

**VERMILION PARKS & RECREATION BOARD**  
Minutes of January 19, 2021 - 6:00pm | Zoom Meeting

Roll Call: Terry Parker (Chairman), William Warden, Brad Scholtz, Dennis Brudney, (Vice Chairman), Liz Elden, Jeff Keck (arrival at Approval of Minutes). Not Present: Kate Repola

*Also, Present:* Chad Kuhns, RECREATION DIRECTOR; Marc Weisenberger, PARKS SUPERVISOR; Tony Valerius, SERVICE DIRECTOR; Brian Holmes, COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

*Guests:* Mayor Forthofer

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Mayor Forthofer called the meeting of January 19, 2021 to order.

**ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN/VICE CHAIRMAN:**

**B. Warden MOVED;** L. Elden seconded to nominate Terry Parker as Chairman for 2021. Roll Call Vote 4 YEAS, 1 ABSTENTION (Parker). **MOTION CARRIED.**

**B. Scholtz MOVED,** L. Elden seconded to nominate D. Brudney as Vice Chairman for 2021. Roll Call Vote 4 YEAS, 1 ABSTENTION (Brudney). **MOTION CARRIED.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**B. Warden MOVED,** D. Brudney seconded to approve the meeting minutes of December 15, 2020. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**COMMUNITY EVENT GROUP USE PERMITS:**

*- Lake Shore Corvettes (Vermilion Corvette Show – July 17, 2021 from 6am – 5pm) – Victory Park/Etc.*

B. Warden wondered if Lake Shore Corvettes ever investigated other options instead of the usual requested areas. For instance, Romp's property or behind McDonalds in the parking lot. T. Parker said during previous discussions, it seems like they want to help draw people downtown and they want access themselves to the downtown.

**B. Scholtz MOVED;** L. Elden seconded to approve the Community Use Group Permit as presented. Vote 5 YEAS, 1 NAY (Warden). **MOTION CARRIED.**

**SERVICE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

No report.

**PARK'S SUPERVISOR REPORT:**

M. Weisenberger reported they are continuing to work on the planning for the parks and they will have their Sherod Park Master Plan update available shortly. He noted a playground company is updating the existing CAD drawings for Showse Park, so he should have more information to share with the board next month.

**VERMILION CITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT:**

B. Holmes mentioned that City Council supported the Main Street Revitalization Project as presented.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Forthofer indicated he had meetings with the Health Commissioners for Lorain and Erie Counties and today he spoke with the President of the Cleveland Clinic and with regards to festivals and events in the future and he thinks the parks board is logically proceeding with each application. However, there is no consensus on what will happen with festivals and events at this time. He understands there is an organization that was formed for outdoor festivals who is working with the state and Governor to find an acceptable format to continue some of these events, which he hopes they wholeheartedly do. He told the board to accept the events as they are going to happen and then they will deal with it down the road.

**RECREATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Chad Kuhns indicated they were not able to get a gym this year to offer basketball due to the policies of the schools and churches. He said with the rise of COVID cases it is probably good to keep everyone at a safe distance until this passes or the vaccines can be administered. He said they are planning on football starting around March 15. He has monthly meetings discussing the details and making sure the surrounding communities are prepared for the spring season. He understands there will be some challenges, but they are preparing accordingly to make facilities available in surrounding communities.

He said every two years they are required to recondition the football equipment and this year is that year. They noted the fundraising activities over the past year have been light. The school has been helping the parks department out with giving their discount and sending in the equipment with their equipment to get reconditioned. The cost this year is over \$3,000 to have all the equipment reconditioned. He asked the parks board to assist with possibly

providing half of this amount. T. Parker said they would take this recommendation up under 'New Business'.

#### Budget/Finance Subcommittee Report:

B. Scholtz stated the subcommittee met since the last Parks Board meeting and they have been in communication with Amy Hendricks regarding the borrowing legislation. The subcommittee met to discuss what they would dedicate the rest of the funds to because as they previously voted, \$320,000 would go to the Main Street Revitalization Project. The subcommittee recommends they dedicate the additional funds to walking trails at Sherod and Showse parks. The reason why they decided this made sense is to spread the funds across the city as the three primary parks are Sherod, Showse, and Main Street Beach which covers the east side of town, the west side of town and the central portion of town. The second big bullet point in them making this decision is per the public survey and walking trails ranked as a high priority for the residents, so they felt this made sense. Therefore, the committee is recommending to the board that they spend the balance of the funds on walking trails at Showse and Sherod.

Amy Hendricks said legislation will be submitted to City Council this week and the borrowing would not exceed \$705,000. Reason being that with the fluctuation in interest rates and being they are trying to target a certain debt service of \$47,500 they have had in the past – depending on how the bids come in that day the city could get anywhere from the original \$545,000 to \$705,000, so they felt it was important to maximize the funds that are available. With the way the walking trails will be constructed is no problem at all and they are working on making the language flexible enough to make the adjustments work.

