

**SOUTH BEND BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
MARCH 19, 2018**

The Board of Park Commissioners of the City of South Bend, Indiana met on Monday, March 19, 2018 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  
Ms. Aimee Buccellato  
Mr. Dan Farrell  
Ms. Consuella Hopkins

Park Board members absent were as follows:

Staff members present: Aaron Perri, Director of VPA; Eva Ennis, Operations Coordinator; Clara McDaniels, Assistant City Attorney; Jeff Jarnecke, Deputy Director; Jackie Appleman, Experience Director; John Martinez, Facilities and Grounds Director; Patrick Sherman, Project Manager; Kim Williams, Finance Director; Jonathan Jones, Recreation Director; Amy Roush, Volunteer Coordinator

**I. Call to Order - President Mark Neal**

President Mark Neal called the meeting to order at 5:06 pm.

**II. Approval of the minutes of the last regular meeting of the Board held on February 19, 2018.**

Mark Neal noted that the ND Hydro Dam Lease FERC Amendment will be moved to Unfinished Business.

Motion to approve the minutes of February 19, 2018 by Consuella Hopkins, supported by Dan Farrell, motion carried.

**III. Consent Agenda Approval**

Eva Ennis noted a correction to the consent agenda noting that all arborist license applications are renewal licenses.

Motion approve the consent agenda by Consuella Hopkins, supported by Dan Farrell, motion carried.

**III. New Event**

Jackie Appleman explained that Pupalooza is an event that celebrates of dogs at Rum Village which will be the location of the new dog park. The event has requested to use the big pavilion. Mark Neal – is there anything that needs to note. Expecting 200-300 people. Jackie Appleman added that dogs will be required to stay on leash.

Mara Trionfero, founder of State of South Bend social media, explained that this event is a celebration of South Bend pets. The event will be free but there will be some sales and buy-in opportunities. The event already has sponsors on board.

Aaron Perri noted that it comes with a favorable recommendation from VPA staff.

Motion to approve the Pupapalooza event at Rum Village on April 22, supported by Consuella Hopkins, 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 none.

#### **V. Reports by Organizations**

##### **1. Cubs Presentation**

Joe Hart, President of South Bend Cubs, shared that the South Bend Cubs home opener is April 5. Wednesday, April 4 is an exhibition game against Notre Dame's men's baseball team. Proceeds of the event will go to Ronald McDonald House and Kroc Center Scholarship. Rooftop ballpark seating will be ready after all-star break in June. Fun zone has been relocated to west side of team store which added 12,000 sq. feet additional space in ball park. Season ticket sales are trending above last year. Joe Hart thanked VPA Facilities & Grounds for all their work and commented that this is the best public-private relationship he is aware of.

##### **2. Block by Block**

Amy Paul explained the services that Block by Block provides. He emphasized that Block by Block does not look for janitors but hires for personality. Ambassadors engage the public and provide hospitality and customer service. Ambassadors receive thorough training that focuses on customer service, safety, and engaging with the public. Block by Block first started in South Bend in 2006 with the clean and safe program at DTSB and 6 years later took over the parking garages. In 2015, the City contracted with Block by Block to staff Westside Main Streets. In 2017, the City contracted Block by Block to provide parks ambassadors and an outreach specialist position.

Consuella Hopkins asked how the phone number to reach the ambassadors is advertised. Amy Paul replied that ambassadors hand out card and the number is also posted on the parking garages. She noted that signs could be added to parks as well.

Dan Farrell asked what Block by Block would do with more financial resources. Amy Paul replied that she would like to increase efficiency to free up the ambassadors' time to give more face to face interactions.

Sue Kessem, representing Michiana Disability & Advocacy, asked if someone could call the ambassador phone number to get a parking space reserved for people with disabilities. Amy Paul replied that the ambassadors would be able to help with that.

Sue Kessem also recommended having disabled students at Adams High School help grow flowers at greenhouse to save money as was previously done. Aaron Perri replied that it is certainly worth exploring a possible partnership and there are many more flowers downtown than before.

#### **VI. Unfinished Business**

##### **1. ND Hydro FERC Amendment**

Clara McDaniels explained that this amendment is in relation to the agreement that was signed in 2016 that allowed Notre Dame to take advantage of the City's FERC exemption. Tim Flanagan explained that the City's exemption was transferred to the University and the University had to apply to an amendment

to the exemption. As a part of that process, the ground lease was reviewed by FERC, and FERC requested that Notre Dame as the holder of the exemption is responsible to FERC for carrying out any orders given. Notre Dame and City of South Bend council thought this was taken care of with the ground lease, but FERC wanted to see this language specifically to get the application passed.

Mark Neal requested a brief update on the project. Paul Kempf replied that Notre Dame is hoping FERC review of this exemption is the last piece before starting construction. Everything else, including city and VPA approvals and construction and design contractors in place. If the FERC review is approved, the project should start in April and have a 14-month time frame for the hydroelectric turbine construction.

Mark Neal asked if the flooding this winter had caused any issues at Seitz Park that would impact construction. Paul Kempf replied that Notre Dame conducted potential failure modes testing and incorporated those into the design, so the turbine design is prepared for significant weather and flooding like what happened in February 2018. The flooding did not impact Seitz Park

Motion to approve the FERC Amendment for the Hydroelectric Turbine by Dan Farrell, supported by Consuella Hopkins, motion carried.

## **2. Block by Block Agreement**

Jeff Jarnecke reported that VPA staff gave a favorable recommendation to extend the Block by Block agreement for three years. Previously, the agreement was one year. The legalese is the same as the previous agreement. VPA and the City has had a favorable relationship with Block by Block. There will be an annual renewal of the Outreach Specialist position instead of the three year extension.

