

SOUTH BEND BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
March 15, 2021

The Board of Park Commissioners of the City of South Bend, Indiana met on Monday, April 19, 2021, via Microsoft Teams virtual meeting for its regular meeting. Notice of the date, time and place of the meeting were duly given as required by law. The public was provided with a link to join the virtual meeting.

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

VPA staff members present: Aaron Perri, Executive Director; Eva Ennis, Operations Coordinator; Jonathan Jones, Director of Recreational Experiences; Cynthia Taylor, Director of Community Partnerships; Jeff Jarnecke, Executive Director of Venues; Matthew Moyers, Community & Partnerships Coordinator

Other city representatives present: Clara McDaniels, Assistant City Attorney; Lori Hamman, Councilmember

I. Call to Order

Dan Farrell called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

II. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on March 15, 2021

Motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 15, 2021 by Aimee Buccellato, supported by Mark Neal, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

III. Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the consent agenda of April 15, 2021 by Aimee Buccellato, supported by Mark Neal, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

IV. Use of Parks – New Events

1. RISE x Local Spirit | May 15 | Howard Park

Jackie Thomas explained that RISE is a regional innovation startup education for college and community members in Elkhart and South Bend. RISE would like to host its annual capstone event at Howard Park on May 15 at Howard Park. They are partnering with a new startup called Local Spirit on the event.

Motion to approve the RISE x Local Spirit event on May 15 at Howard Park by Aimee Buccellato, supported by Mark Neal, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

V. New Business

1. I&M MOU Right of Way Work and License Agreement

Aaron Perri explained that I&M is burying a transmission line underground to connect two substations. The transmission line will impact property owned by the Board of Park Commissioners and the use of East Bank trail system which requires board approval.

Cliff Vaughn explained that the project is part of rebuilding the infrastructure in South Bend. This is an underground transmission line to connect two substations, and a second transmission line is being relocated underground. Kelly Rentschler noted that the strategy with moving the lines underground is to preserve the urban nature of the community.

Cliff Vaughn noted that some trees will have to be moved as part of the project. I&M has done a deep analysis of tree types, conditions, and locations to create a tree management plan. He reviewed the locations where trees are being removed and provided the board with the analysis and tree management plan. He explained that the underground line requires a 10-foot clearance and the path that exists is 10 feet wide. The restoration plan is to replace whatever is currently there with the same materials.

Dan Farrell asked about the area just north of the Niles Avenue Dog Park and the steep riverbank. Cliff Vaughn replied that the work will deviate from the path there to help alleviate issues with the riverbank.

Dan Farrell asked if the entire path be closed for the whole project. Cliff Vaughn replied the trail will open, close, and restore on a section-by-section schedule. There will be small detours while those sections are closed.

Aimee Buccellato asked if trees are coming out because the root balls will be damaged or are they in the way of the underground line. Kelly Rentschler replied that the trunk of trees are in the way of the path. Aimee Buccellato also commented that she wants to make sure that from the park's perspective that the list of trees being removed have been reviewed to identify if there are alternate ways to avoid specific trees.

Motion to approve the I&M Memorandum of Understanding for Rights-of-Way Work and License Agreement as presented by Aimee Buccellato, supported by Mark Neal, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

Tim Sexton thanked I&M and the City of South Bend for their efforts on this project.

2. ASM Global Agreement re: Parking Garages

Jeff Jarnecke explained that the City went to bid for parking services at the garages and on-street. There were no responses to RFP, so the City went to ASM, who currently services Century Center, to consider how they could help manage our parking since they already manage parking in other markets in the country. Under new purchasing policy, the City does not require board approval to enter into this agreement, but staff wanted to make the board aware of the change. The agreement is effective as of April 5.

3. United Way Partnership Agreement

Jonathan Jones explained the Hello Summer partnership with United Way. United Way is partnering with VPA on the Hello Summer campaign with the goal of promoting safe activities for families this summer. United Way will also sponsor several VPA events this summer as part of the agreement. The agreement does not require board approval.

4. Seitz Park Memorandum of Lease

Clara McDaniels explained that the City of South Bend and Notre Dame entered into this Memorandum of Lease in 2016, but there was a clerical error where a signature was missed so to correct this both parties will resign.

Motion to approve the Seitz Park Memorandum of Lease by Aimee Buccellato, supported by Mark Neal, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

VI. Reports by Organizations – Friends of Potawatomi Conservatories

Jan Maciulski reported that the Botanical Society changed its name to Friends of Potawatomi Conservatories, but still legally referred to as the Botanical Society. So far this year, the conservatory has seen 794 guests.

The Conservatory has formed a committee to create a 10-year plan. The 2021 plan focus is on fundraising, and the conservatory is looking for corporate sponsors. Other goals include working on the pond to get fish in it, adding Wi-fi speakers around the conservatory, and a carnivorous plant room. 2022 focuses include opening a gift shop and more outdoor gardens. The Conservatory has requested the following support from VPA: glazing and glass repair needed and heating and cooling upgrades needed. Aaron Perri replied that he is referring these requests to John Martinez to follow up on.

VII. Report by Director of Community Programming – Cynthia Taylor

Cynthia Taylor gave the following updates:

- The Community Programming Division is now fully staffed. Cynthia Taylor reviewed the staff in their new positions: Stephanie Coleman, MLK Manager; Hannah Teshka, Pinhook Manager; Garry Harrington, Rum Village Manager; LaResha Johnson, Charles Black Center Manager; Kintae Lark, Youth Jobs Program Manager.
- From January-March, the division continued to do e-learning sites at the Charles Black and Martin Luther King Jr. Centers.
- All regular programs have started running again this season.
- There are two new programs that focus on late night programming: Midnight Basketball and Friday Night Life.

VIII. Reports by Executive Director Aaron Perri

Aaron Perri gave the following updates:

- JPR provided a report regarding Charles Black Center renovations and fractures in the masonry. JPR did a structural investigation and found no immediate danger to the building.
- The request from previous meeting regarding a drainage easement at Fredrickson Park has been withdrawn. The developer performed additional calculations, and they could meet the obligations to store the storm water on the site. Aaron Perri thanked EAC for their review of this property and the basin.
- April 26 will be the second and third reading of Bill 87-21 dealing with updating Chapter 19 of City of South Bend code to revise the tree and shrub ordinance.
- VPA has several jobs open, especially for youth and seasonal employment.
- Arbor Day will be celebrated on April 24 at Pinhook Park
- Pinhook Park Ribbon-cutting will take place on May 6.
- The Workers' Memorial rededication at Howard Park will take place April 28 at 5:00 pm.

- The Rask Family Fountains Grand Opening at Howard Park will take place May 14 at 5:30 pm.
- Seitz Park construction has started on the park. The project is anticipated to take one year, so the new opening date will be summer 2022.

No other questions or comments from the Park Commissioners, meeting adjourned at 7:02 pm by President Mark Neal.

The next regular meeting will be held Monday, May 17, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. virtually.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eva Ennis