

**SOUTH BEND BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 19, 2016**

The Board of Park Commissioners of the Park District of the City of South Bend, Indiana met on Tuesday, January 16, 2016 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:

Ms. Amy Hill, President
Mr. Mark Neal, Vice President
Mr. Dan Farrell
Ms. Aimee Buccellato

Park Board members absent were as follows:

N/A

Staff members present: Aaron Perri, Director of Parks; Ron O'Connor, Director of Financial Services; Susan O'Connor, Deputy Director of Parks; TJ Mannen, Director of Golf; John Martinez, Maintenance Superintendent; Mark Bradley, Director of Marketing; Matthew Moyers, Project Manager; Brent Thompson, Operations Manager; Paula Garis, Special Events Supervisor; Attorney Michael Schmidt

- I. The meeting was called to order by Board President Hill at 4:03 p.m.**
- II. Welcoming the new Director of Parks Aaron Perri**
- III. The first order of business Interviewing of Interested Citizens.**

President Hill requested City Attorney Michael Schmidt address the meeting prior to the interviewing of interested citizens. Attorney Schmidt did address the meeting advising a special meeting concerning the sale of Elbel Golf Course is scheduled for February 11, 2016. Attorney, Michael Schmidt, suggested any individual wishing to address the board concerning the sale, limit their speakers at this time to 1-2 per group, unless additional information for each speaker was required. Also Mr. Schmidt requested each speaker begin by introducing themselves and state their address.

Paul Blaschko of 322 E Colfax Apt 209 South Bend, IN 46617 representing Elbel for Everyone (EFE) advised the board there would be four or five interested citizens this evening representing different areas of concern. A request was made with respect to public process, these each of these speakers have an opportunity to address the board and the process should take approximately 10 minutes. Mr. Blaschko provided the background of Elbel for Everyone, as a grass roots movement of approximately 300 citizens. Mr. Blaschko stated the priorities of EFE are twofold, 1. That Elbel Golf Course

remain publicly accessible as a natural space, 2. That the ecological integrity of Elbel Golf Course be protected according to scientific informed standards.

Mr. Blaschko thanked the board & Director Perri for the scheduled meeting on February 11th to discuss the potential sale of Elbel. Mr. Blaschko stated the meeting will provide a good opportunity for a publically, accessible, and transparent step to discuss the future of Elbel.

Elbel for Everyone is proposing the Common Council call for a formation of a commission consisting of members from the park board, city officials, concerned citizens of the city, and members of Elbel for Everyone. Elbel for Everyone would also like to see experts with experience in ecology and land development be consulted. EFE suggested the duties of the proposed commission would be to explore, research, and report on all options available for Elbel Golf Course. EFE submitted to the Common Council, Mayor's office and the Parks Board a proposal for an option for what can be done, included in the proposal was a 600 signature document against the sale. Mr. Blaschko stated Elbel for Everyone believes public deliberation of the matter have not been adequately approached. Elbel for Everyone is requesting Resolution 0003-2015 and Bill 0116 to be removed from the table, stating the ability to discuss in a publically and transparent manner cannot be accomplished with the threat of an approval pending for the sale of Elbel Golf Course. Mr. Blaschko also stated Elbel for Everyone is asking the Parks Board to join in the effort to revoke the approval of the sale of Elbel Golf Course. Questions will be presented by Elbel for Everyone showing the necessity of removing the resolution and bill while the process is in effect. The questions Elbel for Everyone will present are also ones which ask the board publically, to investigate the issues which concern Elbel for Everyone before the February 11th meeting. This will prepare the way for all parties involved to communicate, collaborate and come up with solutions going forward.

Mr. Blaschko ask the following questions:

1. Does the city own the property or does the DNR have ownership, and if the DNR does not have ownership what is the relationship of the DNR to the property? Also requesting if a map of the clear boundaries of Elbel Golf Course can be provided?
2. Elbel for Everyone would like to have public access to Elbel Golf Course operating budget for the past 5 years including all detail, before the February 11th meeting?
3. Was there a new fee schedule approved in the November meeting for Elbel? Does the fee schedule allow Elbel to operate without a deficit in 2016?
4. What would be the appropriate timeline for both, forming a commission and responding to questions presented? Is this timeline reasonable given the outline and questions presented in advance and in writing?

