

Parks Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday March 4, 2015

**Board Present: Susan Atkinson, Doug Barrett, Tim Earl, Emily Hirschman
Kathleen Hoyle, Roger Smith, Charles Thomas, Jan Whitcomb**
Board Excused: Jon Peer
Board Absent: Sisira Kavuri

Staff: Tricia Keala

Guests: Jack Briggs, Deb

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Kathleen Hoyle at 6:33 p.m. in Stuart Manor.

Minutes of the February 4, 2015 meeting were reviewed. Ms. Atkinson requested that “Susan William” be changed to “Susan Atkinson” to accurately represent current board members from January and February meeting minutes. Mr. Thomas motioned for approval of minutes, seconded by Ms. Whitcomb. Motion approved.

Deb introduced herself to the board as a nursing student that is working on a paper regarding preventing obesity in Kalamazoo County. She is interested in hearing more about what activities the Park Board may have involvement in that promote health and fitness in the community.

New Business:

- 1) Friends Group Update:** Mr. Briggs introduced himself as a member of Friends of Ramona Park. He gave a brief overview of the group, which includes 8-10 volunteers that have grown up around Ramona Park. Notes their group has recently met and is requesting more direction from the board on goals and activities for the upcoming spring/summer season. Their group would like to clean up the raised garden by the park entrance and continue to be the main volunteers of that park. It was decided that Ms. Keala and Ms. Whitcomb will work with John Milo to come up with a list of monthly tasks and volunteer opportunities for the group for upcoming events that are held at Ramona Park. Ms. Keala notes that some current projects are in place for Ramona Park, including improvements on the beach house and handicap ramp down to the water. Ms. Whitcomb will continue to act as a liaison between the board and the Friends group. The Friends of Ramona Park will continue to have permission to use a golf cart at the park. It was suggested that ID badges be made for members of the group to be easily identified by staff. Ms. Whitcomb also plans to make a list of all the members that can be left at the gate entrances for staff. Ms. Keala plans to look in to possibility of car decals for members of Friends of Ramona Park to have easy accessibility to the park and will speak with the park rangers about the group. Ms.

Hoyle discussed interest in placing a sign at the entrance of the park acknowledging the group for their services. The board thanked Mr. Briggs for the Friends of Ramona Park's time and dedication.

- 2) **Recycled Art in the Park:** Ms. Hoyle informed the board that grants have now been submitted to Ervin S. Gilmore and Kalamazoo Community Foundations and that we should hear back on those within two months. There has been a good response from participants at this time, we are still not at our limit, but we are expected to reach it closer to the deadline, which is March 20th. Ms. Hoyle plans to do a press release and possible radio spot before the deadline. At this time, there are no donations, but some are currently in the process. Judges will be emailed soon. Ms. Atkinson and Ms. Hoyle didn't have time to meet last month and will plan to meet this coming month. Ms. Keala will ensure that no events are planned 1 day prior to or after the event, and if there are they will be informed of the event set-up and tear-down needed on those days.

- 3) **Celery Flats Music Fest:** A brief overview of last year's event was given to the board. Mr. Earl and Ms. Hirschman are co-chairing this year's event with the Kalamazoo Folklife Organization. They report that at this time, things are up to speed. They plan to continue to stay in contact with KFO leaders as the date approaches. Ms. Hoyle has contacted last year's caterer, Off The Cuff, and they plan to do the catering again this year. They are fine with us bringing on another vendor for ice cream only, and noted that if we cannot find one they can do the ice cream as well. The changes for this year's event were reviewed, including KFO having the ability to set up their sound equipment one day prior to the event, the inclusion of an ice cream vendor per attendee requests at the past year's event, and all bluegrass music participants. The plan is to continue with no awnings at this time as it is felt this may impact visibility of the bands. Ms. Keala will ensure that all buildings needed, including Stuart Manor and the Gazebo, are reserved for that day. Ms. Whitcomb asked if a 2nd golf cart would be available to help transport attendees with disabilities or small children. Ms. Keala noted there is only one available. Ms. Hirschman to look in to finding a business that might donate a golf cart for the event. Closer to the event, the committee will need to contact Max Walters from the Senior Center to see if he would be willing to drive people from the overflow parking lot to the event and back.

- 4) **Green-A-Thon:** Scheduled for April 25, 2015. Ms. Keala provided Ms. Hoyle with paperwork for the event from the Youth Advisory Committee, she plans to fill out and provide copies to Mr. Smith and Mr. Thomas. Reviewed that the volunteers will be responsible for running the Park Board booth at the event. Mr. Smith will run the booth from 11am-1pm and Mr. Thomas volunteered to run the booth from 1pm-3pm. Ms. Keala plans to bring the display board and board booth box to the event on the day of. We will look at the materials at the next meeting to become more familiar with what will be at the booth. Ms. Whitcomb noted that she can help answer any questions as she has helped at the event in the past.

- 5) **Board Goals & Objectives:** Ms. Keala to confirm all dates and deadlines and report back to Ms. Hoyle. The board reviewed and revised last year's goals. "Launch Friends of the Park" will be changed to "Grow and Promote Friends of the Park." It was decided that Mr. Thomas will create a quarterly newsletter. Ideas for the newsletter included interviewing Friends of Ramon Park group, discuss upcoming events, and promote the website. The board agreed to change the goal of Nature Education Series to Exploring opportunities for the 45+ age demographic. Ms. Atkinson brought up the idea of gearing more events towards this demographic. Ms. Whitcomb notes that she will plan to attend the city council meeting with Ms. Hoyle to provide support.
- 6) **Spring Meeting Schedule:** Meeting schedule was reviewed. Park assignments were delegated. Mr. Peer will now have Lexington-Green. Ms. Hirschman will now have Oakland Drive. Ms. Atkinson will now have West Lake/South Westnedge && Schrier/Bishop's Bog. Ms. Whitcomb will now have Lakeview and Ms. Hoyle will now have Eliason Nature Reserve. Board members plan to present on their park's history at the beginning of the meeting being held at their park. It was agreed that board members will attempt to visit their park monthly before meetings and report back on any issues identified at monthly meetings. This will be added to future agendas. Ms. Hoyle noted that every park has a website with information relating to their park. Ms. Atkinson suggested the notion of walking the parks during meetings as able. Ms. Hoyle reminded everyone that April's meeting will be at Schrier Park/Bishop's Bog.
- 7) **Park Board Website:** Mr. Earl notes that he has reviewed the website. At this time, Mr. Peer has agreed to take over as the website liaison. Mr. Peer to give website update to the board at our April meeting.

Summary Report:

- Ms. Keala updated the board that the deadline for Adult Softball is 3/25/15 and spring/summer programs are approaching.

Comments from the Board:

- Ms. Hoyle noted that Ruth from the Environmental Board will be coming to April's meeting to discuss exchanging volunteer bases for board events. Ms. Keala to add this to April's meeting agenda.

Adjournment: Motion was made by Ms. Whitcomb, seconded by Mr. Thomas. Motion approved, meeting adjourned at 7:38 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Emily Hirschman, Park Board Secretary

