

**Huron Joint Recreation District
Regular Board Meeting – Minutes
Tuesday, April 6, 2021 at 6:30pm
City Municipal Building, Huron, OH**

Members Present: Christine Crawford, Bryan Edwards, Jen Kilbury, Jonathan Merckens, Julie Spitzley

Present from HPRD/City of Huron: Doug Steinwart, Cory Swaisgood, Dan Weaver

Members Absent: Tom Solberg, Gordon Hahn, Rene’ Franklin, Scott Slocum

Approval of minutes: Motion to approve March 2, 2021 meeting minutes by Mr. Edwards; motion seconded by Ms. Spitzley; approved without change.

Audience comments: None.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Potential Fish Cleaning Station - Update

Doug Steinwart presented updated: We have had a couple meetings with ODNR, and are working on an agreement draft. The City is working on updated engineering plans, also working on more details with Erie County Environmental Dept. It is still moving forward; a potential agreement would ultimately need to go to Council for approval.

NEW BUSINESS

A. HJRD Agreement Update

Ms. Kilbury introduced Mr. Swaisgood, the City Finance Director. The Board packet included a hand-out prepared by Mr. Swaisgood, which he reviewed with the Board. He stated that the City Administration had met with Mr. Hahn, from the Township; and Mr. Slocum, representing City Schools; to discuss the 2020 financial hardships which hit government entities. He continued: It was a year of uncertainty for every single expense and revenue line item in the Parks & Rec. Department. Luckily, the volume at Nickel Plate helped the Parks & Rec. Department last year. Going forward, we want to involve the Board more in the budget process. As background, Mr. Swaisgood stated the District was created over 20 years ago; it is a separate taxing authority. To date taxes have not been considered, the intent of the agreement between the parties was to contribute financially, and not add another tax to residents. The annual agreements approved by all three entities include the allocations made by each entity – in the future, we want to move the approval process of that annual agreement up to December. He noted that, in light of COVID related issues, the three entities got together to review actual contributions. We would like to present again to the Board in the Fall, as part of the budget process, and also plan to meet with the Schools and the Township so they are aware of the numbers by the end of the year.

Mr. Steinwart thanked Mr. Swaisgood for attending. Mr. Steinwart encouraged the elected officials on the Board —Ms. Crawford, Mr. Hahn, and Mr. Slocum—to spearhead Parks & Rec conversations with their entities. In regards to the “capital reserve surplus” we will have a list of items to discuss with the Board. Mr. Steinwart pointed out that the department was very conservative in 2020 expenditures, delayed some maintenance, and did get some assistance from the CARES act. Mr. Steinwart also stated that Mr. Swaisgood has worked with the department on a 10-year plan, which we can discuss with the Board in the Fall, to address long-term equipment and facility needs.

B. Boat Ramp Update

Mr. Steinwart stated the docks were installed today for the season. He reminded the Board that the State owns the facility; the City has an agreement to maintain it. So, we do all the “daily” maintenance—mowing, docks, restroom cleaning, etc. The Boat Ramp is 12 years old, so we have two capital projects that we are working on with the State—1) Stone for the erosion on the river side, 2) LED lights for the parking lot. They have agreed to re-lamp the entire system. The agreement is working well, and the State is fulfilling their obligation.

C. Manager’s Update

Mr. Steinwart stated that we are working on our Paddle Shack agreement for Nickel Plate, which has been a great relationship; and Electric Scooters, with Kyle Wright. When finalized, those agreement will go in front of council. We have had some recent donations – a maple tree at the Boat Ramp, donated by the Practical Gardeners of Huron, celebrating their 80th anniversary – also several benches on the Pier (he read the list of contributors). He thanked all for the donations.

In Parks, Rick and Dan refurbished the Nickel Plate Parking Entrance building, and the Boat Basin hut. They completed the Batting Cages upgrade, re-purposing the used synthetic turf from the High School field renovation. We are already cutting grass, and the Huron Baseball-Softball program is using Fabens. The Marina electric is on; we are getting a few boats in. Restrooms will be opening next week. He also reported on programs: Our City-Wide Garage Sale is May 22nd, we are taking registrations. Safety Town is divided into two one-week sessions this year, so we are able to take the kids who were unable to attend last year due to cancellations, in addition to children entering Kindergarten this Fall. That is already about half full. We will offer seven youth sports camps. Brian is also working on Day Camps and our Art and Crafts Youth Camps. In response to questions about seasonal employees, Mr. Steinwart said we always encourage applications – have a few specific needs yet.

CHAIRMAN’S COMMENTS

Ms. Kilbury asked for input. Mr. Merckens thanked the staff, as did Ms. Crawford. Ms. Spitzley reported TV news station interview on the pier, based on the “Perch Church.” Ms. Kilbury said that Grow Huron added some pansies to pots; excited to have purchased a watering vehicle.

OTHER MATTERS – ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Spitzley; second by Ms. Crawford - motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Irvin, Administrative Coordinator
Huron Parks & Recreation