



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

DAWN M. JONES, CITY CLERK

PERSONNEL AND FINANCE

AUGUST 31, 2022, 5:00 P.M.

Committee Members Present: Sheila Niezgodski, Eli Wax, Troy Warner, Rachel Tomas Morgan

Committee Members Absent: Henry Davis Jr.

Others Present: Dawn M. Jones*, Victoria Trujillo*, Justin LePla*, Rachel Tomas Morgan*, Canneth Lee*, Bob Palmer*, Cynthia Taylor*, Rachel Cortes*, Benjamin Doughlas*, Jordan Gathers*, Matt Frazier*

Agenda: 2023 Venues Parks and Arts Budget Presentation
Council Questions and Feedback on Proposed 2023 VPA Budget
Public Input on Proposed 2023 VPA Budget

Members marked with an asterisk (*) are present digitally

Please note the attached link for the meeting recording:

<https://docs.southbendin.gov/WebLink/browse.aspx?dbid=0&mediaid=357175>

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski called to order the Budget meeting at 5:00 p.m.

2023 Venues Parks and Arts Budget Presentation

The following highlights were presented:

- Senior-Citizen Spirit week is ongoing in South Bend. A lunch-and-learn series discussing financial literacy is being held.
- There is Wi-Fi in twenty-two (22%) of parks, and by the end of 2023, over forty percent (40%) will have access.
- A grant was received allowing the city to distribute free bicycles to citizens.
- Multiple festivals are scheduled.
- Last year, the Council approved the purchase of two (2) fifteen passenger (15) vans for the parks department. The vans have not yet arrived due to supply chain issues. Ford has begun accepting new orders and the vans should arrive by the spring.
- Wheelchair tennis games have begun to be hosted regularly.
- Seventy-five thousand (\$75,000) dollars are distributed annually in scholarships, including the free children's golf and skating programs.

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- A kayak and paddle board rental kiosk were opened.
- The table tennis league is ongoing.
- Through American Rescue Plan dollars, the athletic playing services are being repaired for a cost of one million two hundred thousand (\$1,200,000) dollars.
- The roller-skating program, basketball leagues, and aerobics programs are ongoing.
- The installation of the solar panels has been completed.
- Non-native and invasive plants are being removed from parks. A nature trail was installed geared towards youth to view native trees.
- Randolph Park was divided by Samson Street. Working with Public Works, the council approved the removal of the street to ensure that the park is safe for children to play in.
- The natural resource management plan was updated and adopted revising how public spaces are cared for.
- The wildlife coexistence plan is being drafted to address how to handle certain species such as Canadian geese.
- Thirty thousand (30,000) pounds of food was rescued and distributed, preventing it from going to waste.
- Energy efficient lighting was installed at arenas to reduce light pollution in neighborhoods and lower energy costs.
- The zoo parking lot expansion was completed.

The Council reviewed the proposed draft 2023 VPA budget.

Council Questions and Feedback on Proposed 2023 VPA Budget

Committee Member Davis reported that he supports tree planting but expressed concerns that it could lead to issues in the future.

The presenter confirmed that, having learned from past mistakes, the parks department has specifically planted trees that will not cause issues.

Committee Member Davis asked how items are priced.

Justin LePla reported that pricing is outlined in the strategic plan. Items that are highly accessible by the community are covered by the department and there is no expectation of cost recovery. Items like summer camps, where the department is supervising and feeding children, do have a cost component to cover expenses which will be subsidized.

Committee Member Davis expressed concerns that the programs available are not common public knowledge and concerns that the sporting events are not generating enough revenue to provide transportation to and from sporting events. There needs to be more revenue generating projects to justify the amount of equity that is being requested in the draft budget.

Committee Member Davis asked if there is an opportunity to fill the violence prevention programs with park staff.

Justin LePla suggested that it is a possibility but not a direction he has considered.

Committee Member Davis asked for more information regarding the reporting and organizational structure and what the expectations are for individuals associated with these initiatives.



Justin LePla reported that there should not be many changes to the existing structure.

Public Input on Proposed 2023 VPA Budget

Committee Member Davis suggested that the community needs to show that South Bend is not a diminishing community and come together.

Cheryl Walsh suggested that pools are part of their neighborhoods and when a pool closes it is difficult to transport children to different pools. She suggested that there should be at least two pools. She suggested that more people need to be made aware of the programs and services available.

With no further business, Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski adjourned the Budget meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski

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