

**Charter Township of Van Buren
Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes
December 12, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting came to order at 5:34 PM with the following individuals in attendance:

MEMBERS: Chair Todd O'Neil, Vice Chair Charles Coleman, Clerk Leon Wright and Kimberly Nofz

EXCUSED: Tammy Wall

STAFF: Director of Recreation Zaenglein and Director of Parks Jason Locke

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM: A quorum of the Recreation Committee was present for this meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION and second by Kim Nofz and Leon Wright to approve the December 12, 2023 Recreation Committee Meeting Agenda as presented.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF JUNE 13, 2023 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES:

MOTION and second by Kim Nofz and Leon Wright to approve the June 13, 2023, Regular Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

1. Community Center Update (Director Zaenglein):
A tour of the Van Buren Community Center ("VBC") was conducted.

2. Recreation Update (Director Zaenglein):

The REAL / Drop-In & Play

Over the summer, we ran the REAL Program once again. This time, Director Locke oversaw the field operations, while Director Zaenglein continued to handle the interviewing, hiring, training, and other administrative duties. We continued with providing programming by offering a new program called "Drop-in and Play". The REAL students assisted in these programs by interacting with local children by doing crafts, games, other activities.

Summer Concert Series

We held our Summer Concert Series once again at Quirk Park. This year we featured a free gourmet popsicle giveaway courtesy of Van Buren Township, and provided by Frios food truck. Out of three concerts planned, one successfully was performed while the others were canceled due to bad weather.

Candy Loop / Punkin' Roll Out

Our fall activities included record crowds at Candy Loop with just under 1500 people in attendance and our second annual Punkin' Roll Out. We were happily surprised to have Debbie Dingle join us at the Punkin' Roll Out event.

Festival of Trees / BAM Holiday Ornament Workshop

We are assisting our Sister department, the Belleville Area Museum, and their return of the BAM Holiday ornament workshop. The workshop has been taking place in conjunction with the Belleville Central Business Community group "Photos with Santa". The Santa activity has been taking place at the newly opened museum with the ornament workshop happening at the Belleville Area District Library. Also at this time, the BAM is hosting the formerly annual Festival of Trees. The Recreation Department has decorated a tree which has been donated to the library for a silent auction.

Position Openings

We are currently looking to hire for two (2) full-time positions for the VBC. The Recreation Programmer will be responsible for all of the programming at the VBC and will assist the director in all programming aspects. The Facility Coordinator will also report directly to the director and will be responsible for the upkeep, cleanliness and safety of the VBC. We are hoping to fill these positions in January of 2024.

3. Parks Update (Director Locke):

All Parks:

All bathroom facilities and drinking fountains (as well as the Splash Pad) are closed for the winter. Water was shut-off and the plumbing was winterized.

French Landing:

- Construction of the new fishing dock was completed this fall. The new kayak launch is also up and running.
- Kayak rental "vending machines" were installed this fall. The kayaks are available for rental from spring thru the end of fall. Currently, the kayaks are about to be stored for the winter.
- The first summer rental season for the new pavilion was a success.

Riggs Park:

- Restoration work (grading and seeding) has been completed in the area along Huron River Drive where all the trees were removed earlier this year.

Haggerty Park:

- Vandalism and graffiti remain an issue. New park signs are constant target for this. Will be removing one of the signs soon due to extensive damage to the bottom. Play structure is always getting graffiti attacks (paint and carvings).
- Due to the reaccuring vandalism, Director Locke shared his vision of reimagining the park into a passive walking park with pathways and trees by removing the vandalized equipment.

MOTION and second by Clerk Leon Wright and Kimberly Nofz to recommend to the Board of Trustees to discuss the consideration of removal of the play equipment and pavilion at Haggerty Subdivision Park and transform the property into a passive park with pathways and added trees.

ROLL CALL:

YEAS: Charles Coleman, Todd O’Neil, Kimberly Nofz and Leon Wright

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Tammy Wall

MOTION CARRIED (Certified Motion Attached)

Pickle Park:

- The courts are now closed for the winter season. The fence screens and court nets were removed for storage. Will reopen in spring once weather allows.

Quirk Park:

- Splash Pad was closed up at the end of September.
- Youth soccer will possibly be using fields for the last time this upcoming spring.

Van Buren Park:

- The Sled Hill has been prepped for the winter. Snow fencing was placed at the base area of the hill to mark of safe area for sledders so cars do not get too close. Picnic tables were also placed in area for use.
- Starting Dec. 18th, the front gates to the park will remain open. The gate at the entrance to the “Front Loop” area of the park will start being closed at night. This will allow visitors to the sled hill access to the hill after hours as well as during snow plow operations for the back of the park and/or holiday closures (specifically Christmas).
- The Iron Belle Trail was completed and officially opened this fall. Safety bollards will be installed within the next week or two to prevent vehicles from accessing the trail at gate areas and crossings.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION and second by Todd O’Neil and Charles Coleman to adjourn at 6:34 PM.

MOTION

Wright moved, Nofz seconded to recommend the Board of Trustees to discuss the consideration of the removal of the play equipment and pavilion at Haggerty Subdivision Park and transform the property into a passive park with pathways and added trees.

Yeas: Coleman, O'Neil, Nofz, Wright

Nays:

Absent: Wall

Motion Carried

I hereby certify the foregoing is a true correct copy of the motion made at the Recreation Committee meeting held on 12 December 2023.

Jennifer Zaenglein
Acting Recording Secretary