

Portage Park Board Meeting Minutes

May 7, 2014

Present: Jim Bennink, Tim Earl, Kathleen Hoyle, Jennifer Mohlner, Roger Smith, Charles Thomas, Lauren Ammar, Jan Whitcomb

Excused Absent: Susan Williams & Doug Barrett

Staff: Bill Deming & John Milowe

Guests: Brian and Patricia Zantjer, 8845 S. Westnedge, Portage
John Speeter and Chuck Rysenga of Kzoo Folklife

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Vice-Chairman Jim Bennink.

Guests and Board members were introduced.

March meeting minutes reviewed, discussion of Mr. Earl's suggestion of photos for Ramona Park. The March 5, 2014 and April 3, 2014 Minutes were reviewed, Ms. Hoyle motioned for approval, seconded by Mr. Smith. Minutes approved.

Ms. Ammar presented the history of West Lake Preserve.

Mrs. Zantjer shared with the Board that quite a few people "enjoy" the West Lake Preserve. She also inquired of the Board if a golf cart could be used in the Park for those with limited mobility. Mr. Deming explained it would be allowed by special written permission of the Parks Department.

A. Recycled Art in the Park: Ms. Hoyle reminded the Board the event is Saturday May 10, 2014. The judges will be Betty Upjohn Mason, Kalamazoo Institute of Art; Tom Fox Kalamazoo Institute of Arts; and Dr. Margaret Merrion retired Dean Emeritus of the College of Fine Arts. Sponsors this year: Schupan Recycling, Eaton Corporation, Bowers Manufacturing, the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo and the City of Portage. Volunteer help will be need on Friday with the flowers, roping off the artist display areas and the tent. Mr. Smith volunteered to help in the morning. Saturday volunteers need to arrive by 9:00 a.m. to complete the set up. Mr. Earl, Mr. Thomas and Ms. Whitcomb will be assisting Saturday.

B. Friends Group: Mr. Speeter and Mr. Rysenga of the Kzoo Folklife shared with the Board they have musicians lined up for the event. They will play 20-25 minute sets. Mr. Rysenga suggested consideration of the following items:

- Use of golf carts for those who have special needs
- Donations sites at main entrances of the Celery Flats
- Need of a plan for donations
- Location for musicians to drop off their equipment and instruments
- Press release
- Email blast
- Location for musician jamming sessions
- Location for children's musical petting zoo
- Signs and banners

Ms. Hoyle will contact food vendors and request they have extra water available. Mr. Deming will meet again with representatives of the Kzoo Folklife for a walk through of the site. Additional meetings with Board members may also be needed.

C. Get Active Portage: The date is Saturday August 9, 2014 at Ramona Park. Board

Volunteers will be needed the day of the event. Mr. Thomas and Mr. Earl will begin contacting the vendors.

New Business: Mr. Earl shared with the Board his concern about the growing popularity of “sky lanterns” and the fire dangers associated with them. He had reviewed the park rules and suggested we take proactive steps to prevent use of the sky lanterns in our parks. Mr. Deming indicated that the City Administration can make park rules with the approval of City Council.

Ms. Whitcomb motioned the Park Board request City Administration action to amend park rules by prohibiting the use of the sky lanterns in city parks. Mr. Thomas seconded and the motion passed.

Summary Activities by Mr. Deming who reported that softball started last week. The Family Fishing Fair will be on Saturday May 17, 2014. The beach at Ramona will open Memorial Day weekend. Portage Memorial Day Parade will be on May 26, 2014.

Comments by the Board:

Mr. Smith confirmed he is planning on volunteering at the Recycled Art in the Park. Student representative Ms. Ammar shared this was her last meeting and she has enjoyed her time with the Portage Park Board

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. Hoyle, second by Mr. Earl. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
Jan Whitcomb