

SOUTH BEND BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
December 12, 2022

The Board of Park Commissioners of the City of South Bend, Indiana met on Monday, December 12, 2022, 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, Consuella Hopkins, and Sam Centellas

VPA staff members present: Aaron Perri, Executive Director; Jessica Williams, Executive Assistant; Tony Stearns, Director of Golf; John Martinez, Director of Facilities & Grounds; Emily Sims, Chief Development Officer; Matt Frazier, Marketing Manager; Hannah Francis, Special Events Coordinator; Amy Roush, Development Director; Matthew Moyers, Community Standards Coordinator; Rachael Zeiger, Special Events Coordinator; LaResha Johnson, Manager of Charles Black Center

Other city representatives present: Jenna Throw, Assistant City Attorney

I. Call to Order

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

II. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on November 21, 2022

Motion to approve the meeting minutes of November 21, 2022, by Sam Centellas, seconded by Consuella Hopkins, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

III. Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the consent agenda of December 12, 2022, by Consuella Hopkins, seconded by Sam Centellas motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

IV. Outstanding Partner – Navarre Hospitality Group

Navarre Hospitality Group is a South Bend based company with almost 40 years of passionate pursuit in dining perfection. NHG is responsible for some of Michiana's top upscale restaurants and bars including a catering company and exclusive venues such as Palais Royale at Morris Civic Theatre, Crystal Ballroom at The Lerner in Elkhart, and many others. At the Morris 100 Fest, NHG served 12,000 people during the course of 2 days. NHG has been involved in many local events and is appreciated in the community. Aaron Perri presented NNHG with the Outstanding Partner award.

V. Use of Parks – New Events

1. Trotting Tots Play Café January 29, 2023, from 10:00am – 4:30pm at Howard Park Event Center

Motion to table Trotting Tots Play Café, by Sam Centellas second Consuella Hopkins, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

2. NIMCHN Community Health Fair on April 22, 2023, from 11:00am – 3:00pm at Muessel Grove

Rachael Zeiger spoke on behalf of Northern Indiana Maternal and Child Health Network. The event is expected to host 150-500 people. There will be a variety of health services as well as healthcare resources offered at one central location at no cost.

Motion to approve the NIMCHN Community Health Fair, by Consuella Hopkins, seconded by Sam Centellas motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

VI. 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.

VII. New Business

1. Resolution 0006-2022: Acceptance of Martin Luther King Jr. Center Lots

Aaron Perri explained Resolution 0006-2022 is to consolidate over a dozen parcels owned by various city entities into sole ownership by the Board of Park Commissioners. Jenna Throw confirmed the Board of Public Works has already signed an agreement and approved to transfer the properties to the Board of Park Commissioners. This resolution is a complementary resolution to the BPW document for the Park Board to accept the transfer of lots. Jenna stated the parcels will eventually be consolidated into one single parcel.

Motion to approve the Resolution 0006-2022: Acceptance of Martin Luther King Jr. Center Lots, by Sam Centellas, seconded by Consuella Hopkins, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

2. Artwork Lease Agreements

a. First Amendment to Artwork Lease Agreement Robert Bloss

Throw explained the agreement with Robert Bloss is amended to expire at the end of next year in 2023. The termination date is the only change to the agreement.

b. First Amendment to Artwork Lease Agreement Brian Hutsebout

Throw explained the agreement with Brian Hutsebout is amended to extend the current term through the end of February 2023. Following the end of February, the agreement will be on a month-to-month basis in the event that the artist wants to move the artwork.

Motion to approve the Artwork Lease Agreements, by Sam Centellas, seconded by Consuella Hopkins, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

3. Selection of the Ecological Advocacy Committee for 2023

Motion to formally amend the agenda to include the Selection of the Ecological Advocacy Committee for 2023, by Sam Centellas, seconded by Consuella Hopkins, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0. Perri stated the EAC will retain the bulk of their members with one member departing. Lindsey Chatterton will be stepping down. Matthew Moyers added the EAC will continue to keep the same staff as liaisons. There is one open position for a student intern.

