

**VERMILION PARKS & RECREATION BOARD**  
Minutes of February 16, 2021 - 6:00pm | Zoom Meeting

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

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

*Guests:* Mayor Forthofer

---

Terry Parker called the meeting of February 16, 2021 to order.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Liz Elden MOVED**, B. Scholtz seconded to amend the meeting minutes of January 19, 2021 pertaining to a statement made by Terry Parker with regards to the Parks Board encumbering \$185,000 towards the Main Street Project. It was noted for the record that the amount should reflect \$180,000. The clerk noted the revision. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**Liz Elden MOVED**, B. Scholtz seconded to approve the minutes as amended. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**COMMUNITY EVENT GROUP USE PERMITS:**

T. Parker indicated the Main Street Vermilion ‘All Washed Up’ event scheduled for July 17, 2021 was scheduled on the same day as the Vermilion Corvette Show. Therefore, he noted that Marilou Suszko had requested to change their event date to July 31.

**B. Warden MOVED**, D. Brudney seconded to change the event to July 31 as requested by Main Street Vermilion. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

*-National Day of Prayer – 5/6/21 from 12pm-1pm – Victory Park*

**K. Repola MOVED**, L. Elden seconded to approve the event as requested. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

*-3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday – May – September from 5pm – Sunset (See park areas as listed on permit)*

**L. Elden MOVED**; B. Warden seconded to approve the event as requested. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

*-Festival of the Fish – 6/16-6/21 – All Day (See park areas as listed on permit)*

**K. Repola MOVED**, B. Warden seconded to approve the event as requested. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

*-Concerts in the Park – July – August (Sunday's) – Victory Park*

**L. Elden MOVED**, D. Brudney seconded to approve the event as requested. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

*-Woollybear Festival – Date TBD – All Day (See park areas as listed on permit)*

**L. Elden MOVED**, B. Scholtz seconded to approve the event as requested. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

### **COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE REPORT:**

B. Holmes noted that Council is moving forward on the museum project.

### **RECREATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

C. Kuhns reported they held a football meeting yesterday and they will move forward with two Vermilion teams in the league. The first league will include third and fourth grade teams and the second will include a fourth, fifth, and sixth grade team. He noted that practice will begin on March 15 and the league will run through May 16. They are looking at the option of having cheerleaders for the season.

### **SERVICE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

T. Valerius reported the museum demolition went out to bid and there will be a mandatory contractor meeting tomorrow to discuss what is staying and what is going. The bid opening is scheduled for February 25. He said RFQ's were due on February 11 and they received two packets of which they will score shortly.

He said he met with M. Weisenberger with regards to the fire station #1 building, which was presented to City Council to get their blessing. He said they would like the Parks Department to take over this building which would be perfect in size to house and maintain their equipment. They all can utilize the meeting area for various meetings. Their current location has no heat or water, and this building would provide all the above and it will offer an office for Marc. Mayor Forthofer said they did run this idea by council, and Council felt this decision should be made by the administration. He felt the plan was a good one because they would need to make substantial improvements at the current location. He said the social group can utilize the space for various public uses. B. Holmes said he likes the idea as they can winterize their equipment in a heated space. He said they do not need to close it off to anyone as other civic groups could use the meeting room, so he thought the idea was worth looking into. B. Scholtz said he loved the idea but was curious of the costs. T. Valerius

explained the maintenance of the building would be minimal as they recently put a new roof on the building and painted it. They also installed new windows and supported the northern wall. He said they currently pay \$6,700 a year for electric and gas, which is close to what they are paying for the existing building/office area on Devon. B. Warden asked who was paying for the utilities now at the fire station. T. Valerius responded the fire department. B. Scholtz agreed it was a great idea and it is close to the downtown parks. Mayor Forthofer said once the fire department is completely out of the building, then the administration will hand the building over to the Parks Department. B. Warden agreed it was a great idea and wholeheartedly agreed it was in a central location. Mayor Forthofer noted the firehouse designation on the building will be removed.

