

The pool parking renovation we just met with EP Ferris Engineer Firm. Based on the Preservation and Enhancement Masterplan calling for a redo of the pool parking lot. It is one of the projects we thought we would be able to move forward with quickly because it can be done through street funds. We expect it to be included in the street projects for the year.

We still need to work through the design elements. It is similar to the first iteration. We will probably want to make some design changes.

The goal with the lot was the interface at the creek side, the west side in trying to move the trash receptacles and relocating them so we can have a better interface, connection to our natural resource Alum Creek. Also just beautification of the parking lot by breaking up the asphalt area by adding things to the middle of the parking lot. And to also address pedestrian access to the site spaces they are going to when using that lot, specifically the pool and the park space to the north. Looking at trails or paths in that middle section. I do expect it to be in the bid package which will go out next month. And assuming they have enough money,, to cover the project that they prioritized in the street project bid project, it should get done in the Fall of 2025.

Also if the bids come in high and they have to cut things this could potentially get cut.

Ann Brennan - If it gets cut then we will have to move into next year.

Mike Price - And the Four Season Shelter is not at all in the 2025 Capital budget.

Mike Price - As with all these master plans we will continue to reference them when we find out about opportunities to address things, whether it is the Handicap Accessible path, Four Seasons Shelter, Playground on the north end or the Outdoor Classroom we will continue to address those as we can

Ann Brennan - Do you think we will find funding for new benches in the park, new benches in the woods.

Mike Price - Yes

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Eric Acton - Yes I have seen them in a number of metro parks where people will donate benches so I think it might be with the trees, with folks who are purchasing trees for the neighborhoods, could consider benches.

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

Ann Brennan - So moved

Tyler Stanley - Second

All in favor - The meeting is adjourned.