Jennifer Betz, 511 S St Joseph, South Bend IN, 46601. Jennifer stated she previously attended Park Board meetings and has questions regarding the December 16, 2015 meeting, during which the resolution was passed. In this meeting was the appraisal opened (and/or provided) and why the resolution to sell Elbel Golf Course was presented during an irregularly scheduled meeting? Ms. Betz also stated there were contradicting messages (if any) on the website and not sure per the Public Access Law of the State of Indiana of the type of media and whether they were properly contacted. Ms. Betz stated Elbel for Everyone was not made aware of the meeting change, despite a park board designee being assigned to communicate with all parties.

Ms. Jennifer Betz reiterated the following question:

1. Why the park board decided to accept the appraisal and have a vote on the sale of Elbel Golf Course at an irregularly schedule meeting?

Ms. Betz re-emphasizing as a result of the December 16th meeting, there was the passage of Resolution 0003-2015 and the subsequent passage of Bill 0116. Also during this meeting it was noted when the appropriate time for Concerns of the Public was held, it was recorded as no one from the public is available for comments, giving illusion there were no public opposition to the proposed sale of Elbel Golf Course. As a whole, Ms. Betz stated this language is a misrepresentation of Elbel for Everyone considering they were represented with 20 concerned citizens in September. Ms. Betz also stated she was present at the October meeting, Ricky Klee was present at the November meeting, during which they were told there were no new developments and no additional information was given concerning the appraisal. Elbel for Everyone is asking for the bill to be rescinded from the Common Council as it is not a true representation of the public sentiment.

Mark Piasecki, 101 Conestoga Lane, South Bend, IN 46617. Commented he sent a memo to the Park Board on September 16, 2015 and received an email in return from Mr. St Clair, thanking him for his concern and encouraged him to participate in future discussions concerning the sale of Elbel Golf Course, as the best option for the Elbel Golf Course are currently being weighed. Mr. Piasecki stated he was surprised to learn the decision to sell had been made on December 16, 2015.

Question asked by Mr. Piasecki:

1. Is it possible individuals who are concerned and involved with park issues be emailed by the park board, as the present situation was handle in a less than transparent way?
2. On February 8th will the Common Council have the final decision on the ordinance for the sale at that time? If not, then will the Park Board accept further information on the February 11th meeting?

President Hill responded by informing them the Common Council and the Park Board will be working in conjunction on any decision, and nothing will occur prior to the public meeting on February 11th. The park board has been working with the Common Council to make sure all the dates line up and there will be an opportunity for public participation.

3. Requested copies of the December 16, 2015 meeting minutes as he was unable to locate them on line?

President Hill requested Mr. Piasecki's contact information be given to Ron O'Connor, who would be able to email the requested information.

Andrew Tucker, 127 South 34th Street, South Bend, IN 46615 is an ecologist employed with the Nature Conservancy, a non-for-profit organization. Mr. Tucker does not represent the Nature Conservancy nor Elbel for Everyone, however comes before the Park Board with several questions concerning the environmental impact the parties of the sale may not be considering.

Questions by Mr. Tucker:

1. Has anyone ever done a complete ecological integrity assessment of the entirety of the Elbel Golf Course property?
2. Has an environmental consultant been hired/available to craft a proposal for Elbel, and what contributions the natural habitat have made?
3. What quality assessments have been performed on the property and what were those findings?

Mr. Tucker noted one botanist has documented two State of Indiana rare species and one endangered species of plants now exist at Elbel Golf Course. Mr. Tucker noted in addition to the plants, Elbel Golf Course provides habitat for the State of Indiana Blandings turtle. Mr. Tucker asks what has the Park Department done to monitor the status of these state species and what provisions have been made for ongoing monitoring to maintain their safety?

