

**CITY OF BIG RAPIDS
PARK AND RECREATION BOARD
APPROVED MINUTES
February 11, 2016**

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair, Karen Simmon at 6:30 PM.

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

Absent: Richard Spedowske, Jason Kostecki

Other: Heather Bowman, Park & Recreation Director
Stacey Johns, Acting Secretary

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None

PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

COMMUNICATIONS – None

GENERAL BUSINESS:

Pool

Heather Bowman stated that the community pool will be opening as scheduled. Bowman noted that board members would see a proposed rate increase to be paid by users of the pool. This is due to the minimum wage increase that took place in January 2016. Following the new minimum wage requirements, a majority of the pool staff will now be paid eight dollars and fifty cents (\$8.50) per hour and pool directors will make an estimated additional fifty cents (\$.50) per hour.

Bowman stated that, based on user numbers from the 2015 pool season, the proposed rate increase would generate approximately two thousand dollars (\$2000) in additional revenue. This amount is not enough to cover the entire increase in staff wages, but it does cover a significant portion. Bowman believes that the approximate one thousand dollar (\$1000) shortfall can be made up through donations and concession sales.

Motion by Megan Eppley, seconded by Deborah Chipman to approve the rate increase for the community pool.

Motion passed.

Ice Rink

Heather Bowman stated that the ice rink in Hemlock Park is now open. Due to warm weather, the rink had to be closed for a period of time earlier this winter and the grand opening ceremony was canceled.

There is no plan to reschedule the grand opening ceremony at this time.

Bowman also stated that there is a group of men, who regularly use the ice rink, that contact her when the rink is in need of improvements. Bowman appreciates the community assistance in keeping the rink well maintained.

Clay Cliffs

The City of Big Rapids is hosting a public forum on Tuesday, February 16, 2016 at 6:30 PM in the City Commission Room.

Marlies Manning will present a conceptual drawing of trails on the property as a starting point of possible ideas. After consideration of suggestions and ideas from the public, a Clay Cliffs Master Plan will be developed. The Clay Cliffs Master Plan will not be merged with the Park and Recreation Master Plan at this time.

CIP's

Heather Bowman stated that all capital improvement projects, including what she considers to be "wish list" requests, were submitted. The projects that have been UNOFFICIALLY approved at this time include the sidewalk program, completion of the Mitchell Creek Park project and twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) to be put into a reserve to re-marcite the community pool.

Win Kellum

Mark Brejcha updated the board on his contact pertaining to labor and materials for the dugout project. Brejcha stated that Job Corp, a program through the Department of Labor in which at-risk young adults are trained in a specific trade, will be donating the labor to build the dugouts. In exchange for their work, the Job Corp students are allowed the opportunity to gain on the job experience, while being supervised and taught by a master mason.

The only expense anticipated for the labor will be food and lodging for the Job Corp crew during the duration of their stay in Big Rapids.

Brejcha also stated, that through another contact, he was able to get one thousand (1000) cinder blocks donated for the project.

Both the labor and cinder block donations are considered huge gifts that will greatly help with the completion of the project.

Holland Park

Heather Bowman stated that all of the personalized donation bricks have been ordered. It takes approximately twelve (12) weeks for the bricks to be shipped after ordering. The bricks will be stored inside the Department of Public Works garage, at which time quality of the blocks and spelling of names will be checked. The bricks will also be sorted into groups to honor requests from the purchasers.

The target date for the Grand Opening of Holland Park is set for Veteran's Day, November 11, 2016.

Special Events

Girls on the Run flyers have gone out. Bowman stated that Morley Stanwood Middle School dropped out of the program this year, but St. Michael's is a new group that joined.

Special Event Request Forms have recently started trickling into the Department of Public works for 2016 events. Board members should expect several requests in the packet for the March meeting.

STAFF REPORTS

Recreation

Heather Bowman stated that the Daddy/Daughter Dance was a huge success. In total, four hundred ninety-nine (499) people attended the dance this year. Each year the event grows by approximately one hundred fifty (150) attendees.

Students in the Ferris State University Honors Program volunteer at the dance every year, and Bowman commented on how much their help is appreciated.

Megan Eppley commented on the amount of business this event brings to Big Rapids merchants through the purchase of clothing, dinners, flowers and hair & nail services.

A Mother/Son event is being planned for late fall or early winter 2016.

UNSCHEDULED BUSINESS

History

Recently Roger Schneidt, Deputy Director of Public Works, came across a newspaper article and photos of the ballparks at Hemlock Park dated July 1975. The board enjoyed sharing in this interesting piece of Big Rapids History.

Playscape

Stacy Pedigo voiced concerns about older kids hanging around Playscape in the late afternoon/evenings who are engaging in unsafe activities and inappropriate behavior. Caryn Schonert stated that she has seen the same type of issues while visiting Hemlock Park. Bowman encouraged anyone who witnesses this type of behavior to call the police immediately.

The next meeting of the Park and Recreation Board will be March 10, 2016 at 6:30 PM in the City Commission Room.

Meeting adjourned at 7:06 PM

**Respectfully submitted,
Stacey Johns, Acting Secretary**