

**CITY OF BIG RAPIDS  
PARK AND RECREATION BOARD  
APPROVED MINUTES  
November 10, 2016**

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

Present: Richard Spedowske, Megan Eppley, Mark Brejcha, Deb Chipman,  
Jason Kostecki

Absent: Caryn Schonert, Stacy Pedigo, Karen Simmon

Other: Mark Gifford, Public Works Director  
Heather Bowman, Park & Recreation Director  
Paula Weipert, Board Secretary

**MINUTES:**

*Motion by Deb Chipman, seconded by Megan Eppley to approve the October 13, 2016 minutes as presented. Motion Passed.*

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Resident Laura DeBold spoke on her use and enjoyment of the Riverwalk. She spoke on an area along the trail between River Street and Winter Avenue as having been a dumping area many years ago. A great deal of glass and old metal had been becoming exposed and she and City staff had cleaned up much of what could be. Myrtle has been planted in hopes of helping the area with the erosion problem that causes the junk to be exposed.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

None.

**GENERAL BUSINESS:**

**Dog Park:**

Mark spoke on the request that was presented to the Board at the October meeting. Thomas Bratus, a visitor and patron of the Brutus Dog Park approached the Board and requested that the rules be changed at the park to require that all dogs be spayed/neutered prior to being able to enter the park.

City Attorney Eric Williams wrote a response to this request and his response was read to the Board.

Mark Brejcha spoke on making rules clear and visibly posted. Richard inquired as to what avenues a patron has if someone doesn't leave with their animal if requested to.

Tom Bratus, spoke again on the necessity for this rule. Laura Debold spoke in favor of Tom.

Jason Kostecki spoke about not wanting to alienate people who either do not want to or cannot afford the procedure. Wants the park to remain open to all, not a segregated group. He asked about how they respond to an individual in which they approach and ask to leave and they choose not to leave.

A member of the audience spoke on the fact that there are certain breeds that are not supposed to be spayed/neutered until a certain age.

Deb Chipman spoke about park facilities being open to the public. You enter those facilities at your own risk. She wants all dogs welcome to the park and no restrictive rule, such as this one, put into place.

Mark Brejcha would like a larger more visual rule sign installed. One that is more eye catching. Also, suggested that a large dog could use the small dog area, if no small dogs were utilizing it at the time. Megan Eppley inquired as to how often the small dog area is empty.

Heather talked about Eric William's response and that there needs to be further research and discussion before any rules are changed or enacted.

This item tabled for further action.

**Park and Recreation Master Plan:**

Heather spoke on information that is within the Board packets. These are ideas and suggestions that came from surveys that were completed.

**Win Kellum Update:**

Heather spoke on Ferris Club having spread 40 yards of crusher dust. 1 of the dugouts is complete and the other is in need of a roof.

Mark Brejcha would like to see some work on the press box.

Heather talked about the noise issue complaints that she has received over the past from a residential neighbor to the ball field. The music played on weekends at the field during practices has been an issue with this neighbor. This will need to be discussed with the Ferris Club and include this resident in on those discussions.

**SPECIAL EVENTS:**

Copies of current and upcoming Special Events are included in the Board packets.

**STAFF REPORTS: Recreation**

The is a mother – son event being planned at this time. The City has received a score of 200 out of a possible 230 for the MRWS Grant.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS/BUSINESS:**

None.

**UNSCHEDULED BUSINESS:**

None.

**The next meeting of the Park and Recreation Board will be January 12, 2017 at 6:30 pm in the City Commission Room.**

Meeting Adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Paula Weipert