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## Recreation Board Minutes

April 2, 2025.

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

Ann Brennan - So moved

Aly DeAngelo - Second

Roger Carroll - All in favor say aye

Motion is approved.

### Roll Call

Eric Acton - Absent

Ann Brennan - Present

Clare Ceballos - Present

Aly DeAngelo - Present

Joanne Pickrell - Present

School Board

Tyler Stanley - Present

Lori Ann Feibel - City Council Rep.

Mayor Kessler

Roger Carroll - Welcome Mr. Mayor

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

Ann Brennan - So moved

Clare Ceballos - Second

Roger Carroll - All in favor say aye

Motion is approved

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

Ann Brenna - So moved

Clare Ceballos - Second

All in favor say aye

Motion is approved

### **Bexley Bloomers**

Mike Price - It is always a pleasure when the Bloomers are here. We have Cindy, Mary and Susan here. Mary, will you be doing the presentation today? This is three of the four leadership, Ellen is not here today, I just wanted to take the opportunity to publicly thank the Bloomers and all that they have done over the past couple years, the amount of time and dedication and passion and vision.

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And frankly just the work, it's been a real blessing for Jeffrey Park and for the Department and for the community. We really appreciate all that your group does, so thank you very much. With that I will pass it over to Mary.

Mary McMunn- First of all I want to say a huge shout out to Natalie for all her help in getting the 2026 Community Gardeners registered. I know that is not the Bloomers but we appreciate all her help in keeping that organized for us . I know it can be a lot of effort for her and she does a great job. And kudos to your staff for all their support they have given to the Bloomers.

So here we are going into year five. We are all volunteers, for the most part live in Bexley or in the Bexley area. Like I said we are going into year five and just looking at the total number of hours that we have been able to contribute considering the size of the group I am amazed by that. And we are fortunate to have others in the community to come out to serve as our celebrity Bloomers. Getting the High School kids involved because their perspective on things is not quite the same as ours. It is just fun having different people come and serve as the celebrities for the day.

We weed, plant and mulch. The Bloomers also help at the community gardens, especially the south gardens. We worked a little at Havenwood park but mostly we just have fun. We have gotten to know each other over the past couple of years, it is a great way to get to know your neighbors.

Our cumulative hours each year we aim higher. I am surprised we got as many hours in as we did with the drought so hoping this year it will be a little more moist.

We had a game changer last year with the City picking up that water truck for us. So we have someone that goes around and waters all of our new tree plantings which is extremely important.

We are going to focus on Commonwealth Park this year so we are excited to move over there as well.

Ron Gould is always there to help us with anything we need and we are very appreciative of their support.

We always have lots of ideas on plantings for the park. Each year we have a Bloomer of the Year Award, that we named after Kim, who was an amazing leader and this past year it was Scott.

We appreciate your support as a board and would love for you to come and join us. We meet in the evening with people and every Thursday morning.

Roger Carroll - Mary , Cindy and Susan thank you so much. We all appreciate how hard you are working, I know since I helped out once and you guys do it every Thursday and that is really impressive. Really grateful for all your hard work and the Mansion area looks so nice, as it does all the time.

Mary McMunn - It is our pleasure

Mayor Kessler - I really look forward to working with you.

## Director's Report

### Senior Center Update

Mike Price - We met today with TCB, Community Builders. Last week they received full approval to move forward with the Livingston Ave and Cassady Ave projects. Which the project obviously being our Senior Center space. So we met to get a time line. We knew this was going to happen. As you know we put some money into the budget to help us to potentially rent a temporary space. We now know we will vacate the space at the end of August. We will have all of our programming that has already been promoted through August at the Senior Center. We will then move to a temporary space in some way shape or form starting in September.

We will then go through mediation from contamination of the soil then demo of that building in the fall. They will start construction of the building in the spring of next year. With a temporary fall of 2027 completion, so essentially two years for a temporary space for the Seniors. Kristen has been actively looking for space options, but now we have a deadline we will be more aggressive with trying to figure out a temporary space. Met with the Mayor and Megan today and did some brain storming. I am going to reach out to Capital University to see if there are any opportunities there and some other organizations as well as private rental opportunities, so the process is under way. With the timeline we will be more aggressive because we know when we could need to take ownership or access to the space .