### **PARK'S SUPERVISOR REPORT:**

M. Weisenberger reported they are continuing to perform snow removal in parking lots and on sidewalks. They will be repairing a picket fence in East Exchange Park. They will also be working on maintenance issues on the mowing trailer, which will include new lights, turn signals, and tires for the upcoming season. He said they will also perform maintenance on the pool deck equipment. He said he is continuing to work on the park assessments as part of the master plan.

He noted the Erie County Metro Parks grant is due in a couple months, so he will be discussing projects with the finance director to see which one would score the best.

He said he would like to meet with Liz Elden and Betsy Wakefield to discuss the playground so they can start putting a plan together for the playground upgrades. He also will meet with Kate Repola to discuss the marketing and promotion of the parks and programs. He said he wants to put together information on anything that might have been done in the past regarding shoreline erosion and beach retention, so they can start putting together a long-term plan.

### **MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Forthofer said he met with local mayors today and the Health Commissioner for Lorain County has a good confidence level on being able to hold the festival in June which may include modifications with regards to COVID.

### **Budget/Finance Subcommittee Report:**

B. Scholtz explained that City Council approved a motion to go out to bid for the demolition of the museum. He said the funds should be available shortly. T. Parker thought the final number approved was around \$597,000. Mayor Forthofer confirmed with the finance director that the number was \$575,000 and there was \$22,000 of issuance fees. T. Parker noted that \$320,000 of this money has been committed to the Main Street Beach Revitalization Project and the rest is committed to upgrades in Sherod and Showse parks in terms of trails and other things.

#### Community Relations/Publicity:

K. Repola said during a pool subcommittee meeting they had spoken about possibly doing a once or twice update a month in the Photojournal on the Parks Department, so she will facilitate this with Candy. They need to work out some details, but it is in the works. Also, she contacted Anne Maiden to find out how they would update their Parks & Recreation page on the city website. She asked the members to look at the page to see if there were other changes they would like to make, and possibly think about whether they wanted to add the survey results of the pool on the website.

#### Erosion:

Bill Warden noted that Homer Taft sent him some nice, proposed maps concerning possible locations for break walls that would be effective in the future. He forwarded them to M. Weisenberger. He also talked with Marc on what is going on in his search for possible history and information that would help them in researching what is stemming erosion problems as high water has already taken a toll. He said they need to fit some solutions into their potential understanding of expenditures for the future. He thanked Marc in his efforts and certainly to Homer for his input. He looks forward to getting with them in the next couple weeks to see if there is a resolution in getting some of this started.

#### Main Street Beach Revitalization Project:

B. Scholtz explained they will be hiring an architectural firm which will then initiate their process for Phase 2. They will assemble a group to begin the planning phase for this area. T. Parker said he had preliminary conversation with the communications person of Western Reserve Land Conservancy and one thought was to put together a three or four question survey for the community to give input on what they think would be great to include down there.

Recreation and School Relations: No report.

Sherod Playground: No report.

## Vermilion Community Pool:

D. Brudney said that he and Marc has been gathering data for the current pool re-opening this summer as well as data for future disposition of Valleyview Pool. Marc, because of current and past relationships in parks and pools field, has been able to talk to many pool operators to gather data which might help us. He visited Amherst outdoor pool, only one to open in Lorain County last summer as well as indoor pool in Fairview.