Jesse Davis P.O. Box 10205 South Bend, IN. On his own behalf, Mr. Davis asks the following line of questions.

1. Were any of the park board members aware of a meeting, did any park board member attend in the meeting, or did any park board member have any information on what transpired in a meeting which he stated took place at 5:00 pm, January 15, 2016 in the council chambers?
2. Mr. Davis questioned why when he attended was this meeting moved across the street to the Democratic headquarter building?

Christine (last name unavailable) 3808 Highfield Dr Apt 3B (of the first district) representing Elbel for Everyone.

Questions:

1. Why the did the Park Board not have a proposal for the sale of Elbel Golf Course in the Master Plan (which one would consider a very strategic, and driven by an extensive study provided through professional consultants and with specific and valid studies to determine park strategy with considerable community involvement)?

Christine followed with a comment noting Elbel for Everyone and other community groups it represents, call for the following two principles to be included concerning Elbel Golf Course. The first is **Public Access**, and the second is **Ecological Protection**. Elbel for Everyone is of the belief the questions asked, have not be answered and explored sufficiently. They request the park board recommend to the City/Common Council to create a commission which will allow sufficient time to study these issues and consult with experts, as well as, the public, to propose a creative and innovative partnership to reach a permanent solution which will preserve public access to Elbel and protect the ecological integrity of the wetlands. In addition, Christine repeated their request for the Park Board to withdraw its support for the resolution and bill, until the mandate for a commission is allowed.

President Hill thanked those who were present and available for comment. President Hill requested if there were any changes or updates please provide them in advance of the February 11th meeting to allow the board time for preparation. President Hill confirmed the upcoming meeting for February 11, 2016 at 5:00 pm.

Call for any additional interested citizens with other topics? None present.

IV. Reports of Organization.

1. Potawatomi Zoological Society
2. Botanical Society of South Bend.
3. South Bend Cubs ó Not Available

Potawatomi Zoological Society represented by Marcy Dean welcomed Director Perri offering support and assistance. Updates were provided on the new carousel being constructed. Construction has continued but delayed in areas due to the weather change, but is still on schedule for mid-April opening. Board will continued to be informed on a final date of completion and ribbon cutting ceremony. Winter Days have continued, every other Saturday and will continue until the official 2016 opening date of April 1st.

Request for questions: none.

South Bend Botanical Society represented by Jamie Robinson. Jamie provided an update of the greenhouse/warehouse located on the north side of property. A matching grant was received from the Community Foundation, match was for \$7000.00 and a deposit has been given to Keeler-Glasgow to renovate the structure using the existing foundation.

The work will take place ASAP depending upon the weather. A Sensory Garden is planned for the north side of the conservatory; several fund raising events have been planned, Trivia Night on January 30th from 5:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. \$15.00 per person with tables of 8, food may be brought in but food and drinks will be made available; Bowl-A-Thon scheduled February 20th from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Chippewa Bowl tickets for the fundraiser are \$15.00. Green the Bend has made contact regarding a green roof being placed on the potting room of the conservatory. The potting room was constructed in the past with future plans of a green roof being added in the future. The conservatory is looking forward to the plan being completed soon. Meeting is scheduled for next Thursday for a MOU (memorandum of understanding).

V. Unfinished Business

No unfinished business to cover.

VI. New Business

1. Resolution 0001-2016 Honoring Phillip St Clair Park by renaming Belleville Park to Phillip St. Clair Park. Attorney Michael Schmidt prepared a resolution officially rendering under Parks authority to rename Belleville Park to Phillip St Clair Park in honor of his 30 plus years of service to the City of South Bend, and in particular to the South Bend Park Department.

Call for questions none, motioned by Ms. Buccellato, second Mr. Neal. Motion carried.

2. Resolution 0002-2016 Honoring John Byers, John Byers Jr, and James Byers by renaming the Belleville Softball Complex to the Byers Softball Complex. Attorney Michael Schmidt cited the Byerø family service to the Belleville complex dating back to 1938, having provided 77 years of service, the Mayorø office and the South Bend Park Department proposed the renaming of the Belleville Softball Complex to the Byers Softball Complex.