We also know it's not going to be the same. There will be pros and cons to the space we find, we will do our best. We fully expect that in a lot of instances parking might be an issue. May get better parking but less square footage so there are a lot of things to take into consideration. Depending on what the rent ends up being we may have to come back to council to ask for a little more money. Depending what the plan is we will include it in the 2026 budget.

Roger Carroll - The plan is still for the facility on Cassady to have a Senior Center on the first floor

Mike Price - Yes it is . We have had really productive meetings with TCB. They have been open to change the layout to maximize parking . The most recent iteration which has been approved has more parking than early on. And in conjunction with some efforts around street parking around the building. Parking will not be what it is now but relative to parking to any other building in the community it is pretty solid. We feel pretty good about it to this point.

Tyler Stanley - Have we decided what the minimum requirements for the temporary place as far as square footage goes and capacity?

Mike Price - We haven't necessarily outlined a requirement . Not sure that will drive anything for us and I think there will be many different factors. Things we are going to take into consideration. Just to give you some sense we looked at places as big as 5,000 square feet, we looked at the warehouses across the tracks on Cassady, to turn a warehouse into a temporary

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space, Ohio Bank on the 3rd floor, Based on square footage and what the layout is 2, 000 square feet with a bunch of small rooms which do not work. We are going to plug away, we have ideas of what we would like to see but there is going to be some give and take at what we end up with.

### **Jeffrey Woodland Work**

Mike Price - I want to express a big thank you to Preservation and Enhance committee member, William Waterman. As you know he has been very active and knowledgeable, along with his son Charlie, who volunteers from the Environmental Club. They have been out in the fall and now this spring to do some honeysuckle removal, especially in the south woods. William has been acquiring saplings from Delaware Soil and Water as well as a grant through Franklin County Soil and Water.

They did a removal this past weekend along with some volunteers. They are going to come back with the saplings and with the grant he was able to secure a number of cages totally fencing in an area to protect the saplings from the deer.

We are going to look at purchasing more protective devices, including potentially fencing in an area. We are going to replant the woodlands. We appreciate all the work William has done, research, and effort to get grant dollars.

### **AED Program**

Mike Price - We have all of the Safe Stations in and the AED themselves are ordered and hope to receive them in the next week or two, Grant Archer and his team are working on getting an electrician in place to start installing the Safe Stations. There is one at Cassady and Main at the library. We will be installing five, in the parks and one on the restroom building at Commonwealth and one on the Park Cabin building at Jeffrey Park and one at the shelter at Schneider and then there will be two more on Main Street, One at Kindness Park next to the Drexel and one at Parkview Ave. and Main Street on the north east corner.

A huge thank you to Lee Nathans who has really driven this for the City. He will be setting up more training sessions at the Bexley Senior Center.

Some of this is a requirement as part of new legislation of our Parks having AED's. It has expanded to having the whole community having coverage for Emergency access to AED's.

### **Egg Dash**

Mike Price - The Easter Egg Dash is Saturday, April 19th at Noon. Don't be late ! You will not get an egg. Spread the word.

Andrew Will be in charge of this event

Thank you to Girl Scout Troop 6143 for helping with this event.

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**Bexley Community Foundation Grants**

Mike Price - We received two grants and three sponsorships from the Bexley Community Foundation. They have been sponsoring Splish Splash and Dash, and it probably doesn't exist without their initial sponsorship. They are going to continue to sponsor

Splish Splash Dash, COSI Science Festival as well as Pool shade, I believe it is the Birthday Trent they are going to be one of the sponsors.

In addition they issued a \$75,000 grant for Tennis and Pickleball Lights. \$50,000 from the Ryan Solom memorial fund, which also provides \$20,000 a year for our Summer Camp scholarship program. \$25,000 from the general fund.

