

Minutes
Parks, Recreation and Senior Services Advisory Board
Thursday February 7, 2019 at 7:00p.m.
Mahany/Meininger Senior/Community Center
3500 Marais Avenue
Royal Oak, MI 48067

Meeting called to Order 7:01 PM.

Members Present: Sarah Kindinger, Tim Ciechorski, Maya Harris, Crystal Chow, Commissioner Melanie Macey

Also Present: John Fedele, Superintendent of Recreation.

Members Absent: Paul Kanan, Jeffrey Plachta, Greg Rassel, Director of Public Services and Recreation,

I. **Approval of Minutes:** Change date: Motion by Sarah Kindinger, Second by Crystal Chow, unanimously approved

II. **City Commission Comments:**

Oakland County Parks Board has approved a proposal that would give the City \$1 million for Normandy Oaks. Still has to go through the Oakland County Commissioner Board.

Last commission meeting, we approved the payment of the playground equipment for Normandy Oaks.

John Fedele states that we just completed the Pre-Bid meeting for the park with an estimated break ground in April.

Golf course netting pre-bid will be on February 20, 2019. There are houses in the area that the netting will go up to shield those homes.

Do we need to reconvene the Normandy Oaks Task force?

John is not sure if they will need to be reconvened for the decision of awarded contractor.

Nicole and Crystal would be interested in service on the Normandy Oaks Task Force.

III. **Public Comment:**

- Stephanie Comptos: Friendly suggestions regarding Normandy Oaks, seeing a lot of chatter on social media sites and there are some rumor/chatter on what's going on or not going on. If there could be periodic updates as to what is going on that would be great

Suggestion: people are using the hill to sled, not very safe a lot of construction going on.

Suggestion: When we are ready to begin construction, keep fences up until the last minute. People are off roading in the park.

- Pat McGee: Reiterate what Stephanie Comptos regarding the sledding and four wheeling going on inside the Normandy Oaks Park area.
 - o Commissioner Macey ask if there are fences there?
Pat says no, nothing.

The building of the small homes by the berm, maybe by Nowak and Fraus, is there any known construction going on by the berm or no? Robertson Brothers took a large boulder from Normandy Oaks Park and placed in on their development. Water runoff in the park is exponentially greater than it has now. Intersection of Nakota was flooded and I believe there was a water main break.

The build up of the park from Robertson Brothers going onto Normandy Oaks Park is growing and Robertson Brothers should take responsibility. Also, a lot of construction debris lying around their area is unacceptable. Thinks the housing development is taking advantage of park since no one is there watching it.

Has brought this up to Greg Rassel, states Greg has told him that it is not a work site yet.

- Stephanie Comptos: The debris is just not going into the park but its spreading through the whole neighborhood.
- Joe Spatafore: I am the manager of the Royal Oak Golf Course I mow that park and the debris is bad. Some days I spend more time picking up trash than I do mowing the park. I do not pay much attention to the housing development but mostly the park.
- Janice Wagman: Still no handicap signs at the Farmers Market. Hotline number that we have to call still stakes January 31st. I would recommend having a standard message. Brought up multiple times about communication regarding the senior center.
- Janet Roger: Miller Park is scheduled for workout equipment?

- Sarah Kindinger: We would have to revisit this park and funding that we are given:
 - Janet Rogers: Points to area and asks if it could be a butterfly garden.
- Sarah Kindinger: We would have to follow the guidelines provided to us by the CDBG

End Public Comment

IV. **Business:**

a. John introduces Paige Gembarski, Senior Center Director:

- Paige Gembarski: Our Chef Tim Campbell has passed away recently so we have been in transition to hire a new Chef, Erin Koch, she resides here in Royal Oak. She has a culinary arts background and worked in the schools and hospitals. She has been on board for about a week but have reinstated meals on Tuesday 2/4/19. Prices are the same
 - Commissioner Macey: Is it still going to be called Tim's Kitchen?
 - Paige: That is a discussion we have been having, he touched a lot of our hearts and we would like to honor that but there also could unfair to the new Chefs. Maybe make it a memorial for him. Possibly be doing this.
 - Commissioner Macey: Is this a full-time job for the City?
 - Paige: No this is a permanent part time job which means she cannot exceed 1400 hours per year, 28 hours per week. 1-person kitchen which we rely heavily on volunteers. Work heavily with Royal Oak Schools, Berkely etc. When Tim was ill, we were trying to gather a plan as a backup plan. We reached out to local colleges and into their culinary program and coordinate an internship with our Chef. It would be a win win situation, students would get credit for the internship and we would get their assistance. Staff at the center is cross trained in the kitchen. March 15th is the celebration of life for Tim, posted flyers plugging away with our regular classes and with all this weather we have not closed our doors, we ran all the programs we could have ran. We extended hours as a warming center, staff stayed longer to help out the power outage around the area. The center is open if called for a warming center during regular hours and it dictates by the hours that are dictated by rental/class times. We do not have staff or are

trained to have the building open 7 days a week from 8 am to 8 pm as an example.