Question by the Board: Is there anyone in attendance of the Byerø family? Would you like to have a few words?

James Byers spoke on behalf of the family, thanking the board & mayorø office for recognition of the service he, his father, and brother have given. President Amy Hill offered additional thanks and requested a motion to approve. Motion to approve by Ms. Buccellato and second Mr. Neal. Motion carried.

3. Resolution 0003-2016 Park Board Resolution to transfer Parcel Plat Bartlett Street. Attorney Michael Schmidt presented Resolution 0003-2016, a proposal to request to transfer a parcel plat of Leeper Park to be given to the Board of Public Works to further continue the effort of the City of South Bends Street Smart Program and its Two Way Conversion Plan. According to State Law, a matching resolution has been prepared for both, the Park Board and Board of Public Works for this transfer.

Ask for a motion to accept the resolution, with the next action requesting the signing of a Quit Claim Deed for Transfer of Parcel Plat Bartlett Street to the Board of Public Works. During the January 26, 2016 meeting, the Board of Public Works will have a matching resolution accepting the transfer from the Park Board assuming acceptance of the resolution and quit claim deed. Noting this is an internal transfer of property from one city department to another city department.

Question by Mr. Mark Neal, does ownership have to be transferred to Public Works in order the eventual work to be completed as part of the Smart Street initiative? Attorney Michael Schmidt responding by stating yes, this particular parcel is necessary to complete a proposed round about. Both Mr. Mark Neal & Mrs. Aimee Buccellato questioned the validity of ownership by the Park Department of the parcel in need, which is parceled off as a portion of Leeper Park and not privately owned? Mr. Schmidt not positive but the lots are separated east to lot 13/14 and out lot 128. Further investigation revealed the parcel is owned by the Parks Department.

President Hill called for further questions, Motioned by Ms. Buccellato for the transfer, second by Mr. Neal, motion carried.

4. Quit Claim Deed for Transfer of Row Parcel Bartlett Street. Attorney Michael Schmidt requested that part of the motion include Park Board President Amy Hill in her capacity as Park Board President execute the Quit Claim deed.

Motion made and second motion carried.

5. Family Passport to Play Award - Matthew Moyers representing the South Bend Parks Department, St Joe Health Department, Health Works Museum-Beacon Health, Martin's Super Market and St. Joe County Parks presented the Park Board with the IPRA Award of Excellence for the Passport to Play Program. The Passport to Play was selected as the premier program for the by the Indiana Parks & Recreation Association (IPRA). Mr. Moyer presented the award to the Parks Board for acknowledgement of their participation.

6. Introduction of Plant Health Care Management Program was presented by Brent Thompson. The Plant Health Care Management Program is a new program partnership between the Parks Department and the Department of Community Investment. The program is a 5 year maintenance program and part of the Smart Streets program which will run from 2016-2020 and is intended to be fully funded by Public Works. The South Bend Park Department through the Forestry Division will bill directly to Public Works. The purpose of the program is to maintain Smart Streets trees to ensure longevity of newly planted trees. According to City Forester, Brent Thompson, requirements of the Park Department would:

Allow for one (1) full time salaried position and one (1) part-time position, each position will be for the full 5 year program duration. Also required will be two (2) pick-up trucks each with a water tank. Budget needs for the program are as follow: \$125,000 for year 2016; \$130,000 for years 2017/2018; and \$126,000 for years 2019/2020.

Totaling \$637,000 for the 5 years. Additional printed budget information was provided to the board.

Mr. Neal requested more information and background for the purpose and reason for the program? Mr. Thompson stated the reason as, prior to this program, trees were planted in the city, but were not properly maintained. Within the first and second year of planting, many of the trees would die from lack of maintenance. Plant Healthcare Management would fix the problem by maintaining newly planted trees through observation, watering and fertilizing the trees for 3 years.

