

Park Board Meeting Minutes

May 4, 2011

Board Present: Mike Zajac, Matt Tanis, Vicki Locke, Kathleen Hoyle, Susan Williams, Tucker Webb, Janet Luchies, Jim Novaria, Jason Koscinski

Board Members Excused:

Absent: Bery Pannkuk

Staff Present: Bill Deming, John Milowe

Guests: Dan Kalleward

Meeting was called to order by Mike Zajac at 6:30 at the West Lake Preserve.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: The April minutes were approved. Janet made the motion to approve the minutes; Jim seconded the motion; all others unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion of West Lake Nature Preserve and South Westnedge Park:

- West Lake Preserve (Matt Tanis and Bill Deming):
 - 80 acres with marsh, wetlands, upland and bog, then added 30 more for a total of 110 acres.
 - Development started in 1989-1990 timeframe and turned into a Nature Preserve to showcase its natural assets including decking, wood chip and grass trails.
 - Last year worked to clean out glossy buckthorn and purple loosestrife
 - South Westnedge Park on the other side of the road and was the old city landfill. In late 1960's turned into park with softball fields. Additional fields added in the 1970's and 1980's. Skatepark, in-line hockey rink and soccer field added in 2005.
 - Current comments from citizens include: "Add to trail to explore more," "love the park with the deer, turkey, herons and other wildlife," "Open the restrooms on April 1?," and "would like sidewalk on east side of Westnedge."

B. Park Reports: Should include visible activities going on at the park; conversations (comments/suggestions) from residents using the park; conditions of the trails and other amenities.

- Millennium Park (Vicki Locke) – Due to weather the park is not very active yet.
- Schrier Park/Bishop's Bog (Tucker Webb) – Platforms in bog are partially submerged and plans for this year include repair of those sections.
- West Lake Preserve/S. Westnedge Park (Matt Tanis) - Preserve has not been too busy yet, but there is great bird watching. Bluebird houses need repair, but John mentioned they are being removed due to age and vandalism.
- Lexington-Green (Susan Williams) – No report
- Ramona Park (Mike Zajac) – Park is well used with soccer fields. Vicki commented that she found nails (50-60) on beach sand and John will follow-up with maintenance crew.
- Lakeview (Jason Koscinski) – Not much activity due to weather, but is in good condition. Investigating May 18 aeration program.
- Oakland Drive (Jim Novaria) – Busy soccer fields, basketball and tennis; good condition.
- Haverhill (Kathleen Hoyle) – Busy neighborhood park with tennis, basketball, in-line skating, two playgrounds with lots of walkers, runners, and bikers; good condition.
- Westfield/Harbors West (Janet Luchies) – Has not been too busy yet with weather, but everything looks in good condition. Parking is hard to find.
- Bicentennial Park (Bery Pannkuk) – No report.

Outdoor Meeting Schedule: Reminder that each Park Board member has selected a Park to present the history on this year as part of the agenda at the summer meeting rotations. This will be in addition to the Park Reports above.

Park Assignment	Board Member	Meeting Date
Millennium/Central/Liberty	Vicki	
Schrier/Bishop's Bog	Tucker	April 6 (6:30)
West Lake/South Westnedge	Matt	May 4 (6:30)
Lexington-Green	Susan	June 1 (6:30)
Ramona	Mike	July 6 (6:30)
Lakeview	Jason	July 6 (7:15)

Park Assignment	Board Member	Meeting Date
Oakland Drive	Jim	August 3 (6:30)
Haverhill	Kathleen	August 3 (7:15)
Westfield/Harbors West	Janet	September 7 (6:30)
Celery Flats/PCBP	Bery	October 5 (6:30)

C. “Get Active Portage”/ Paddle Fest / Children’s Triathlon (Ramona Park):

- Request to have Blood Drive during Health Fair but Board felt this was not within the scope of the event, but possibly at another event. There could be a booth with information regarding Blood Drive.
- Two new vendors include a dentist Dr. Wang and Great Harvest Bread and would like suggestions for more vendors.
- Youth triathlon will include a \$25 credit for children to participate with KIVA. There are 30 registrations so far, with age groups of 7-9 and 10-13. Event is sanctioned by USA Triathlon.
- Umbrella logo for event to be developed through Susan.
- Brochure should be created with new logo.
- Advertising will include the Portager, website, distribution in Portage Public Schools, and Dan Kalleward would like to add the event to the Triathlon event website.
- Board decided not to do the “virtual goody bag” since it would be better for people to visit the vendors at their booth for coupons.
- T-shirts will be handed out by Triathlon group to kids and volunteers and will add new “Get Active Portage” logo.
- Vicki will contact printers to get flyers printed for distribution at schools and other events.

D. Park Goals & Objectives:

- Goals were presented to Council and response is expected in June.

E. Family Fishing Fair:

- Date is set for May 21 from 9:30-1:00. Kevin VanDam will be present with prizes including half day fishing trips on Kalamazoo River and Lake Michigan. Eight to ten vendors and exhibitors will be on hand.

F. Champions for Healthy Kids Event:

- Bill is representative for Portage on the Pioneering Healthy Communities Grant for Kalamazoo County. A Summit on May 11 will be focused on health lifestyles for youth including movement and food. Board members are welcome to attend.

SUMMARY ACTIVITY

- Ramona Beach: Opening May 28; water is high
- Softball: Season is underway
- Summer Entertainment Series: June will begin season
- Restrooms: Opened the first week of May

COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

- Susan and Kathleen will work on an outline of the “Friends of the Park” volunteer development and report next meeting including roles and responsibilities.

ADJOURNMENT

Vicky made a motion for adjournment; Susan seconded the motion; all other unanimous. Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:40 p.m.

Next meeting: Wednesday, June 1, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. Lexington Green Park. Susan Williams will present history and information on the Park at the meeting.

Respectfully submitted
Kathleen Hoyle, Secretary, Park Board