

**Huron Joint Recreation District
Regular Board Meeting – Minutes
Tuesday, May 5, 2020 at 6:30pm
Meeting held remotely, via Phone-In System**

Members Present: Christine Crawford, Rene’ Franklin, Jennifer Kilbury, Jodi Mast, Tom Solberg

Present from HPRD/City of Huron: Mike Spafford, Doug Steinwart, Brian Croucher, Rick Reinbolt, Dan Weaver.

Members Absent: Gordon Hahn, Julie Spitzley

Community members in attendance: None

Announcement: Huron City Clerk of Council reminded us that the Huron Joint Recreation District Board needs to permanently fill the Board Chairperson position. In response, Jennifer Kilbury nominated Tom Solberg as Board Chairman. The nomination was unanimously approved. Tom Solberg nominated Jennifer Kilbury to replace him as Secretary; motion was also unanimously approved.

- 1. ROLE CALL OF MEMBERS:** See “Members Present” above.
- 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Motion by Ms. Franklin to approve Feb. 4, 2020 written minutes; seconded by Ms. Kilbury. Minutes approved.
- 3. AUDIENCE COMMENTS:** None
- 4. NEW BUSINESS**
 - a. COVID-19 Programs, Events, Facilities, and Financial Impact**

Mr. Steinwart presented updates: Based on Governor’s order for closing school facilities, Safety Town was cancelled, in addition to related Youth Camps held at Shawnee. Our staff continues to assess each program based on timing, staffing, facilities, and the State of Ohio guidelines:

 - Scheduled activities at Fabens Park cancelled through May 15th. Impacts several “outside” tournaments, shelter rentals, and the Huron Baseball/Softball program. Will continue to re-evaluate based on future guidelines, and “push back” dates when possible.
 - Huron Boat Basin events cancelled through May 30th. City-wide Garage Sale has been re-scheduled to Sept. 5th. Rotary Club meeting to discuss their event. We will continue to evaluate, developing policies based on State Guidelines –potentially will impact Fireworks and River Fest.
 - Youth Sports Camps will likely be cancelled—most of these programs depend on School Coaches and facilities. Swim Lessons will depend upon future protocols defined by the Governor, as well as the ability to use Huron Lagoons pool under those protocols.
 - Nickel Plate Beach – operation will be based on Governor’s guidelines; we are hoping for clarification on public beaches soon. We continue to prepare as though the beach will open. Focus has been on implementing the additional safety measures; which has benefitted from the joint efforts of the Administration, Police and Fire Departments.
 - Financial impact: We have seasonal staff on “stand-by” and have limited purchases to essential items. Right now, park maintenance depends entirely on Rick and Dan; it is more than two people can do. We have partnered with the Street Department, and they have helped with some tasks. Cancellations impact revenue-generating events for our department. While seasonal dockage has been good, transient revenue is way down. As a department, we have positioned ourselves with positive account balances to offset some of this, and our staff has been willing to “put on any hat” to keep us on-track.

- Mr. Steinwart asked Mr. Spafford to comment on the “big picture” for the City. He stated that the City is in fairly good financial condition; we have kept our organization lean for a long time – our management strategy has focused on targeted capital improvements; avoiding drastic financial commitments. He continued, even though the situation sounds dire regarding revenues, and it does require prudent financial management, we still have to focus on insuring public safety. The Huron Joint Recreational District’s commitment has allowed us to keep our parks open, so we can continue to provide quality-of-life benefits to our local families and our community. He thanked the Board and the Parks & Rec staff for their commitment.

b. Water Levels and Forecasts

Mr. Steinwart referenced the US Army Corp of Engineer’s report on Great Lakes water levels, which was provided to the Board via email. Our department continues to monitor high water levels, which have a major impact on many of our parks, facilities, and shorelines—from debris, to erosion, to structural damage.

- He highlighted the “seasonal water levels/cycle” page showing lake levels beginning to rise in March; peaking in the 2nd week of July.
- He also reviewed the statistics showing that the 60-month period ending Jan. 31, 2019 was the wettest in 121 five-year periods for the Great Lakes Basin.
- He said there was some good news in the report’s predictions: May will not set a record, and the Lake Level for June 2020 will be 4-6” below June of last year.
- Mr. Steinwart also thanked Mr. Swaisgood, City Finance Director, for securing a grant through our insurer that sponsored the cost of “High Water” Safety signs. Mr. Spafford added that the City has partnered with the County, using the GSI system, to document high water levels, and the visual differences are remarkable.

5. CHAIRMAN COMMENTS: Mr. Solberg asked for Board member comments; several thanked the staff for their efforts. Ms. Mast said that the Schools had been notified of major decrease in State funding; and Ms. Kilbury thanked the community for their support of “Grow Huron”—including many board members. Ms. Franklin said she had enjoyed walking at Fabens, and also seen many other walkers at Fabens; it is an important healthy outlet for many.

6. ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn by Ms. Mast, seconded by Ms. Franklin.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Irvin, Administrative Coordinator
Huron Parks & Recreation