Mr. Neal ask for the outlined areas of Smart Street Tree work? The outline areas at this time are Lincolnway West, Western Avenue, Mission Park and Lafayette. Michael Schmidt added the program would be beneficial legally in making sure the city remains in compliance and code.

Ms. Buccellato ask for the choice of trees to be used? Mr. Thompson advised that the Forestry Division uses a variety of 15 different species of trees, so out of those species a selection would be made. Having more than 15 species available would prevent previous problems seen with the insect, Emerald Ash Borer, which potentially kill every tree on a block.

7. President Hill call for the approval of Arborist Licenses for:

A Cut Above, Niles, MI

Alex's Take Down Tree Service, South Bend, IN

Custom & Moore Granger, IN

Douglas Landscape, Inc. South Bend, IN

Marimontes Tree Service, South Bend IN

Quality Turf Management, South Bend, IN

Walt Temple Tree Service, South Bend IN

Envirovision Inc. Mishawaka, IN

San-Mar Tree & Maintenance, South Bend, IN

New Image Tree Service, South Bend, IN

McLeans Services, South Bend, IN

Watson's Tree Service, Niles, MI

Michiana Tree Service, Niles, MI

MAT Corp of Michiana, dba Mark Temple Tree Service, South Bend, IN

M.A.A.C. Property Service, Niles, MI

Kevin's Tree & Landscaping of Michiana Inc. South Bend, IN

Kachur Tree Service, Niles, MI ó Acorn Landscape LLC, South Bend, IN

Attorney Michael Schmidt stated he has reviewed all application to verify minimum requirements of insurance have been met; recommends approval of all arborist application for licensing.

Mr. Neal question whether the licensing applicants were new or renewals. Ms. Hill verify them all as renewals.

Motion made by Dan Farrell and second Ms. Buccellato, motion carried.

8. Request for use of Parks:

Paula Garis advised that all of the following were returning events and that all requirements have been met for the following events and dates:

SBPD, Cinco De Mayo, Rum Village May 1, 2016, 11am ó 4pm

March of Dimes Walk, Howard Park River Walk, May 14, 2016, start time 8am

Girls of the Run, Potawatomi Park, May 21, 2016

Sunburst, River Walk & Potawatomi Park, June 3rd & 4th, 2016

Suicide Prevention Walk (Paint the Town Yellow) Seitz Park run thru Howard Park, June 16, 2016 6pm

Call for questions by President Hill.

Question from Mr. Neal, if Attorney Schmidt has reviewed the request?

Michael Schmidt stated he does not typically review these, if the provision of insurance has been met, they have provided what has been requested that is sufficient. Michael Schmidt adding he may review any request should any unique circumstance arise. Mr. Garis stated prior to sending for Park Board approval, that a package is requested and completed and all items and issues have been met accordingly.

Request if anyone from those requesting the use of the parks present. None were, as they are repeat request. No other question entertaining of motion.

Motion by Ms. Buccellato second Mr. Neal motion carried.

VII. Approval of Minutes of the Board Meeting December 16, 2015

Clarification of the minutes being revised as requested by Board Member Aimee Buccellato. President Hill elected to continue with the meeting and return to the approval of the minutes when all information was present.

VIII. Approval of the Parks and Recreation Vouchers for the month of December 2015 totaling \$893,215.58.

Motion for approval of the Parks and Recreation Vouchers for the month of December 2015 by Mr. Neal and second by Mr. Farrell motion carried.

IX. Business of Director

Director Aaron Perri having assumed his position just recently had limited business at this time, however he wanted to thank those who are serving and working in the Parks & Recreation Department. As incoming Director he is currently getting to know the staff, facilities and parks. Has visited all of the parks in the city, the centers and golf courses; has conducted one on one meetings with the leadership staff and will continue to do more. Looking forward to an All Staff Assembly on Friday February 5th to chart a new course for the residence and visitors to the City of South Bend, Director Perri express his excitement for the future endeavors.