T. Parker clarified they have encumbered \$185,000 toward the Main Street Project and they are rounding out the \$500,000 with \$320,000 of the borrowed money. He thinks they will need to clarify and clean up what the board voted on last month. Therefore, they need to go out to bid for borrowing with debt service at \$47,500, with the amount not to exceed \$705,000.

B. Warden asked what the trails will be composed of. M. Weisenberger said it will be a combination of concrete or black top in some areas where they are trying to get handicap accessibility. Some of the fitness trails might be compacted stone. It depends on how far the budget will take them. He would like to address ADA accessibility as well as offer fitness opportunities to both parks.

T. Parker said part of the rationale at borrowing at the level which they have been paying debt service is they can generate enough revenue to do these things and still have their annual revenue undisturbed at what it has been.

Community Relations/Publicity: No report.

Erosion:

Bill Warden thanked Homer Taft for the extensive and nearly complete list of suggestions for protecting the lakefront from potential erosion through the construction of offshore break walls. He thought they should have more discussion on implementing this. He said they spent almost \$50,000 restoring Showse's damaged lakefront and if they start implementing some of these offshore break walls, then it would allow for the buildup of sand and increase the potential for the usability of beaches. He thought it would forestall future erosion potential. He asked Marc Weisenberger if he could contact Homer Taft and himself to set up a meeting to discuss implementing some of these things so they can bring it in front of the board.

T. Parker said part of the shoreline revetment along the museum property is rolled into the budget for this project, but not for offshore break walls.

Main Street Beach Revitalization Project:

B. Scholtz explained that City Council did vote in favor of the Main Street Beach Revitalization project.

Recreation and School Relations: No report.

Sherod Playground: No report.

Vermilion Community Pool:

D. Brudney explained a survey was done to look at the citizens requests as far as a public pool. The survey was completed on December 20 and they were happy to receive 548 replies and over the holidays and with the COVID crisis the data is being compiled but taking some time. As they have received some of the raw data back, they have been looking at it and the intern needs to put it in more formats that will be readable by all. The data is being compiled into things such as age brackets and different sections of the city that replied. He said the intern has been setting up five focus groups and contacting people to get them involved. This will help them gain more information on what the people in Vermilion think about having a pool. They have collected a lot of data and M. Weisenberger has been contacting pool companies and they are receiving estimates and drawings on how to fix the pool, replace the pool at its current location, or possibly even putting something in another location such as a covered pool. He said they had a meeting with Dr. Orr and the intern from Bowling Green State University and they went over a brief review and analysis of what they thought about the data

from the pool survey, and they will start putting some of this information out to the public shortly. They want to meet with the pool subcommittee to go over this information. Within the next meeting, he will set up a meeting with the pool subcommittee to review the data at this point. They are trying to put the information in a power point so they can make better presentations. They are also participating in a class at BGSU as Dr. Orr is running a class which will be at no charge to the City of Vermilion. They will look at demographics at different pools in the area. He said they will look at population distribution, fundraising possibilities for a new pool, and what the city can afford, along with more aspects. He said they would expect the focus groups would help them quite a bit when making decisions. He said the key when coming up with different scenarios is what the people are willing to support. They have gentleman coming to Vermilion from Bowling Green who will be looking at the city's current pool to see what condition it is in. This will help determine what they will need to do to possibly rebuild or go to another location. They are trying to figure ways to get this information out to the public as not all people have cell phones or computers.

M. Weisenberger said this is an important project and they want to make sure they are getting all the information gathered so they can make some good, informed decisions.

T. Parker said the gentlemen from Bowling Green are master candidates in Public Administration and he thinks they are in their final semester and they are required to do a project with a municipality. He said about 200 people that completed the survey expressed interest in participating in a focus group, so the contacts are being made and he believes they are being grouped by age.

#### **OPEN TO THE AUDIENCE:**

Judy Williams said when she approached City Council and the Parks Board about speaking on the promotion of a Dog Park in Vermilion, she didn't know there was a group working on this. At that point, the only thing she knew is what was in the Photojournal about one of the City Councilman who said he didn't think it would be a good use of the money. She wanted to disagree with this and give the board some points which she thinks was important to consider. She said as a senior citizen and widow she spends a lot of time talking to her dog and taking him for walks. She said it is important for her to take good care of her dog. She said the Dog Park in Erie County is located behind Plumbrook Country Club and it is divided into two parts. The larger part is for big dogs and everything is fenced in. The smaller part is for small dogs and she rarely sees another small dog. She said her dog runs freely among the park and there is one tree and two benches for the humans to sit. She said it is a pleasant place and when then sun is shining, she brings a book and enjoys the weather while her dog is running around. It is exercise for all and usually she will follow the dog around the perimeter of the park because one of the rules is that if your dog leaves any dog droppings, you must be