- Commissioner Macey: How is the building open with regards to the weather, salt, snow removal etc.?
 - A lot of coordination, DPS will check our lots and try to help as best as can. Most of the time its DPS against the weather.
- Nicole McEachern: How many part timers do you have on staff?
 - Paige- get answers from Paige
- Nicole McEachern: Are all instructors contracted?
 - Paige- yes, all instructors and custodial is contracted out. Wonderful group of part-timers.
- Commissioner Macey: Roses people claim that there are not enough Rose people to go around? Should we raise more funds for the program?
 - Paige: Over the course of 10 years we have seen an issue with hiring and retaining the workers. They get paid anywhere between \$12-15/ hour. Initially it was seniors helping seniors. Over the years we have increased wages up \$2/hour and we have not received any more interest. We cannot hire local companies because of the CDBG funding. We have to use local people. The workers develop a relationship with those who are requesting help and find out they can get the money from the side rather than go through the ROSES program. In the meantime, the program is where it is today, we cannot seem to retain the workers. There are three tiers to the program, initially a 3-hour service or 5 -7-hour service regarding income and providing services to those most needed. Snow is the most difficult because they want it right then and there. Transportation is rolling, we did get an increase from SMART we got 5 busses instead of 4.
- Commissioner Macey: How is the need vs. the supply?
 - Paige: Like anything else, we could always use more but we get by. It is funded by community and transportation credits. Like everything else, it depends we try to put medical first.
- Nicole McEachern: Are you able to use the SMART busses for trips?
 - Paige: Yes, as long as you remain inside the county. We do partner and coordinate with Pleasant Ridge and get their funding through SMART and two trips per month from them.

- Commissioner Macey: In terms of what you're hearing from people, what are you hearing about what people are seeking/needs?
 - Paige: the building is getting to the point where it is not large enough. They would like to have a fitness center/room here. Which is something in progress. We are tapped out in space. There is not a lot of area around us. Do not want to take away from the parks. May move up/ create a second floor. My wish would be to pick up Salter and combine the two facilities.
- Commissioner Macey: Have you been over to Salter?
 - Paige: Most of it is all recreation and drop in classes.
- Commissioner Macey: Do you seek any communication needs from the seniors/need more communication for the center?
 - Paige: Not really, I feel the city provides a lot of services to the City and communicates it well. Would like to do more for ROSE but we are strapped.
- Commissioner Macey: We have tried to pass onto the Commission to make the newsletter free instead of a subscription.
 - Paige: Would like to know the reason behind this. We offer the monthly newsletter and the quarterly insight. The monthly newsletter is easy to manager and easy for the seniors to follow. We have under 100 people that subscribes to this and it is \$8/year. Majority of people who subscribe are not residents. I don't understand why we would be mailing this for free when majority isn't in the city and the insight is shipped for free or you can pick one up for \$.10, and the reason why we charge because people would just come in and take it.
- Commissioner Macey: The reason is because the cost would be \$800 so it is fairly inexpensive.
- Nicole McEachern: The reason there is a charge is, so people don't just grab them. If we made it free it would add to staff time and development and could provide a challenge to instituting this.
 - Paige: Exactly, creates more stress on our staff to produce and control it going out to all residents for free.
- Sarah Kindinger: Do you feel there is a gap between communication?

- Paige: No, we feel we have reached everyone that we can efficiently with what we provide. It is a hard group to reach but you have to know when you get inquiries how to answer their questions. We have people that ask why haven't I heard this building? Well its been open for 30 years, and if they don't open the newsletter or insight what can you do? We out of the task force need to figure out what needs/areas need to be addressed of the 8 areas because you cannot address all of them.
 - Commissioner Macey: I totally agree with what the task force needs to do but it is not going to happen overnight. In the meantime, do you think there needs to be some incremental work to be done?
 - Paige: No, we are going to see where things progress, see where our kitchen goes, we are just trying to get the meals out.
 - Nicole McEachern: How many meals per day?
 - Paige: Try to do 40 but depends on the menu could do anywhere between 40 – 75 meals. She cooks from scratch like Tim did. We could do 100 but cannot do that with the provided hours. It is a scratch kitchen.
 - Commissioner Macey: When you say you can do 100, does that mean capacity of kitchen?
 - Paige: Yes, we have the capacity, but the demand isn't there.
 - Nicole McEachern: The seniors look at the menus and go wherever they feel like eating.
 - Paige: we have to coordinate the dinner dance with Shelby because we provide the same services and cannot coincide with them.
- b. Senior Task Force Update – Stephanie Comptos states that they are the commission meeting to meet ADA requirements. Next meeting on February 20, 2019.
- c. Golf Course Report – Joe Spatafore:
 - John Fedele introduces General Manager of the Royal Oak Golf Course, Joe Spatafore
 - Joe: Given the report, we would like to see more of you out there. The building is from 1960 that Joe and his management has renovated. Suggests maybe incorporating funds for a new golf building/senior center.

RFP went out for Golf Course Cart Path and Re-Pavement of the parking lot. Been a process but will be moving towards it.

Hopefully break ground in April but that course is a swamp, cart paths is a huge revenue boost for our Golf Course. This year was one of the worst years we usually open in March and we didn't open until April and we are open as long as we can.