We are evaluating what that lighting system is going to look like. The City has about \$95,000 going to the system. We think the highest end price will be around \$180,000. We have about \$170,000 secured. We are looking at other lighting opportunities. I am going tonight to look at Worthington Hills Country Club. It has a different lighting system which is not the traditional four poles that are up 20 feet in the air, but its lighting system that runs along the railing of the top of the tennis court. I am going to see how that looks. We will continue to be interested in what kind of light bleed we have, controls and cost. I do have a quote on that which is significantly less. It is about a \$40,000 lighting system for our space versus what I have a quote for the Musco which is \$180,000 potentially. What I am seeing tonight is a new kind of lighting concept and there are not a lot of them out there so I want to get a better feel. We spoke to the representative for this, it's called a Tooler.

Ann Brennan - Are they the lights best for the environment? Whatever the criteria even though they may be more expensive

Mike Price - Yes. I am working with the building department putting an RFP together. Potentially go out to bid for it. Including the focus to minimize light bleeds. I am interested in whether there will be less of a light bleed with the lighting that is happening at 10 foot as opposed to 25 foot.

Clare Ceballos - When I was on the grants committee, and I could not remember, did we settle on the time for Pickleball after the lights were up?

Mike Price - End time is 9:00 p.m. and in the morning start time is 8:00 a.m.

Clare Ceballos - And that will be clearly posted ?

Mike Price - Yes

Clare Ceballos - My other question is are we still working on noise mitigation or are you focused on lights at this point.

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Mike Price - We are focusing on the lights at this point. The material that you hang on the fencing.

Clare Ceballos - Was it expensive ?

Mike Price - It was super expensive. You have to reinforce the fencing because of the weight. We are going to continue to look and also continue to plant on the south side.

Frankly if you remember when we had a lot of conversations with the residence lights were actually a bigger concern . They continue to make some strides in pickleball equipment so we are going to continue to keep an eye on that too. We may at some point require some type of paddle or ball.

Ann Brennan - I think a lot were interested and were upset about the noise. Honestly, at least privately , a lot of people talked to me about it. I think the night they testified they didn't make as big of a deal out of it , as some of them did privately to me. I think they were a little intimidated. I think it will be helpful to address both over time, especially when they are going to be playing at night. When people are home from work .

Mike Price - Pickleball is picking up right now you can play till 8:00 o'clock right now, without any lights a month from now they will be able to play until 9:00. It will extend the amount of time but for a very small window of time.

Ann Brennan - It is worth monitoring over time though, noise impact on the neighbors.

### **Commonwealth Unification - Update**

Mike Price - The team from Brian Kent Jones got back to us with a design based on the feedback from the committee that met with them. They brought back with them a more focused design concepts that we talked to them about last week. We will reach out to the committee and have them provide feedback on the latest iteration.

The latest interaction is a focused centerpiece hardscape in the middle sitting area with a path running north and south on either side. Some of the other interactions have a lot of paths going off of it. This one there is one path going in, one path going off, with some nice sitting areas, shade structures. It's pretty clean and straight forward. We are going to present that to the committee and get more feedback and try to refine the plan.

They have framed for concrete work for the curbs and sidewalks, I am hoping that gets done as weather allows for it. Once that is done it will feel more unified.

The turf management consultant was out there and I asked him to take a look and asked him if we should be getting more growth out of that middle area or what you need to come back and plant more just so it doesn't look like it is under construction in the middle as much as it does

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right now. We will try to get it to look as nice as we can until we finalize the plan and we move forward.

Roger Carroll - I think I mentioned today , just with the unification as it is now it looks like a vast improvement and a real plus to have a continuous park as opposed to having a road going through it.

Lari Ann Feibel - The new stuff at the Arboretum walk looks really good, They worked really hard on it and it looks really good, and things are blooming just beautifully. If you haven't taken a look at that go by it is really pretty.

Mike Price - Our service crew did a lot of that. We had a lot more material and we cleaned up some stuff that did not make it.

Mayor Kessler - There is still a ton more infill to happen , much denser.