Consuella Hopkins asked if Block by Block is looking to extend the boundaries on western. Amy Paul replied that it could be considered and currently the ambassadors already will go beyond boundaries to help clean up where necessary.

Aimee Buccellato asked if the contract takes into consideration the future park acquisitions that will take place. Aaron Perri replied that we will need to revisit the agreement if the scope increases. The contract does include additional hours to riverfront patrol, though

Motion to approve the amendment to the professional services agreement between South Bend Park Board and Block by Block by Aimee Buccellato, supported by Consuella Hopkins, motion carried.

## **3. Berlin Place Walkway Agreement**

Joe Hart introduced DWG Development, the development partner for the project. He explained that the plaza space previously was used to walk to games and still will be. The material used for the new walkway will be permeable concrete pavers in a red-brown color with planters along plaza. The pillars that exist will remain. The area will be well-lit at all times. There will be security at all entrances and parking lots, which requires enough light to make license plates visible. DWG Development reviewed specific light products that would be used.

Aaron Perri clarified that the walkway will be treated like public right-of-way which requires signage, lighting and patios to follow right-of-way rules and less like a park. Aimee Buccellato noted that it is important to be consistent with the rest of the city.

Consuella Hopkins asked what the lighting really looks like at nighttime. DWG Development replied that it would be brighter than what was previously there. The lighting will make people visible in detail.

Consuella Hopkins noted that she is pleased to see that lighting standard on that side of town match downtown.

Motion to approve the walkway agreement at Berlin Place by Dan Farrell, supported by Consuella Hopkins, motion carried.

## **VII. New Business**

### **1. VPA 2017 Annual Report**

Aaron Perri reviewed the 2017 Annual Report. The report is hosted on the website. It was also presented to the Common Council earlier this month. The report is organized by outcomes that VPA is working towards: social equity, safety, econ impact, health and wellness, ecology. VPA uses this tool to show what we do and why we do it.

### **2. Strategic Plan**

Aaron Perri requested the board to spend time reviewing and provide input on the draft Strategic Plan. The plan will come back to the board for approval at the next meeting.

As part of the process, VPA tweaked its mission statement to “Venues Parks & Arts inspires a more livable South Bend for all, connecting us to emotionally engaging experiences and to one another.” The plan is organized into five focus areas: major capital investments, asset management, event & program optimization, customer engagement, and employee development.

Aimee Buccellato asked if there is a document outlining how the decisions we are making now are being maintained. Aaron Perri replied that it would show up in asset management and major capital investment parts of the plan.

Aaron Perri noted that this is the new version of the 5-Year Master Plan.

### **3. BWE Fireworks Proposal and Contract**

Aaron Perri explained that this is a contract for the fireworks on the Friday night of Best Week Ever. The fireworks cost, which totals in \$12,000, is paid for by sponsorship.

Motion to approve the fireworks proposal by Consuella Hopkins, supported by Dan Farrell, motion carried.

### **4. Digital Inclusion Site Management Agreement**

Jacob Barnett explained that this is a partnership with the Metronet, public library, and city facilities to provide access to internet and technology to help reduce the digital divide in communities that have less access to those things. The MOU details that partnerships. Martin Luther King Jr Center will be the pilot site for this program and start this summer to provide technology access during MLK Center’s summer programming.

Consuella Hopkins asked if the program is geared towards all ages. Jacob Barnett replied that the programmatic part is still being worked out, but the program is anticipated to serve all ages and skill levels. Consuella Hopkins encouraged them to really look at senior programs. Jacob Barnett added that the program will include 1-on-1 office hours to help answer questions.

Jacob Barnett added that the anticipated launch date is early June, but that depends on ground thaw.

Jonathan Jones noted that this partnership improves access and facilities. VPA won't rely solely on IT to program it but Recreation and MLK Center program it.

Motion to approve the Digital Inclusion Site Management Agreement by Dan Farrell, supported by Consuella Hopkins, motion carried.

### **VIII. Report by Executive Director Aaron Perri**

Aaron Perri gave the following updates.

- Recognized Sharon McBride, new Common Council member
- A team from VPA will be visiting Spevco headquarters in North Carolina to check on progress of the Experiential Recreation Vehicle in North Carolina. The vehicle will be completed early fall.
- SPARK Magazine for spring/summer is printed and being distributed to the community.
- SPARK mascot will be ready next month. The mascot will be a firefly, which is also the new state insect of Indiana.
- Flooding update: Estimated damage of \$3 million in parks alone, but there are still areas we cannot physically access to assess the damage. There are fissure-like fractures along the Riverwalk. As water recedes, we continue to find new things such as a sinkhole along a walkway. Many areas remain closed. Most of these areas were already part of the plan to upgrade as part of My SB Parks & Trails but those plans may need to be reviewed again. We have sanitized areas that are open but were impacted by water. Our estimates of damage to FEMA to determine if we qualify for federal aid are due in a few days.
- Project update: Charles Black Center is on schedule and on budget. Rum Village Dog Park is planned to be completed in July. Howard Park construction is starting this summer as well. Gov. Kernan Trail work is starting & West Bank Trail is starting this summer. Scoping out for storage at High Street, park restrooms, Erskine Clubhouse, Bowman and City Cemetery, and Pinhook are all starting this year.

No other questions or comments from the Board, meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm p.m. by President Mark Neal.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Eva Ennis  
Executive Secretary