



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting will be held virtually using the Zoom Platform.

Kent Park and Recreation
March 18, 2021
Zoom Meeting 5:30

Members Present:

Steve Mitchell
Jake Ferlito
Neil Dukes
Kathleen Wiler
Debbie Smeiles

Staff Present:

Melanie Baker
Sam Tuttle
Megan Johns
Karen Magilavy
Nancy Pizzino

Council Liaison

Gwen Rosenberg

Mr. Mitchell called the meeting at 5:30. Roll was noted and is listed above. Jake will be joining us later. **We have 5 sets of minutes to approve. The regular monthly meeting plus the special meetings concerning hiring. There is a small error in 3 of the sets of the minutes February 22, 23 & 26. Melanie did not title herself as Interim Parks & Rec Director. Also, Steve would like the board chairman to be referred as Chair or Chair Person. Kathleen made a motion to correct the February minutes that needed the signature corrections and in the future use the term Chairperson. Voting yes, Steve, Debbie, Neil, and Kathleen. Neil seconded, all were in favor and there was no more discussion and the motion passed unanimously. Jake joined the meeting. Debbie made the motion to approve all 5 sets of minutes with the previous corrections, Jake seconded the motion. Please quickly check the February 18th minutes. Voting to approve Steve, Debbie, Neil, Kathleen, Jake. Motion to approve passed unanimously.**

Personal Appearances None

Correspondence None

Staff Reports

Revenue Nancy can answer any questions. There are no questions on revenue.

Expenditures The \$11,000 for the Fitness Center is rental, for 4 months. There is a food license for the concession stand at Kramer Field. That includes the Rec Center food license too.

Park Report Sam told the board the crew has worked on every ballfield. Longcoy has not been worked on in over a year. Almost all the soccer fields have been marked out except Al Lease big field. That will be done tomorrow. This is the earliest we have had fields done. The March weather has been great. Baseball and softball have started practice and soccer will start in April. April 10 will be the first travel soccer games. We got a new dump truck yesterday, that we ordered 13 months ago. It was delayed due to Covid.

Recreation Report We have everything up and going, coaches meeting will be starting soon. We have all our baseball/softball sponsors including our major sponsor. Our Egg hunts were canceled by the Health Department, even with all our special precautions. Everyone was disappointed. Jake said that the numbers were less than a high school sporting event. Steve passed on information about coach's clinics and Garyn would be sharing that with all the coaches. This Grassroots Program is a 2 hour clinic for the coaches it gives the coaches access to 24 practice plans. We can probably bring that to Kent. The cost is \$20 per coach. Maybe we can find a way to fund it. The coaches would appreciate that. Debbie asked if there are other sport coach classes available. We provide a manual for basketball coaches that the high school coaches put together for the youth coaches. We are trying to be consistent with all the sports. As all of you know Nancy is resigning and moving to Florida. She would like to thank everyone. She has met with the staff to make a seamless transition. She will miss everybody. Steve told Nancy about meeting her during her first week at the tennis courts. The board would like to thank Nancy and give appreciation for her 19 years as Recreation Supervisor. Best Wishes

Megan has a babysitter training coming up at the Rec Center. She would like to make a correction she put KPR officer instead of KPD officer Matt Butcher, he is familiar with the recreation programs. His daughters have been in our programs. Matt will be at the babysitter training. After Spring Break the kids club will start back to 4 days a week in school. Our numbers are increasing a little bit. They will be split up into small groups. Kids Night Out came back last month, it was full. We had trained Babysitters volunteer. We are having Spring Break Care at the Rec and Preschool. The centers are getting inspected, staff is doing well. Summer camp is coming up, she is looking at the covid-19 protocols. They will be swimming again this year and Kent Social Service showed Megan around to let the kids to volunteer there. Junior Exped is still waiting on Chris Lucas from KSU. They have not made a decision about opening back up. We are waiting on that information. We don't have the official word yet.

Director Report

- 1. Director Application Process** As of the last meeting the candidates were narrowed down to 8 applicants. The board interviewed all 8 and which point the list was narrowed down to 4. One of the final 4 candidates did drop out. So the board met with the final 3 for an hour and half each. The board will meet to discuss their thoughts.
- 2. Middlebury Boat Ramp** The service and engineering department have been working on the pump station on Middlebury Rd for the last 11 years. They want to combine the Middlebury Rd with Yacavona Rd. That will require ripping up Middlebury Rd from Akron Blvd to the bridge to install new sanitary sewers and rebuild the pump station. Middlebury Rd will be closed for approximately 90 days this summer. The use of the boat ramp will be hindered this summer. There is a small sliver of land in front of the boat ramp that is privately owned. The owner does not want anyone to use their property. The Law Director, City Engineer and Melanie met with the property owner and they are having discussions and in the future we may be able to use the boat ramp. Right now kayaks and canoes that put in at Tannery will not be able to take out at Middlebury. Debbie asked if the River Bend access would be used. That access is smaller and in a residential area, ok for our neighborhood use. The white water section is for more experienced boaters. We will not encourage use of that access. Chris Lucas of The Adventure Center is waiting to hear from the City and KSU. Steve asked about the dates for construction. The anticipated construction start date will be June and continue through next spring. That includes the repavement of Middlebury Rd.

3. **ODNR Paddling Improvement** We received an email from Peter Bode of West Creek Conservancy. We gave him a letter of support for a grant. The grant is for a live time water flow monitor under the Main Street Bridge. The water conditions will be available for boaters at their website. They will use a traffic light system: green, for all levels, yellow, be more cautious, red, not suggested to enter unless experienced. There is no need for matching funding. There are 98 other flow monitors. We would like our Fire Department have access to that specific monitor and then we may be able to hook that information to the city's website.
4. **Master Plan 2020** Pat Hoagland from Brandstter Carrol reached out to Melanie about the Master Plan we had started in 2020. Covid put a stop to that and he wanted to see where we were in our planning. He asked if the board was ready to get started or if they wanted to wait for the new director. This plan is for the next 15-20 years for future growth of the park system. A steering committee is recommended and the board should start thinking about candidates. Steve would like to wait for the new director, but we could start suggesting names for the committee. It will be a few weeks and won't make much of a difference. Make a Steering Committee an agenda item for next month. Debbie asked if there was any financial reason we needed to get started right away. Melanie said the contract had an open ending and we could wait for no additional cost. What kind of folks do we want to see on the committee? Remember to include representation from Kent State, seniors, Youth programs, and other city offices, and a council member. The committee could get pretty big, maybe just 2 or 3 board members. Do they have to be residents? It depends they may work in Kent but live outside the city. Is it possible that the steering committee be chaired by someone outside the board?

Additional: Melanie wanted to let the board know that CD director Bridget Susel brought an item to council last night. She has been working with 800 Mogadore Rd on the site remediation. They have asked for reentry again this year behind Kramer Field. They need to gain access for additional remediation. This will be after baseball/softball season. They are logging all the trees, bushes, and shrubs. They will meet with staff on site, they are concerned about large equipment crossing the Kramer Bridge. Last time they took huge amount of contaminated dirt out and it required very large equipment. The underground tanks had been removed, there is still heavy metals leeching out of the soil. They have installed a wall to prevent future leaching out into the soil.

Melanie would like to thank Nancy for all her help and will miss her. She appreciates Nancy and her 20 years of service

At 7:30 Adjourn Motion made by Neil, and Kathleen seconded and all in Favor.