there to clean it up right away. Therefore, she may follow him around the perimeter of the park to make sure she has taken care of this. She didn't think there is a rule that you must have a dog to enjoy the dog park. The part of the park that is designed for large dogs is very large with several trees and small hills. It would be a place for someone to go just to enjoy the company of other people or dogs. It is safe and enclosed and it's right by the Metro Parks on Perkins Avenue and she has never had any fear or issue there. Also, she mentioned that this is an outstanding opportunity to honor Dick Goddard who has brought so much positive attention to Vermilion. In the future, her grandchildren may say, who is Dick Goddard and why is this park named after him. They will have the opportunity to share his love of dogs and animals in general. She said she remembers Terry Pluto quoting in the newspaper, "That Dick Goddard would go back after he was statistician for the Cleveland Browns, and he would collect any unsold hotdogs so he could feed the dogs in his neighborhood." She said this is a wonderful legacy for a weatherman and they will name the park after him she would hope in his honor. She said she will contact Marilou Suszko tomorrow to find out what they are doing at this point.

T. Parker mentioned that this project originated with the Chamber of Commerce and Main Street Vermilion and they are continuing to drive it with a committee of citizens.

Homer Taft of 3972 Edgewater Drive said he had asked the finance director at the committee meeting of City Council about the bonding matter and noted there is some ability to change it. He understands that \$47,500 was the payment over the past 20 years, but even another \$12,000 or so might raise it to a million dollars. He isn't sure the board has thought about all the uses, but there is some flexibility and he wanted to know if the board wanted to remain at the \$47,500 in this ordinance. He understands it is necessary to get the Main Street project going.

He said with regards to erosion he did not think there would be much difference in cost between a revetment and an offshore breakwater. To give an executive summary of what he sent to B. Warden, he said each detached breakwater that would protect about 100' of shore would roughly cost about \$75,000. Personally, he felt lakefront and restoring the beaches, and protecting the shoreline is more economically and recreationally for Vermilion, and one of the most important things they can do. With the probable high water over a significant period, they will suffer erosion at the east end of Showse and the east end of Sherod. He said with \$75,000 they could build six breakwaters for \$450,000 and if they spread the amount it could even do up to 12,000' of some protection. Particularly, with respect to Main Street, he thinks there is some opportunities to do things potentially over to Washington or beyond with SID money that might be available. He said one of the most important things in the parks is erosion and he is hoping there will be some funding for this at some point.

B. Scholtz addressed the revetment/breakwaters and asked Homer Taft if he knew what the status is with permitting through ODNR and the Army Corp. Has this been changed, and have

they become more moderate because it took them over three years to get their permit when they did Showse? H. Taft said they have a temporary shore permit that he thinks the city took advantage of, which is an abbreviated process, but they would still have to go back and do the whole thing. He said if they go with detached breakwaters, they will not approve it under a temporary shore permit. However, legally, they don't have a right to say no, but they try to until you push back.

B. Warden agreed they need to keep erosion on the front burner as people are coming to Vermilion because of the water, and the access to credible beaches would make a big difference if they could restore some of them.

### **OLD & NEW BUSINESS:**

**B. Scholtz MOVED;** B. Warden seconded to approve a not to exceed amount of \$1,500 from the operating levy for the reconditioning of the football equipment. Upon discussion, **B. Scholtz MOVED,** B. Warden seconded to amend their motion to approve a not to exceed amount of \$2,000. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**L. Elden MOVED;** B. Scholtz seconded to modify the motion from the December 15, 2020 Parks Board meeting to recommend to City Council to have legislation prepared to borrow against the capital levy in an amount not to exceed \$705,000 (\$47,500 in debt service) for 15 years, which includes Main Street Beach and walking trails at Sherod and Showse parks. Discussion: L. Elden said they discussed other uses for the fund. In the legislation, do they have to call the uses out specifically. A. Hendricks said the language will be broadly enough so they can do different things in the parks they are identifying. The situation for break walls and shoreline protection – these funds must be spent 85% within three years of the time they are borrowed, so with the timing on the permitting process, this would not be a good candidate for this type of borrowing. L. Elden said as they put shoreline protection on their long-term plan how does the Special Improvement District come into play, or do they need to put on their scope a separate set of funds to protect the shoreline. Mayor Forthofer said they would still need special funds because the SID is not really a pot of money but more of a borrowing mechanism. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Mayor Forthofer noted the Parks Board received a letter from Read Wakefield of Huron Street regarding some considerations he would like the board to look at with regards to the Main Street Beach improvements. B. Scholtz said he has included his letter in the file, and he will be part of this discussion, so he will respond to him formally.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

B. Scholtz MOVED, L. Elden seconded to adjourn the meeting. Vote 6 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

**NEXT MEETING:**

Tuesday – February 16, 2021 @ 6:00 pm  
via ZOOM

*~Gwen Fisher, Certified Municipal Clerk  
Vermilion City Council/Boards and Commissions*