

**CITY OF BIG RAPIDS  
PARK AND RECREATION BOARD  
APPROVED MINUTES  
January 14, 2016**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Richard Spedowske at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Richard Spedowske, Mark Brejcha, Karen Simmon, Caryn Schonert,  
Megan Eppley, Deborah Chipman, Stacy Pedigo

Absent: Jason Kostecki

Other: Heather Bowman, Park & Recreation Director  
Paula Weipert, Board Secretary

**MINUTES:**

*Motion by Deborah Chipman, seconded by Mark Brejcha to approve the October 8, 2015 minutes as presented. Motion Passed.*

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

None.

**GENERAL BUSINESS:**

**Welcome new member:**

Heather introduced new Board member Stacy Pedigo. The Board welcomed Stacy.

The Board was informed of the receipt of the resignation of member Jason Swearingen for personal reasons.

**Dog Park:**

Heather spoke on the Civil Rights complaint that had been received regarding accessibility at the Park. She passed around pictures of the entrance areas at both the small and large fenced areas. Crusher dust was installed to aid in the ability to enter more easily. She would like to have more installed in the large area to help with the mud prone areas.

The Dog Park group had approached the City and requested a shelter be placed within the large park area. They would like to be able to sit more comfortably in cold weather. They currently have a make-shift wind block made of vinyl but would like something more permanent. Heather passed around some pictures of different styles of shelters, along with a drawing from the group of what they would like.

Members spoke on wanting the park to remain what it was built for, a place for dogs to be able to run and play freely. The more items that are put into these fenced in areas, the

less space there will be for the dogs. Safety concerns were discussed with having a multi-sided closed in structure. Visibility issues for patrons and dogs being possibly cornered within the shelter area and not being able to get out. If a shelter is placed within the park, it would need to be useful throughout the year. Having a removable one will cause storage issues that the City will not be able to take care. The bus stop style would work good as there could be plexiglass as the side walls which could be removable in the summer months and allow a person to look straight through the building with no blind spots. The side walls on one of these style structures are open along the bottom and this could help prevent a dog from becoming trapped.

The decision to approve this request will be held until the next meeting. Heather will invite the Dog Park group to the next meeting to further discuss this request.

### **Ice Rink:**

The Ice Rink has been filled. Richard, as a member of the City Part-time firefighter group assisted with filling it this year. Richard said that they used 40,000 gallons to fill it. He explained the problem with filling it as the ground is uneven in that location. He would like Heather to talk with Van about having the ground leveled in early spring. Mark suggested that the leveling be done after Fall Ball season and then seed the ground in Spring next year.

Currently the rink has quite a layer of snow on top which insulates and causes problems with the freezing process. This has been an unusually mild winter. The Grand Opening event will be delayed.

### **Clay Cliffs:**

The City has purchased, from Barb Borth, an additional 20+ acres that adjoins the current park. There is potential for a parking lot, sledding hill, staging area and lots of trails.

### **CIPS:**

The CIP'S are due in a few weeks. All requests go before the Planning Committee first and then to the Commission for final approval. The requests that the Parks and Recreation Department will be submitting are as follows:

- Mitchell Creek Park – a camera and wi-fi
- Hemlock – ballfield lights
- Farmers Market/Ice Rink
- Northend Riverside Park – parking lot
- Riverwalk Trail
- Security cameras
- Tennis Court
- Vogel field land addition
- Community Pool remarcite

### **Win Kellum/River Street Park - gas:**

The regulator is being installed by the storage building. The City will receive \$20,000 that will be used towards the renovations that are being made in the park at this time.

There was discussion on the status of the construction of the dugouts. The Flint Job Corp program has a group that may be able to come over here to build them. Heather will contact them.

**Northend Park signs:**

The signs have been replaced.

**SPECIAL EVENTS:**

None.

**STAFF REPORTS: Recreation**

Heather spoke on current programs. She has begun to work on the Girls on the Run program for this coming June.

Megan inquired about a mother-son event in the near future. Heather looked into hosting this event at the bowling alley, however the bowling alley is very busy and is difficult to schedule such an event there. She will be looking into other ideas.

Deb commented on the numbers of walkers in the Middle School. It has been a very well received and utilized program.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS/BUSINESS:**

None.

**UNSCHEDULED BUSINESS:**

None.

**The next meeting of the Park and Recreation Board will be February 11, 2016 at 6:30 pm in the City Commission Room.**

Meeting Adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Paula Weipert