

SOUTH BEND BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
July 19, 2021

The Board of Park Commissioners of the City of South Bend, Indiana met on Monday, July 19, 2021, at Howard Park Event Center, 219 S. St. Louis Blvd and virtually on Microsoft Teams 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
Ms. Consuella Hopkins
Ms. Aimee Buccellato

Park Board members absent were as follows:

Mr. Dan Farrell

VPA staff members present: Annie Smith, Chief Development Officer; Eva Ennis, Operations Coordinator; Jonathan Jones, Director of Recreational Experiences; Amy Roush, Director of Development

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

I. Call to Order

Mark Neal called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

II. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on June 22, 2021

Motion to approve the meeting minutes of June 22, 2021, by Aimee Buccellato, supported by Consuella Hopkins, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

III. Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the consent agenda of July 19, 2021, by Aimee Buccellato, supported by Consuella Hopkins motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

IV. Partner of the Month – Ivy Tech and Big Brothers / Big Sisters

Cynthia Taylor explained that VPA has partnered with Big Brothers / Big Sisters at its after school program at Charles Black Center to partner mentors with after school participants. Debra Walker from Big Brothers / Big Sisters shared her thanks for supporting their programs through the Charles Black Center. Big Brothers / Big Sisters helped connect VPA with Ivy Tech's Communication and Technology Department to provide programming at Charles Black Center Summer Camps. Students have in the program has participated in drone flying, robotics, welding, virtual reality, and cyber security so far at the camp. Violet Hawkins shared that Ivy Tech is glad to be able to offer access to information technology to young people through the camps and programs at Charles Black Center.

Cynthia Taylor presented the Outstanding Partner Certificate to Big Brothers / Big Sisters and to Ivy Tech Community College.

V. Interviewing of Interested Residents

Mark Neal opened the floor for interested residents to speak on a topic not on the agenda. There were no comments.

VI. Reports by Organizations

1. Ecological Advocacy Committee

Steve Sass provided a summary of the Triannual Report for the Ecological Advocacy Committee that was submitted to the board.

Mark Neal noted that the board should discuss the renewal of the EAC Resolution, which expires at the end of the year, at its next meeting.

Aimee Buccellato, in reference to the contractor not following protocol at Ponader Park for construction, asked if given the board's efforts to guide the process to address ecological issues at the site in advance, what steps can we take in the future to ensure guidelines are met when the contractor isn't working directly for the City. Clara McDaniels replied that the legal department would notify the contractor that they are in material breach of the contract and that they are responsible for any costs associated with remedying the problems. Aimee Buccellato added that it would be beneficial to take that course of action to set a precedent and to keep this in mind when we write future contracts.

Aimee Buccellato requested that the board receive the existing EAC Resolution before we contemplate the renewal of the committee at a future meeting. Eva Ennis agreed to send out the existing Resolution to the board for review. Steve Sass noted that the biggest hurdle that the EAC faces regularly that he'd like to address in the next version of the resolution is turnover of committee members.

2. Greater Impact Lawn Care

David Smith reviewed the work that Greater Impact has been involved in with VPA this year. The mission of the organization is to mentor youth through meaningful work. Employees participate in a learning component once a week while employed at Greater Impact. Greater Impact mows 110 vacant lot and the City Cemetery for VPA currently.

VII. New Business

1. Partnership MOU with St. Joseph High School re: Leeper Tennis Center Usage

Jonathan Jones explained that St. Joseph High School uses Leeper Tennis Center as its home court for men's and women's tennis programs. This agreement is formalizing previous usage of the facility by SJHS. The only change is increasing the rate for usage to \$25 per hour. In the future, VPA and SJHS may reevaluate how they charge for usage.

Motion to approve the partnership MOU with St. Joseph High School at Leeper Tennis Center by Aimee Buccellato, supported by Consuella Hopkins, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

VIII. Report by Director of Recreational Experiences Jonathan Jones

Jonathan Jones reviewed ideas for changes to the Park Use Application. He noted that due to increased demand for park rentals, staff has noticed some need for changes to the application process. First, staff would like to require participants to have insurance certificates in place before board approval. Staff

would also like to start requiring security for events that expect attendance over 200. Previously we only required security if there was alcohol.

Aimee Buccellato asked if VPA also follows these stipulations for security when VPA holds events and programs. Jonathan Jones replied that during VPA events there are staff members who assume responsibility that we can rely on whereas outside event coordinators will need to demonstrate that they'll have appropriate security to assume that responsibility. Annie Smith also noted that during large special events, VPA typically does hire special security as well.

Consuella Hopkins asked when a permit is required to use a park versus just a gathering at a park. Jonathan replied that it depends on the size and nature of the event. If any portion of the park is inaccessible to public, if there's amplified music, or if there are more than 50 attendees expected, then it requires a permit.

Mark Neal asked if and when would the changes to the guidelines come before the board. Clara McDaniels replied that once all the final recommendations are in place, it can go to the board for approval. Jonathan Jones said those recommendations could be ready for the next meeting.

Jonathan Jones also gave the following updates:

- In June, the Recreational Experiences Division had a 33% cost recovery rate - \$82,000 in revenue and \$124,000 in expenditures. 83% of expenditures are personnel.
- The division also sees a collective reach of 29,000 people in the month of June, which brings us back to 2019 numbers.
- VPA expects to deploy Boomer more than 40 times into the community this year.
- Vibes Music Festival was on June 26. It was moved into the Century Center last minute due to weather. There were over 400 attendees.
- Entwined Art Series is a textile art show at Howard Park that starts on August 5 and lasts through the end of the month. The event is sponsored by Community Foundation and Pokagon Band.
- City of South Bend Wellness Challenge at the East Race is on July 27 for city employees to compete against each other on the East Race.

Consuella Hopkins commented that the Vibes Music Festival was a phenomenal event.

IX. Report by Chief Development Officer Annie Smith

Annie Smith gave the following updates:

- VPA submitted its portion of the READI grant which is the funding initiative through Indiana Economic Development Corporation that will be awarded regionally. VPA submitted three projects: Morris 100 project, west bank trail development, and MLK Jr. Center redevelopment.
- VPA will host a Community Check-in at Pinhook Park 4-7 on August 19 to receive feedback from the public about projects we've done and future needs.
- WNIT released a documentary on South Bend parks which is available on their website.
- BWE is returning August 1-7. Favorite events are returning such as . Also hosting Brunch on the Bend on Century Center Island, See SB which is a tourist in your own city event, and Curious Quest for Chromatic which is a city-wide treasure hunt.
- The budget process is under way for the City. VPA does not expect any major changes. It is also a Teamster negotiation year.
- Gov. Kernan Park and Trail Ribbon-cutting event will take place Wednesday, July 21 at 9:30 am.

- Pier Park Art Installation Grand Opening will take place Thursday, July 22 at 7:30 pm.

Mark Neal asked if a new date has been selected for the August board meeting because of the conflict that the regular meeting date has with the Morris 100 event. Eva Ennis replied that the new meeting date will be Monday, August 23 and that she will send an official announcement out to the public with that information.

Clara McDaniels shared that the governor's order that allows board members to participate virtually will expire at the end of the month. The board will need to pass a resolution adopting a policy to allow board members to participate virtually subject to several conditions. Clara McDaniels added that she can send information to the board about this option to consider for its next meeting.

No other questions or comments from the Park Commissioners, meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm by President Mark Neal.

The next regular meeting will be held Monday, August 23, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. at Howard Park Event Center and virtually.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eva Ennis