One of our big expenses is watering, we cannot water how we are supposed to be watering. Our first year was about \$120,000 and we are still climbing our way out of that hole. With the new structure we will not be getting charged for sewer so now we can improve our watering. Dug 5 wells at our own expense however it is too salty - cannot use it.

Membership has gone up, golf is on pendulum swing it is hit or miss. We did \$18,000 on Groupon sales this past year. At one time the only people that could use the course was Royal Oak Residents. Now we have memberships, Royal Oak resident pay a lower fee than non-residents.

Remodeling the kitchen, cooler from 1960 will be remodeled we do sell beer and wine, we do have a full liquor license, but it is not a big demand, so we haven't really gotten into it. No issues with the beer and wine.

- Commissioner Macey: Is there a timeline for the RFP?
 - Joe: We had a pre-bid meeting, but the timeline depends on the weather. It is a 10-day project for the cart paths, parking lot will be half and half. All in all, a 2-week project.
 - John: RFP will close right around the same time as Normandy Oaks.
- Commissioner Macey: Would you like for the building to be torn down?
 - Joe: It would make sense for the City; most other local areas have done renovations. We re-done the bathroom, put new tile in but hurts because no one wants to stick around and eat after playing.

- d. Nominate replacement of Mark Ryan on Downtown Park Task Force:
 - Tim motions to nominate Sarah Kindinger, Nicole moves, Macey 2nds: Unanimously passes.

- e. Irish Hill's Leprechaun's – Memorial Park Field Renovation Proposal

John introduces Mark Sacket, President of Irish Hills Leprechauns and Michigan Red Sox, Inc.

- John states that Mark had approached him into bringing his team, the Irish Hills Leprechauns to the City of Royal Oak and playing on Memorial Park Field #3.

John explains that the Irish Hill Leprechauns is a team made up of college baseball players that are sent to play in leagues of other teams made up of college players to increase playing time and practice for the colleges they attend.

John states that Mark Sacket and his management group has proposed a \$350,000 - \$380,000 renovation of Memorial Park Field #3 to consist of replacing the current field with artificial turf, make the existing dugouts bigger, create bullpens for both visitor and home teams and provide temporary fencing for right field.

With these improvements the Irish Hill's Leprechauns will work with Royal Oak Sandlot League and John Fedele to coordinate a game schedule for the 2020 season. Timeline for the construction if approved by the appropriate means would be a break ground in August with a completion in October 2019.

In conjunction with the renovations, the Irish Hill Leprechauns will change its name to the Royal Oak Leprechauns and will offer youth baseball camps for the ROSL teams and Royal Oak Area.

John states that the upgrades to Memorial Park Field #3 would not only benefit ROSL but would benefit the City of Royal Oak as well. The field would reduce the number of rainouts given in a season, bring in more teams to the area and increase participation in youth baseball and in activities throughout the area.

- o Sarah Kindinger: So, what is the total cost is it \$380,000 or \$350,000?
 - Mark Sacket explains that there was an adjustment made after the initial proposal was sent out and the cost is closer to the \$350,000.
- o Sarah Kindinger: Can you explain the profit share chart please?
 - John states that looking at the chart, if the Irish Hill's Leprechauns fund 100% of the renovations, then the profit share would be a 50/50 split only for the Memorial Park #3 rentals and so forth.

- Sarah Kindinger: Why Royal Oak and what is the confidence in providing 100% of these funds?
 - Mark states that he grew up playing at Memorial Park and would like to bring back the team to the local area. The area is nicer than the current city where they play, Adrian, and wants to give back to the community.
 - Mark is very confident in providing 100% of the funds. His management team has already begun reaching out and gathering funds but would need a solid answer from the City in order to official receive the funds from potential sponsors/donors.
- Sarah Kindinger: What is the timeline you would need to have if the city were to help with the funding?
 - Mark states that they would need to know by June 2019.
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Sarah Kindinger makes a motion to move this to the next phase of approval process and pass this along to City Commissioners, 2nd by Crystal Chow: Unanimously approved.

V. **Items not on the Agenda:**

- Tim Ciechorski: Question about shoveling sidewalks and what the process is?
 - John states that he would have to inquire about this particular question with Greg but believe it comes down to a priority list, the amount of staff and competing with the weather.
- Commissioner Macey: Suggest that the board and its members get out in the community and make a presence in the City. And have one event each year, lunch at the center, breakfast at the center etc.
 - Crystal Chow suggest an event in March at the Senior Center like coffee and bagels etc.
- John: Mentions that Tim had requested to host a meeting and tour at the John Lindell Ice Arena.
 - Tim Ciechorski: States the meeting would begin at 6 pm voluntarily for a tour, open to the public, and proceed with the agenda meeting afterward. Recommends doing meetings at other venues throughout the year.

VI. **Upcoming Events**

Friday, April 19 Marshmallow Drop at Worden Park.
April 27-28 Park Cleanup

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

Adjourn: Sarah Kindinger makes a motion, Commissioner Macey 2nds: Unanimously approved at 9:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved,

John Fedele

Paul Kanan

John Fedele, Superintendent of Recreation

Paul Kanan, Secretary

