

**Huron Joint Recreation District
Regular Board Meeting – Minutes
Tuesday, Sept. 7, 2021 at 6:30pm
City Municipal Building, Huron, OH**

Members Present: Christine Crawford, Bryan Edwards, Rene’ Franklin, Gordon Hahn, Jen Kilbury, Jonathan Merckens, Julie Spitzley

Present from HPRD/City of Huron: Doug Steinwart, Brian Croucher, Rick Reinbolt

Members Absent: Tom Solberg, Scott Slocum

Approval of minutes: Motion to approve May 4, 2021 meeting minutes by Ms. Franklin; motion seconded by Ms. Spitzley; approved without change.

Audience comments: None.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Program Update

Brian Croucher updated the Board: We were able to return to our Sports Camps schedule—good participation, and good weather. Track, Cheer and Golf Camps were the highest attendance that we have ever had for those programs. We were excited to get Safety Town at Shawnee back this year – it is one of our most important programs. We had two one-week Safety Towns this year to capture the children unable to attend last year. We slimmed down the program a little, but still had full Police Department and Fire Department participation, and it went very well. We continued at Shawnee with our Art Camp, one week with two age groups—and that filled. From there, we went into our Junior Camps for the month of July. Those were four camps, 4-days each week, for ages 6 to 8. – those camps were also full. We hosted five tournaments at Fabens this year (not counting our own tournament) – every weekend in June and one in July. That went well—drawing lots of people into the park and the community. Then we followed up with our Dawg Daze Tournament. We filled that tournament in March this year, with 50 teams; and the tournament went really well, with good weather. We have been able to keep good umpires for Dawg Daze, but overall, umpires are still a major challenge. As we talked about earlier, we made some changes to Fall Ball – going from six weeks to four weeks, focused on younger ages. The biggest reason for the changes is lack of umpires. Group discussion about umpire shortage and possible training opportunities. Mr. Croucher concluded: even with these challenges, we have full registration of about 40 teams in Fall Ball—and have completed two weeks; and so far it has gone very well, with great weather. He concluded: We have been working on Pumpkin Fest, to be held on Saturday, October 9th.

B. Parks Maintenance Update

Mr. Reinbolt update: Memorial Day “kicked-off” with major northeast wind, had significant clean-up. At Boat Basin and Boat Ramp, heavy rains caused debris clean-up at both locations for about a month. The tournaments that we had in June did have rain prior to the tournament that caused extra prep; caused some challenges but we made it through. At Nickel Plate, another successful year, good attendance. The shower towers were a big success.

Last week at Fabens, we were invaded by Fall Army worms – we had the fields treated, and that appears to have stopped the damage. We have been busy with our routine maintenance; have not had the opportunity to do extra projects; hopefully in the Fall we can work on those. We have the materials purchased to rebuild an old shed and an old fence at the Boat Basin. Board question: how did your “buoy

theory” work at Nickel Plate? Mr. Reinbolt replied that it did not work; we had consistent strong winds after they were installed. We gave it a good effort.

C. ODNR Fish Cleaning Station

Doug Steinwart updated Board: Still working with ODNR/Division of Wildlife. Hope to have an agreement to Council next week. He reviewed the site plan distributed to Board members. It includes some items to enhance the Boat Ramp facility. When it goes out to bid, those items will be “alternates.” Hope to have engineering work about 30% completed by end of October, and go out to bid in January/February 2022. Goal would be spring construction; potentially completed by July 1st. To recap, the State will be funding the project, the City (Parks & Recreation) will handle daily maintenance. It will be fenced in, so can close seasonally. But it will be open 24/7 during season. To remind you – it grinds waste down to a slurry and goes into sanitation lines. There will be two stainless steel cutting tables and high-end grinders. It is also an opportunity to improve traffic flow and sidewalks, as shown on the “extras” on site plan. Our goal is to not close the facility during construction.

D. Outdoor Ice Rink Grant submitted

Doug Steinwart updated Board: We submitted two local community grants – Wightman Weiber Foundation, and the Patrick & Louise Murray Foundation for a total of \$8,000. towards potential ice rink. Bryan Edwards attended the Council meeting when we discussed applying for grants – Mr. Steinwart thanked him. We are excited about it; we are looking at putting it at Fabens. The vendor has said they can ship it in a couple weeks after ordered. We are still looking at synthetic ice in the future. Sandusky received a large grant for synthetic so we will see how that plays out. While there are downfalls to synthetic, we like being able to install it and use for six weeks, independent of weather. It is a challenge to add water and smooth real ice during freezing/thawing cycles; could be trial and error. We think we will know about the grants in about six weeks.

CHAIRMAN’S COMMENTS

Ms. Kilbury asked for Board comments. Mr. Hahn thanked the staff for hard work over the summer. Board question: did we have trouble finding staff—Mr. Steinwart said that we did not; and thanked our part-time staff. We think it is due to quality of our part-time workers. The City is looking at a part-time wage analysis, which we hope would help retain quality part staff. Ms. Franklin asked about consideration of splash pad. Discussion about potential locations, and funding. Ms. Spitzley asked about dredging/filling in at the pier. Mr. Steinwart stated the City is involved in long-range planning with Army Corp / EPA, since open lake dumping not approved. Mr. Steinwart stated that the Lake Shore Electric Trail signage, sponsored by donations from Ms. Gallagher, is still moving forward. Ms. Crawford also thanked staff for their work; Mr. Edwards echoed the thanks to staff. He also asked about the “pier” beach which was recently formed. Discussion about Lake Front beach / Pier beach / Waterworks beaches and future use. Mr. Merckens also thanked staff for work. Ms. Kilbury complimented staff relations with part time workers. Next meeting is Oct. 5th.

OTHER MATTERS – ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Merckens; second by Ms. Franklin - motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Irvin, Administrative Coordinator
Huron Parks & Recreation