- Vermilion Photojournal posted pertinent pool survey data in the February 4th edition. A more complete PowerPoint presentation will be displayed as a “feature item” on their online website on February 11. A follow-up story on the 11th was printed about Mayor Forthofer and Parks Board supporting the decision to attempt to open pool if economically feasible. Mayor Forthofer and Parks Board Chairman brought up to City Council at their last meeting.
- Strong support from the community to have a pool that is repaired, improved and in current location seems to be an acceptable scenario.
- BGSU Master’s Program students visited pool toward end of January to analyze strengths and weaknesses. Much collected data was given to them to proceed with their project.
- Focus groups held on February 4 and 5. Summary of results given to subcommittee by BGSU intern.
- Pool Subcommittee met on February 3 to discuss survey results. Kate Repola will coordinate bi-weekly report on pool and parks updates with Photojournal. Kate will also pursue fundraising possibilities to open pool this summer. We will hold meeting within next week or so to discuss this summer pool opening.
- On February 11 held zoom meeting with pool Subcommittee and BGSU students to discuss SWOT analysis of Valleyview pool they were working on. SWOT stands for (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats). Information for SWOT came from focus groups, survey, info gathered by them as well as info provided by pool Subcommittee to them. A summary of SWOT was given to meeting attendees. If need info, let me know.
- Received some data from Superintendent Pempin at Vermilion Local Schools which deal with their five-year demographics, student mappings, etc. Student enrollment down to 1900 this school year and forecast to drop to around 1800 in five-year forecast. School district willing to help support a levy if needed for new pool. Meeting with school personnel and committee members in next few weeks.
- Continuing to gather cost data to build upgraded pool at Valleyview location as well as an indoor facility possibly at new location like school campus.

## OPEN TO THE AUDIENCE:

Mike McClure of 1166 State Street said they just purchased their property at the end of 2020 which is next to West Breeze Park. He asked if they could possibly purchase 10 feet of park property to the south of his property. Mayor Forthofer advised him to contact his office to discuss possible acquisition.

Homer Taft of 3972 Edgewater said on the erosion matter they will need to get together as there are a ton of things to think about. He said if anyone wants any of the information he submitted they can email him at [hstaft@yahoo.com](mailto:hstaft@yahoo.com). He noted there was something said at the last meeting that nothing could be done on erosion within three years and he thinks there can be a lot done within three years. With regards to the community pool, he thinks the last year the pool was opened they spent \$50,000 for what was counted as 2,500 uses, which would be \$20 cost for everybody to use it each time. They need to do a better job of recovering as last time it was \$11,000 in private subscriptions and they did not have any fees for seniors, and they need to charge enough to pay for the pool. They need to do the best they again between donations and the subscription charges to recoup most of the costs. He said he read the works on the Wakefield museum that the Parks Board did and is well convinced that it cannot stay up. When an organization comes like Preservation Ohio and says they can and there is a good use for it, then he wishes this board and council would at least listen to them and give them a hearing before they start ripping things down. At the end of the day, it probably must come down, but he thinks they owe them if they think there is an opportunity.

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

T. Parker said in reply to Homer Taft's last thought, the point of address is City Council because they have taken their actions, and the Parks Board is taking their lead at this point, so this is the place where people should go. Mayor Forthofer said they have had meetings with people who have sentiments in preserving the museum numerous times over the past year and a half. They always made themselves available and the final word in those meetings was usually him saying, "This is a wonderful idea, please show me a statement on how this won't be a financial burden on the taxpayers." After this, it usually ended anymore meetings, but they have listened, and they remain available to listen to anyone who has ideas – just that it will always end up in that place. T. Parker said he does not know how they get around this as there are limitations on what can be put on this property. They have shared those repeatedly and they do not seem to quite sink in. Some of the things that are proposed are beautiful, but they are not permitted by the conservation easement. For example, the boardwalk along the shore – as long as those two buildings are there – there is not enough permissible impervious surface left to do something like this because of the restriction. He has shared this a few times personally and he has shared it with the person who wrote the article in the Morning Journal. Unfortunately, it got there too late to get in the article, but they are following up on this. It is hard to share it with the public in such a way of what they have been up against. They have

been in this from the beginning – 2011 and 2012 and every time they came up with an idea, they ran up against either financial limitations or restrictions imposed by the conservation on sustainability issues. In December of 2017, the subcommittee after three years of work and two public meetings said the only thing, they could recommend is demolishing those two buildings, and it was made public at that time and now suddenly it seems to have taken on an 11<sup>th</sup> hour emergency. He does not know what else they could have done going forward.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

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

**NEXT MEETING:**

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

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