

SOUTH BEND BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 18, 2017

The Board of Park Commissioners of the City of South Bend, Indiana met on Monday, December 18, 2017 at the O'Brien Administration & Recreation Center, 321 E. Walter St., South Bend, Indiana for its regular meeting. Notice of the date, time and place of the meeting were duly given as required by law.

Park Board members present were as follows:

Mr. Mark Neal, President
Mr. Dan Farrell
Ms. Aimee Buccellato

Park Board members absent were as follows:

Ms. Consuella Hopkins

Staff members present: Aaron Perri, Director of VPA; Eva Ennis, Operations Coordinator; Danielle Campbell, Assistant City Attorney; Jeff Jarnecke, Deputy Director; Jackie Appleman, Experience Director; Amy Roush, Volunteer Coordinator; John Martinez, Facilities and Grounds Director; Patrick Sherman, Project Manager; Tony Stearns, Director of Golf; Jessica Spoor, E-Media Coordinator

I. The meeting was called to order by Board President Mark Neal at 5:10 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes on November 20, 2017 by Aimee Buccellato, supported by Dan Farrell, motion carried.

III. Consent Agenda

Motion to approve consent agenda by Dan Farrell, supported by Aimee Buccellato, motion carried.

IV. Interviewing of Interested Citizens

Mark Neal opened the floor to citizens interested in speaking on a matter not listed on the agenda. There were no citizen comments.

IV. Reports by Organizations - Potawatomi Zoo

Marcy Dean provided an update on upcoming Potawatomi Zoo projects primarily the front entry renovation project. The Zoo has a fundraising deadline of March 31st. The entire project has a \$3 million project budget. The zoo is hosting a large fundraiser on March 10 at the Armory. Next steps include the North America section remodel.

She also reported that the Zoo is officially closed for season and will reopen on March 30. Mark Neal asked how large is the new entrance building is. Marcy Dean replied that it is 4,500 square feet. The Zoo is planning for a fall 2018 ground breaking following Zoo Boo. Mark Neal asked if there is participation by the City in this capital project. Aaron Perri replied that the City would contemplate it as part of the whole private public partnership. Dan Farrell asked that Marcy Dean invite the board to other upcoming fundraising events.

V. New Business

1. 35th Street Wetland Presentation

Andrew Tucker reported on the 35th Street Wetland area which is a five-acre area in a neighborhood on the east side. He explained that this area is an opportunity for park development and reviewed the demographics of neighborhood and a vision for a park in the area. He noted that My SB Parks & Trails highlighted the future acquisition of park land considering the Trust for Public Lands ParkScore, neighborhood needs, and feasibility of locations. The 35th Street Wetland is in an area of relatively low access to parks. The area is 25% minority and 20% children. The current zoning of the area is permissible for park use. There is also potential to acquire property adjacent. He reviewed the area landscape, fauna and wildlife. It could also be great opportunity to implement principals of the natural resource management plan.

His vision is for the area to be restored to a healthy natural area and a place to explore, play, relax, learn and connect. He recommended engaging the community to discuss the vision more.

Dan Farrell asked whose land it is and how does it become parks land. Aaron Perri replied that the city already owns the land and it is already zoned in appropriate way to use as a park. The Legal Department has started to research this more. There are some safety considerations since it is a retention basin with storm sewer overflow.

Aimee Buccellato asked if residents do not visit the area because they are unaware of its ownership and purpose. Andrew Tucker agreed and commented that there are not a lot of users now and people just need an invitation.

Mark Neal commented that the board is not taking action, but staff will continue to move this forward.

2. Resolution 0010-2017 Natural Resource Management Plan

The Natural Resource Management Plan was reviewed at the last board meeting. Garry Harrington thanked EAC members who participated in the process. Aimee Buccellato asked what the communication mechanisms are for getting information between the committee and the board. Garry Harrington replied that communication will continue through him. Aaron Perri also added that the enabling legislation that established the committee has some information on how communication will flow between the two entities. Dan Farrell recommended there be a parks standard operating procedure that projects of a certain size require review by the committee and communication to the board on that review. Aaron Perri replied that the Ecological Advocacy Committee can help develop those standards.

Motion to approve Resolution 0010-2017 by Dan Farrell, supported by Aimee Buccellato, motion carried.

3. Ecological Advocacy Committee

Garry Harrington thanked the members for their service. The selection committee selected two applicants to serve as new members of the committee – Greg Koehler and Andrew Tucker. Mark Neal asked how many applicants the committee received. Garry Harrington replied that there were four applicants received. Three committee members served on the selection committee.

Motion to appoint Andrew Tucker and Greg Koehler to the EAC for 2018 by Aimee Buccellato, supported by Dan Farrell, motion carried.

Motion to reappoint existing members of EAC listed on the memo dated 12/6/17 by Dan Farrell. Supported by Aimee Buccellato, motion carried.

4. Golf Overview

Tony Stearns provided a 2018 overview of the golf season. He reviewed that the golf program was down in rounds at the beginning of the year, but regained numbers as the season went on. Revenues are down slightly from the previous year, but they managed the expenses to break even. He reviewed his goals for next year including increasing rounds through marketing, upgrading golf carts, upgrading point of sales to a cloud platform.

He added that they are renaturalizing parts of Elbel and beautifying the entrance with our horticulturalist. 50 acres were re-naturalized into no mow areas and they are currently testing for wildflower growth potential throughout the park.

Erskine is expecting \$1 million improvements in the upcoming year.

The golf program is also focusing on telling our story throughout the next year as Studebaker will be 100 years old.

5. Marketing / Experience Contracts

Jessica Spoor reviewed the various contracts for advertising opportunities.

Motion to approve the marketing/experience contracts a-e by Dan Farrell, supported by Aimee Buccellato, motion carried.

VI. Report by Jackie Appleman, Director of Experience

Jackie Appleman gave the following updates:

- VPA served over 5,000 people at community events over last year.
- VPA has focused on resident engagement and growing volunteer program and Community partners.
- The development team has merged the Morris Entertainment Inc and Parks Foundation into VPA Foundation.

- VPA was awarded \$1.5 million dollars from the Leighton Foundation for My SB Parks and Trails.
- Marketing has focused on brand growth, brand consistency, and team development.

VII. Report by Executive Director Aaron Perri

Aaron Perri gave the following updates:

- The Facilities and Grounds project list for 2018 will be public facing. Lawson Fischer will be working to keep every My SB Parks & Trails project on time and on budget.
- Aaron Perri's goal for the department in 2018 is to foster a culture of communication and engagement with one another as colleagues and employees and with residents.
- The Park Bond has officially closed. The Redevelopment Bond will close in spring.
- Kimberly Williams was hired as the new Director of Finance and will begin in January.
- Susan O'Connor finished work last week after 27 ½ years at the City. Applications for a new recreation director are in and we hope to make offer in the first few weeks of January
- VPA is up for CAPRA reaccreditation next year. All paperwork must be in order by April, so information will come before board to approve before then.

No other questions or comments from the Board, meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m. by President Mark Neal.

The next regular meeting will be held January 16, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. in the Boardroom of the O'Brien Administration Center.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eva Ennis
Executive Secretary