Motion to approve the Selection of the Ecological Advocacy Committee for 2023, by Sam Centellas, seconded by Consuella Hopkins, motion carried. Roll call vote 3-0.

VIII. Reports by Organization – South Bend Botanical Society/Potawatomi Conservatories

Janet Maciulski spoke on behalf of the Botanical Society of South Bend. Many events are celebrated at the conservatories including weddings, showers, birthday parties, funeral dinners, reunions, and photo shoots. A holiday market was held at the conservatories last Saturday. Rental prices have been raised. Maciulski stated there has been a recent addition of a sandbox for children as well as a children's library filled with books about plants. Volunteers from both Woodford Homes and the Adam's Boys Soccer Team helped with some improvement projects such as the placing of river rocks into the desert dome. A group of students who attended Nuner School in the 1960s had their 8th Nuner Nights Reunite reunion.

This year they raised \$1000 to donate to the conservatories. A new manager and 4 new workers from the Goodwill Workforce Connection have been hired. Volunteers are helping to maintain the plants and spaces. January 2023 there will be a plaque made and a party thrown for the volunteers. The Unity Gardens are holding gardening classes on Thursday evenings and yoga on Saturday mornings. Drumming class will begin in the new year. Five of the nine new gas heaters are not working in the desert dome. Maciulski expressed that these will be fixed at some point. Space heaters have been provided to maintain heat temporarily. Restroom painting, tree and plant trimming, fountain renovations, and the carnivorous plant room are all projects that need attention. John Martinez stated the greenhouse will need to provide specifications for reverse osmosis on the fountain. The restroom painter is currently out, and staffing is limited. There has been discussion on having a temperature monitoring system placed into the desert dome environment. All improvements will be included in the master plan for the major reconstruction of the entire Potawatomi Park, which includes the conservatories, the pool, parking areas, and playground.

IX. Report by Director of Golf – Tony Stearns

Tony Stearns began with a revenue recap. \$49,471.06 is the amount that golf is away from making \$2 million this year so far. The beginning of the year the goal of 1.8 million was set and this goal has been surpassed. Commissioner Neal asked if next year is expected to be as good as this year. Stearns stated the goal is to create something sustainable. The business model can fluctuate but there are no signs of a huge decrease. In May golf revenue was down. Record months for June, July, August, September, October, and November changed that trend. The annual recap showed 65,000 rounds played, \$1.55 more per golfer per round than prior, and 51% increase in revenue over last 6 years. The price increase has been well received. There have been more 5-star reviews on the golf platforms than any other year.

X. Report by Executive Director Aaron Perri

- Tony Stearns will have a title change from Director of Golf to General Manager of Golf at the New Year
- Ice-skating has distributed about 2,000 Skate-It-Forward tickets thus far
- IPRA and Toledo Metro Parks were hosted here for an information session on Howard Park. 6 hours was spent with this group and a tour was given.
- The kickoff for Ethnic Festival planning was December 5th. The festival has a target date of September 9 in the Howard Park area. VPA is looking to form a committee for the festival soon
- Personnel changes will come into effect in 2023
- Betty Anderson retired after 26 years of service with the City of South Bend
- Matt Frazier has accepted a position at the University of Notre Dame
- The ribbon cutting for the Daydreamers playable art will be December 19th at Plaza Park.
- Tomorrow bids open for BPW for MLK Center demolition. January 15th is the groundbreaking for the MLK Jr. Dream Center.
- Redevelopment commission approved some public improvement projects totaling over \$10 million. These projects include: a new bridge at East Bank Trail toward Leeper Park to fully connect the riverwalk, Southeast Park playground and splash pad, Coquillard splashpad, Walker Field restrooms, Kennedy Park aquatics, and the final piece would be a trail matched with Hotel-Motel tax funds to connect the University of Notre Dame to downtown.
- Christmas on Washington Street will be held at Charles Black Center on December 17th
- 2023 Park Board Meeting dates will be posted publicly.

XI. Adjournment

No other questions or comments from the Park Commissioners, meeting adjourned at 6:02 by President Mark Neal.

The next regular meeting will be held January 23, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. at Howard Park Event Center and virtually.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jessica Williams
Clerk, Board of Park Commissioners