

SOUTH BEND BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
May, 22, 2023

The Board of Park Commissioners of the City of South Bend, Indiana met on Monday, May 22, 2023 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:

Mark Neal – President
Consuella Hopkins – Vice President
Sam Centellas

Park Board members absent were as follows:

Georgianne Walker

VPA staff members present: Aaron Perri, Executive Director; Jessica Williams, Executive Assistant; Tony Stearns, General Manager of Golf; Andrew Schreiber, General Manager of Venues; Emily Sims, Chief Development Officer; Macey Hanna, Director of Recreational Experiences; Amy Roush, Development Director; Bailey Murphy, Marketing Manager; Hannah Francis, Special Events Manager; Maggie Sullivan, Marketing Manager.

Other city representatives present: Jenna Throw, Assistant City Attorney; Troy Warner, Councilmember.

I. Call to Order

Mark Neal called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

II. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on April 17, 2023

Motion to approve the meeting minutes of April 17, 2023, by Commissioner Centellas, seconded by Commissioner Hopkins, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

III. Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the consent agenda of May 22, 2023, by Commissioner Centellas, seconded by Commissioner Hopkins, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

IV. Partnership Update – JWAS Foundation

Aaron Perri introduced the JWAS Foundation as the recipient of a new partnership agreement. The agreement is a donation of programmatic opportunities to further equitable access to cultural and recreational experiences. Jeanie Shuck spoke on the history and mission of the JWAS Foundation. This foundation selects 1 – 2 children between the ages of 2.5 years and 5 years old to receive a scholarship for schooling including university. Shuck thanks VPA and staff for their partnership.

V. Outstanding Partner

Mark Osbourne was awarded as the Outstanding Partner for the work done in the community at the O'Brien Skate Park. Mark Osbourne thanked the Board of Park Commissioners, and a picture was taken.

VI. Use of Parks – New Events

1. Randolph Park Grand Opening on June 10 at 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at Randolph Park

Karen Nye explained the event will be a grand reopening to showcase the new full-sized park. There will be several organizations present. There will be games for children and food.

2. Symphony Under the Stars on June 30 at 8:00 p.m. at Howard Park
Hannah Francis explained the partnership between VPA and the South Bend Symphony Orchestra will be open to the public. There will be fireworks at 10:00 p.m. to conclude the festivities.
3. End of Summer Celebration on July 19 at 3:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. at Potawatomi Park
Savino Rivera Jr. explained this event is a celebration following a 6-week program serving over 1,300 students in the area. There will be games and activities for the family. All pavilions will be rented in the park for the event.
4. Fish for Life with Youth on August 12 at 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at Pinhook Park
Levi Lewis explained this event is an opportunity for kids to learn about fishing and play games. Children will receive gifts as well.
5. One Band Bash on September 9 at 2:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. at O'Brien Park
Dominic Shumaker and Evander Shumaker explained there will be a BMX and Skate Contest at the park. There will be prizes awarded and bands playing music.

Motion to approve the Use of Park – New Events, by Commissioner Hopkins, seconded by Commissioner Centellas, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

VII. Interviewing of Interested Residents

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

VIII. New Business

1. RESOLUTION 0001-2023 Honoring Matthew Moyers

Aaron Perri called Matthew Moyers to the podium and read the resolution aloud. Each of the commissioners thanked Moyers for the work that has been done over the years. They expressed appreciation for his service. Moyers thanked the Board of Park Commissioners and Perri for the resolution.

Motion to approve RESOLUTION 0001-2023, by Commissioner Centellas, seconded by Commissioner Hopkins, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

2. RESOLUTION 0002-2023 MLK Lots

Jenna Throw communicated that the parcel that makes up the MLK Center is many parcels. This resolution is to make sure that all the parcels are titled to the Board of Park Commissioners. This will be a transference of 2 additional parcels from the Board of Public Works to the Board of Park Commissioners.

Motion to approve RESOLUTION 0002-2023, by Commissioner Centellas, seconded by Commissioner Hopkins, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

3. LAZ Parking Contract Approval

Andrew Schreiber explained this contract is to allow the City to continue to maintain the budget and funds for parking over a 5-year term that begins on June 1st. LAZ will be utilized

as a primary service provider. The Eddy Street parking garage has 30 added cameras and license plate scanners and is now using a 24/7 call system.

Motion to approve the LAZ Parking Contract, by Commissioner Centellas, seconded by Commissioner Hopkins, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

IX. Reports by Organization

1. Potawatomi Zoo

Josh Sisk provided an update on the Potawatomi Zoo. There have been 316,000 visitors in 2022 which is 100,00 more than 2019. To date there have been 43,396 visitors, which is 3,000 more than the previous year. There have been 3,141 distinct Zip Codes recorded from all 50 states from visitors. There were over 48 picnics in 2022 and that number has already been surpassed this year. Over 59,000 people have been reached through the education programs at the zoo as well. There are 430 individual animals, 136 species, and 23 breeding recommendations. There's been over \$21,500 donated to the conservation work for the animals. Lions have arrived at the zoo as well. The Bear concession Lodge is still on schedule for October/November for the soft opening.

X. Report by General Manager of Golf – Tony Stearns

Tony began by reporting that the courses are \$53,445 ahead of the prior year. A comparison of month to month shows that rounds are up 31% in comparison to last year. Revenue shows that golf is also 14% more than the prior year. This past Saturday, golf hosted 108 golfers for Pointa which is local charity that is now located in the Dominican Republic. This was a record day at Erskine. The 2022 golf report card showed 65,000 rounds played. The goal for next year is \$2 million in revenue. A new clubhouse at the Elbel property is now being conceptualized.

XI. Business by Executive Director Aaron Perri

- The Ethnic Festival will return as the new renamed Fusion Fest on September 9 & 10 at Howard Park
- 8 Pickleball courts will open at Boehm. June 24 will be the grand opening along with a tournament by the Michiana Pickleball Association. The courts and tournament will be named in honor of Ray Comer.
- South Bend schools Riley, Adams, and Clay all have open swim and lesson times for aquatics this summer.
- June 6, 7, & 8 there will be public meetings to explore Potawatomi and the surrounding areas at IUSB.
- Aaron Perri, Jenna Throw, and Denise Riedl all participated in the Bloomberg Government Performance Lab. Scholarships were given to attend a session on creative procurement. This session taught about a process to procure RFPs to hire intervention programs in the area.
- On July 1 the City will begin to become a beneficiary of the \$5 million a year in captured sales and income taxes. This is keeping some of the local taxes local. These funds will primarily be used for Four Winds Field. This project is scheduled to begin in September 2024.
- Construction Manager as Constructor is a new procurement method for Public Works Projects. The first project that will utilize this process is the MLK Dream Center. The construction is delayed slightly due to this method however a company has been hired. The construction manager is Garmong Construction Services.

- Perri announced that he will be leaving this role with the city but will continue to be a resident and volunteer in the City of South Bend.

A special thanks was given to Aaron Perri for his years of service with the City of South Bend. Commissioner Neal announced that this will be Perri's last Board of Park Commissioners meeting as the Executive Director of VPA. The audience provided a standing ovation to congratulate Perri.

XII. Adjournment

No other questions or comments from the Park Commissioners, meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m. by President Mark Neal.

The next regular meeting will be held June 26, at 5:00 p.m. at Howard Park Event Center and virtually.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jessica Williams
Clerk, Board of Park Commissioners