

MINUTES

**City of Warsaw
Parks and Recreation Board
Regular Meeting (Parks)
Tuesday, February 15, 2022, 5:15 pm - 6:15 pm
Council Chambers**

In Attendance

Diane Quance; Jill Beehler; Larry Ladd; Larry Plummer; Michelle Boxell; Shaun Gardner; Stephanie Schaefer; Steve Haines; Suzanne Stokes

Not In Attendance

Joe Thallemer; Noemi Ponce

I. CALL TO ORDER

Park Board President Steve Haines called the meeting to order.

II. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES

Meeting minutes from the January 18, 2022 meeting were approved by the Board.

Move: Michelle Boxell Second: Larry Ladd Status: Passed

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Update Airport Land Development

Parks Superintendent Larry Plummer informed the board that Deb from Cornerstone PDS has been hired to begin working on a design for the new park near the airport. She previously worked with the park to produce the 5 Year Master Plan.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. 2021 Year In Review

Superintendent Plummer began the 2021 year in review by remarking that it was another challenging year due to COVID, but the department was still able to accomplish many things. The shoreline stabilization project at Pike Lake was completed and Center Lake is slated to be done in 2022 from the

boat ramp to the Nye Park area. The department once again collaborated with the three lake associations - Center, Pike, and Winona - by contributing \$2500 to each for maintenance, conservation, and preservation. Another notable project was completed with NIPSCO in order to move high voltage power lines from above Kiddie Land to Detroit Street. The park lost a few trees in the process but NIPSCO has since replaced them.

Goshen Health donated a "live vibrantly" bench free of charge that was placed at Kelly Park. In collaboration with KCCRVC, kayak centers were purchased and the installation will be complete with the kayaks ready to use hopefully in mid-to-late April 2022. The plans were laid for new pickleball and tennis courts at Bixler Park through a grant from the K21 Foundation, with hopes that work will begin in the spring. As part of the Buffalo Street Project, the Castaldi family worked with the department on the installation of the interactive Castaldi Fountain which many people have enjoyed and loved. The new gazebo at Nye Park was another part of the scenic upgrades courtesy of the Buffalo Street Project. With the east & west lots being paved at Central Park, everything to the south of Canal Street is completed for repairs. Ker Park was also finished over the span of 2021.

The 5 Year Master Plan was completed and put into place, ready to go for the future. At the Pavilion, HVAC units were replaced, removing units that had been there for 20 years and consolidating into two new units without a need for the third. This has made major improvements to functionality and temperature control for the building. The Pavilion also received new sheeting and roofing along with a new awning out front. All parks received new signs that included the name of the park with the address. All playgrounds and swings were replenished with new fall material for safety. There were sewer upgrades and improvements made to the manager's row at the Pike Lake Campground. In replacing the Central Park banners, the new image will be of the Warsaw Parks logo instead of the Central Park Concert Series because the concerts are now being held in multiple locations. A new wind screen was installed on the pickleball courts at Kelly Park while new tee pads for all holes at the disc golf course in Lucerne Park were poured.

A new office for the Parks Department was given the go-head but completion of the project will likely not be until 2023 due to steel availability. Young Tiger Football donated \$1452 from concessions at the Christmas light display to be used on future displays. As far as equipment, a new truck for Maintenance Director Shaun Gardner was ordered in February 2021 and just received recently. There was a new Grasshopper mower acquired, the Bobcat was traded in for an upgrade that is a track machine that will

help for working in poor turf conditions, and new blowers, push mowers, etc. were purchased to replace aged machinery. With intent to use the Elements program, a few iPads were purchased for the crew that will hopefully be implemented in the near future.

The Parks Department tends to some items downtown like the flower planter beds, the alleyway, and dumping the trash barrels. In 2021 there was 76 tons of garbage collected, amounting to 6-7 loads a day in the summertime. For the winter, there are 28 residents signed up for the driveway plowing program, with the list continuing to grow.

With regard to rentals, Plummer noted that while figures were up from the previous year, they were not back to pre-pandemic levels. He was happy to allow the Pavilion to be used for COVID vaccine clinics in spite of lost revenue because that was important to have for the community. And as for events, COVID forced the cancellation of all major events and attendance was down for smaller ones. He said the numbers were growing in a positive direction despite what had gone on. He also noted that sponsorships and donations were a wash for those events as they were refunded upon cancellation.

Plummer said in closing that the park system has become more valuable as COVID grips society and provides a much needed outlet for many. He thanked the Park Board, City Council, and all those involved with grants and donations for allowing the Parks Department to do all they do.

2. Recreation Report

Recreation Director Stephanie Schaefer informed the Board that Daddy's Little Sweetheart Dance held at the beginning of February was a huge success. The event sold out and there were many positive remarks about the Nelson's catering. March's macrame class is fully booked as the art has become very popular again. She stated all concerts, big and small, are planned for the year. The Lakes Festival and Summer Concert Series contracts have been approved, with the rock and country concert contracts going to Board of Works very soon. The recreation guide is in process and Schaefer is looking forward to her first summer as director. Major concert headliners will be announced the first week of April.

3. Maintenance Report

Maintenance Director Shaun Gardner spoke to the staff staying busy with indoor projects as winter carries on. All picnic tables are complete, with almost all the benches done. Getting the picnic tables done has been a large undertaking as no tables were repaired the year before.

Superintendent Plummer said the guys have been working really hard on the tables. The Pavilion was touched up inside with new paint while the Firemens' Building received a whole fresh coat inside. The crew has also been moving a lot of snow lately and clearing the end of driveways for residents.

V. OTHER MATTERS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD

1. WCS Food Services Request

Superintendent Plummer let the Board know that the Warsaw Community Schools Food Services reached out via letter asking if they could come back to Bixler Park over the summer to serve meals after having to take a couple years off. The letter stated an average of 119 kids receive the meals. Plummer mentioned the Bixler projects should be done before the meal service begins. Park Board member Jill Beehler made a motion to approve WCS using the Bixler shelter and it was seconded by Park Board member Michelle Boxell.

Move: Jill Beehler Second: Michelle Boxell Status: Passed

VI. MEETING REVIEW

Park Board President Steve Haines thanked Larry, his staff, other Park Board members, and City Council for another great year.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Park Board Vice President Larry Ladd moved to adjourn the meeting and Park Board member Jill Beehler seconded to conclude the meeting.

Move: Larry Ladd Second: Jill Beehler Status: Passed

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Stokes". The signature is written in a cursive, stylized font.

Suzanne Stokes, Park Board Secretary