X. Comments by Ms. Susan O'Connor, Deputy Director of Parks

1. Thanked the board for the honor given to the Byers family. Expressed just how much time and service has been given by the father John Byers Sr and sons John Byers Jr and James Byers along with each of their sons and wives. Thanks to the Byers family again for all their service.
2. Deputy Director O'Connor offered to entertain any questions on the Recreation Board Report and the comparison of the numbers. Gave explanation to the reports effort to point out any significant changes. In 2015 there were 388,696 participants served in the recreation field, which is an increase from 2014.
3. Due to the instability of the weather the ice rink has experienced a turbulent start. Ended the year (which is the start of the 2015-2016 season) with 1,343 in attendance. The attendance has as of today still remains unstable.
4. The recreation staff attended the annual (IPRA) state conference in Bloomington, IN during which time a conversation with the Valparaiso Parks concerning their newly opened ice rink provided upbeat and positive outlook for the new ice rink currently being planned. Currently a visit/meeting is being planned for a visit to observe as Valparaiso have seen a record number in attendance. This will give our recreation staff an opportunity to see what can be added to our community ice rink to enhance the enjoyment of the citizens.
5. Edge Adventure will be in town to give an update on the zip line project. Councilman O. Davis has ask the President of Edge Adventure to attend a neighborhood meeting to give some information on the project and to respond to some of the community concerns.
6. Registration of classes have begun, Rivercity Basketball begins in a week and the largest event, Daddy Daughter Dance, is slated for February and an invitation to the park board has been extended.

Deputy Director called for questions. None

XI. Return to the Approval of Minutes of the Board Meeting of the December 16, 2015

Mrs. Buccellato requested clarification of the minutes mentioned concerning the resolution of the sale of Elbel and how the funds would be utilize in the event of a sale, Mr. O'Connor explained after providing hard copies of the minutes. Ms. Buccellato was satisfied with the responses and the amendment.

President Hill call for motion to approve. Ms. Buccellato motion as per amendment, second Mr. Farrell motion carried.

XII. Comments by TJ Mannen, Director of Golf

1. TJ Mannen gave appreciation for leadership and service to the former Director of Golf as he will now assume the position.
2. Mr. Mannen is transitioning into the position, however has meet with Director Perri on the direction of the golf courses & advertising promotions. Promotional activity has stalled temporarily to handle contract issue but will resume soon.
3. Promotions with WNDU have begun and are moving forward.

4. Erskine Golf Course Annual open house will take place Friday, February 19, 2016
5. Yearly pass sales for Erskine and Studebaker are just under \$6,000.00

XIII. Comments by John Martinez, Maintenance Superintendent

1. Introduction of Randy Nowacki as the new Supervisor of Central Mowing & Graffiti Removal, he will begin the responsibilities of this position beginning this week.
2. An annual report will be given to you in next month's meeting as it has been submitted for editing and not available at this time. Information will be forwarded to you and any questions can be sent electronically.
3. A meeting with Director Perri will take place the 1st part of February to discuss the Ice Rink.
4. Park Maintenance has received 3,900 calls regarding parks or equipment break down. Of these call Parks has zero open calls and a 95% SLA time. Zero open calls are largely due to individual contact with one person, preventing forwarding of incoming calls.
5. Reevaluation of existing equipment contracts to take place soon.
6. Boiler breakdowns, one at Elbel Golf Course and Howard Park Senior Center due to aging tubes.

XIV. Comments by Mark Bradley, Director of Marketing

1. A South Bend Park Foundation Meeting is not schedule for the month of January, a meeting is scheduled for February 10th in the Boardroom of the O'Brien Center.
2. Passport to play has a sledding event scheduled for January 27th

XV. All business being concluded the meeting adjourned at p.m. by President Hill

Special Park Board Meeting February 11, 2016 at 5:00 pm for the discussion of the sale of Elbel Golf Course.

The next regular meeting on February 15, 2016 in the Boardroom of the O'Brien Administration Center at 4:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Ron O'Connor
Executive Secretary