Lori Ann Feibel - The first forsythia is starting to bloom and just looks amazing.

Mayor Kessler - We are working in house on both trees and larger shrubs, grown cover so it will be kind of a learning walk, as you walk along here is what you are looking at.

Ann Brennan - Similar to Innis Woods , right? It is really beautiful how they identify everything.

Mayor Kessler - Yes , we walked Chadwick, Innis Woods, and Daws to come up with something like the program we are using at Commonwealth.

### **Summer Brochure**

Mike Price - Registration opens for residents on April 22 at Noon, non residents on April 24 at Noon. We have a lot of new offerings in this brochure. This will be the first brochure without Coach Chris classes . We are sad to see him go. He has been a very important part of our community. For those of us who have kids, there are very few kids in our community that are 18 to 20 years and younger that haven't had an impact on, which is pretty impressive. We are working on our plans to highlight and show our appreciation to involve his work and conclude in front of City Council. We might try to do something at his last class, we want to make sure he knows how much he is appreciated.

Ann Brennan - Do you know who will replace him for youth classes?

Mike Price - I would be careful to say replace. Coach Chris is fairly unique in that he is just an individual that offers great programming. There are a lot of organizations or companies that can offer youth programming, Bali Sports parallels Coach Chris programming. We had success and they did a good job so we are going to expand with them. But it is likely it's going to be a lot

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different approaches, it's not going to be one person that comes in and replaces him. He is unique and we will not be able to replace him that is not realistic.

## **New Business**

Mike Price - We had a staff retreat last week. And we are going to work on a strategic plan. We are talking about the framework of what this document is going to look like.

Westerville which has a robust recreation and parks department has as an example, their strategic plan that feels, in terms of scope similar to what I think, will probably be what we will be looking at.

We have started to discuss it . Some analysis of what we have , what we don't have, what we don't do well and what we do well. Where we have gaps. Programming facilities, those sorts of things. I anticipate this being a short term to midterm and long term goals in there. We want action items out of this so we have things that we can check off that we are accomplishing as opposed to just nebulous ideas that we want to be great. We want to have certain things that we are going to accomplish.

I anticipate us having a small working group with Rec. staff and I would be reaching out to the board and would like a board member or two involved in that and there will be public input. We are envisioning this being a working group that is Rec. Staff, Rec. Board, we will reach out to the public through at least a survey if not some workshopping. Hope to develop something over the course of this year that can give us a good road map moving forward for how we serve the Community. This is the very early stages and one of the things we did, among other things, at the staff retreat.

Joanne Pickrell - Would the Preschool be part of this plan or would they have their own.

Mike Price- Each individual program can have their own sort of plan , we probably wouldn't get into the nut and bolts. If there is something for example we want to make preschool a year round program, that is something we would put in this plan.

Joanne Pickrell - One thing that we started as a Rec.Department and has had great success, and provides a lot of great opportunities in this space, is programming for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. It is this weird gap they have right now. Sixth grade especially because if you want to do sports but not till seventh grade. You are still finding your rhythm at middle school. And some kids are not doing club sports. We have theater but not everyone gets in. Something if we could focus on that a little bit . So far I think we have had pretty good success whether it's a dance or summer program that we have camp, Adventure Camp.

Mike Price - Then we have the one off events we have for middle schoolers, the pool party, party at the senior center, Halloween party. Some of the areas we did analysis on the programming side and we made strides in middle school .There is opportunity to continue to improve.



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The very very young programming toddler and infant stuff we hear from parents what do you have for my one year old? We want to do a mommy and me type of class. We have some but there is opportunity there. High school and young adults, we want to do things in that area, we want to fill some gaps.

Roger Carroll - Any other old or new business you want to bring up.

Lori Ann Feibel had a nice piece about the Rec. Department which I thought was great and gave them well deserved credit for all they do. If you haven't read that please do. It was well done and thank you for doing that.

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

Ann Brennan - So moved

Aly DeAngelo - Second

Roger Carroll - All in favor say aye

Motion is approved.