



**REGULAR PARK BOARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2024 @ 5:30 PM
MGC COMMISSION CHAMBERS
201 WEST WATER STREET, PIQUA, OHIO 45356**

The City of Piqua Park Board met at 5:30 P.M. in the Municipal Government Complex Commission Chambers located at 201 W. Water Street.

Roll Call as follows: Board Members Present: Marcia Garrett, Natalie Young, Cathy Oda, Juli Smith, Zach Gordon, and Terry Wright. Staff Present: Amy Welker, Bob Graeser and Kris Lee.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Natalie Young called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Marcia Garrett moved for approval of the Meeting Minutes from the January 31, 2024, Park Board Meeting; motion was seconded by Cathy Oda. Motion carried unanimously; Meeting Minutes approved.

VOTE OF MEMBERSHIP

Due to no attendance at any meetings, a motion was made by Juli Smith to remove Brad Collins from the Park Board. The motion was seconded by Zach Gordon; the motion was carried unanimously.

CIP RANKING

Amy Welker briefly explained each project listed on the CIP sheet. Jim Roth shared information about the Miracle Field project at Pitsenbarger Park. Each Park Board member present then voted for his/her top 7 priorities. The top 3 projects that received the most votes were Miracle Field, Kayak Rental at Upper Fountain Park, and Fountain Park Dining Hall renovations. The tennis courts, baseball concession stand, basketball courts, and splash pad all tied with 4 votes each. After a revote of these 4 projects, it was determined that the tennis courts and a new splash pad were the next top priorities for the Park Board in the CIP.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Chairperson Natalie Young discussed her perspective on utilizing the implementation plan. The group decided to take the plan and read, evaluate, and come up with ideas. This item could possibly be assigned to a sub-committee. Natalie also shared some of her ideas on the goals of this plan.

TREE COMMITTEE ITEMS

Bob Graeser announced that the city will hold an Arbor Day event on Friday, April 26, 2024, with a rain date of the following Friday. He is planning this event now and invited everyone to attend. Tree Care is providing a tree to be planted at this event. He reiterated that the city received the "Tree City" award again for the 27th year. Bob also informed the board that the 2024 Riverway Summit will take place here in Piqua on Friday, April 19, 2024. He encouraged everyone to attend this event as well.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Natalie talked about the current calendar posted on the city's website page. Amy said that the new Public Information Officer Michelle Perry will be invited to the next Park Board meeting to discuss her plans for the Community Calendar website page.

2024 WORK PLAN

Amy shared the 2024 Parks Work Plan with the group. Natalie had questions about what is being done with the park area on High Street. Amy explained that the High Street Park and Armory Park are no longer maintained as city parks and that the city is currently evaluating the best use for these properties.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Natalie started a discussion on whether there is interest in creating and maintaining subcommittees within the Park Board. Juli expressed her opinion that subcommittees would be too much work due to the meetings having to be open to the public with meeting minutes and public notices required. She prefers to talk about these issues at the regular meetings

instead. Cathy agreed with Juli, stating that another meeting would be too much and that she prefers to work on these items at the regular meetings.

Zach Gordon inquired about using UVCC students for tree removals in the city parks. Bob explained that we have utilized this group of students in the past and that the city will evaluate future projects that may be appropriate for these students.

MINI MASTER PLANS

Natalie said that she would like to utilize Mini Master Park Plans to come to an agreement on the top 3 priorities for each park. It was decided by the group that they will discuss several parks at each meeting for the rest of the year. For the next Park Board meeting, each member will come up with ideas regarding Shawnee Park and Kiwanis Park.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Cindy Pearson said she enjoys working in the parks, picking up litter, helping to beautify the areas, and she likes the focus on maintenance of the parks.

STAFF REPORT

Amy and Bob discussed the new Lock 9 Park and showed renderings of its design. Bob explained each element of the new park. A tentative opening event is scheduled for July 27th.

Amy then talked about a previous recommendation to the board to add reference to Ann Mira Das, for whom Das Park was named. She shared a mock-up design of the new sign with a ribbon referencing Ann Mira. Marcia moved for approval to recommend the addition of the ribbon to the Das Park sign; the motion was seconded by Juli. Motion carried unanimously.

Amy shared that the city is going to acquire new software that will help the city's boards and committees. She explained how it will provide a portal to each board member to access documents, minutes, and other information relevant to these committees.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Terry Wright spoke about a NEEF Biodiversity Conservation Grant Pollinator Grant application, which he received an email notice of one day before the Park Board meeting. The grant is due on Friday. Terry asked Amy if in total there was 200 acres of park land, which was a stipulation for the grant. Amy assured Terry that in total there was 200 acres of park land in Piqua. Terry said that the grant application was for \$50,000 and was a full grant with no matching funds required. Terry noted that there was already \$7,000 appropriated in the current Park Board budget for a pollinator program and perhaps those funds could be re-appropriated in the Park Board budget if the grant was received. Terry said that he had contacted the Ohio State University Miami County office for assistance with the grant, and they agreed with that assistance on the grant application. Terry said that he talked to an employee at the OSU Miami County office who stated that pollination programs were her professional-specialty field in her role at OSU Miami County office. Terry noted that he had had success in writing grant applications for the school district where he taught. Terry offered to write the grant and have the grant application completed and on Amy's desk by Friday so she could look it over and email it in for the process. Amy talked with Bob Graeser and told Terry it was too soon. After conversation with the board, but no vote, Amy told Terry maybe next time and repeated that it was 'too soon this year.'

Juli suggested that the board reach out to Job and Family Services and utilize a non-profit youth program for work in the parks.

Terry reiterated the addition of a sign on the Atomic City Bridge indicating mileage for those using the river. It was discussed that this item will be placed on hold until the Dam Removal project is completed, as signage may be a part of that project.

Terry also asked about the Park Bench Memorial Program, to which Amy responded that the project is ready, and the city will be working with Michelle to advertise it.

Natalie asked about a gravel issue at the Roadside Dog Park. Amy explained why the improvement was made there.

ADJOURNMENT

Natalie moved for adjournment of the meeting; motion was seconded by Juli. Motion carried unanimously. The Park Board Meeting adjourned at 7:51 pm.