

MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
Wednesday, September 5, 2018

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of the August 1, 2018 Minutes
3. Request to place "Forever United" monument in a city park (United Way of Portage County)
4. Request to have tree removed in Bukolt Park (Doug Lynch)
5. Idea of goose culling in 2019 (Deer Management Committee)
6. Director's Report
7. Adjournment

1. Roll Call

Present: Freckmann, Glodosky, Kirsch, Ald. McComb, McDonald, Okonek, Ald. Slowinski, Smith, Sorenson

Excused: Hall, Ald. Oberstadt

Also Present: Director Tom Schrader, Forester Todd Ernster, Attorney Logan Beveridge, Kevin Leahy, Fred Hebblewhite, Doug Lynch, Scott and Darcy Klinkert

2. Approval of the August 1, 2018 Minutes

Motion by Okonek, seconded by Smith, to approve the August 1, 2018 minutes and place them on file.

Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.

3. Request to place "Forever United" monument in a city park (United Way of Portage County)

United Way Representative Fred Hebblewhite addressed the Commissioners regarding the possibility of locating a new donor recognition monument in a city park. They are seeking a location that is visible, public and inviting; and one that would allow for a commemorative design that would be tasteful, attractive and functional without screaming memorial. The "Circle of Caring" site was developed in front of Shopko across from the bus terminal about 10 years ago. Because of the noise and traffic this site is not safe when there is a ceremony for a new donor. The United Way has worked with Jeff Bahling of Rettler Corporation back in 2015 and would like to move forward with Rettler Corporation in honoring the concepts of Jeff Bahling to complete this project in a park setting. We want it to "fit" with the community and be functional for residents.

Commissioner Okonek asked if they are looking for a shade shelter and one possible thought would be at Mead Park along with the Jeff Bahling pavilion which has not had the landscaping done since it was built. With the KASH playground this would be a good location so people could get out of the sun.

President Freckmann stated he has no particular favorites in this but thought the Admiral Grant Park doesn't really have much in the way of an attraction or distinctive feature and there is nothing competing with it or any normal activities that it would interfere with it.

Mr. Hebblewhite stated they welcome opinions of the Park Board because they have been looking for quite some time and have pros and cons for the locations they have been considering and the Park Board is familiar with all of the parks.

Ald. McComb is in favor of the Mead Park location and having it aesthetically tied into the pavilion dedicated to Jeff Bahling.

Commissioner Glodosky stated he would be in favor of the Mead Park as the choice for the monument just so we wouldn't be robbing green space from users of the park.

Commissioner McDonald is in agreement with either Mead Park or Admiral Grant Park as the site for the monument.

Commissioner Kirsch suggested if you're looking for traffic in an area look at the skateboard park area in Bukolt Park as designated on the map provided as site #1.

Motion by Glodosky, seconded by Ald. Slowinski to approve the idea of the United Way of Portage County to place "Forever United" monument in a park.

Ayes all, nays none; motion carried

4. Request to have tree removed in Bukolt Park (Doug Lynch)

Mr. Lynch addressed the Commission stating that there is a 100 year old tree, 87 foot high (white pine), 35 inches in diameter located in the park that threatens his house, vehicles and family. Beyond 42 feet the remaining 45 feet left (the majority of the tree) overhangs his property. It leans 25 degrees off plum, more than 15 is considered dangerous. Recently other adjacent white pines fell down and now it's a field and he wants to know about that.

President Freckmann stated that trees fall down and there are reasons and in this case we don't know which trees fell down, why or when.

Mr. Lynch feels that as a Park Board we could tell him something about the trees that were taken down. He's asking about it and assumes the Park Board should have some knowledge about the trees he's talking about. He's told that the trees were blown down in a storm. He feels it's important to know about the other trees. He read the assessment report from his prestigious arborist to the Commissioners. Mr. Lynch volunteered to take down the tree his own cost.

Commissioner McComb asked to bring the discussion back to the Commission.

Commissioner Glodosky stated that Mr. Lynch made some good points and now the Commission needs to take some time to discuss the matter among themselves. He himself has removed trees from his own yard that he thought were a threat. There are things to think about like being a good neighbor.

President Freckmann state that there are legal points to be considered about procedure and responsibility.

Attorney Beveridge addressed the Commissioners and provided them with a photo that shows a shadow on the roof solar panels caused by the white pine and said the commissioners could draw their own conclusion about the tree blocking the sun for the solar panels. Our City Forester says it doesn't present a hazard and our insurance company has all the information and they are not concerned about the tree remaining to stand so he's recommending denial of this request.

Ald. McComb asked if the worst scenario did come true what would be the City's responsibility for any damage done to Mr. Lynch's property. If something happens we can evaluate it at the time. Based on the recommendations received from the Forester and Insurance Company he hasn't looked further into it. That tree has been there for 100 years and a house has been there for almost all of these years. The previous owner didn't contact the City with concerns about this tree. It hasn't frighten anyone before now so why now.

Commissioner Okonek stated that Forester Ernster is a certified arborist and that's good enough for him and he trusts his judgement.

Ald. Slowinski agreed with Commissioner Okonek that he has confidence in the City Forester and trusts his judgement too.

Motion by Ald. Slowinski, seconded by Sorenson to deny request to remove the leaning tree in Bukolt Park near the Lynch property.

Ayes all, nays none; motion carried.

Commissioner Glodosky stated that Mr. Lynch knew it was a park before he bought the house.

5. Idea of goose culling in 2019 (Deer Management Committee)

Commissioner Okonek stated he's the Chair of the Deer Management Committee and the issue of the geese was brought up to their committee. They have applied for a grant last year and have money to take care of the geese along Pfiffner Park. They used dog silhouettes last year and had limited success. This year added noise making materials. This year the geese didn't fledge until June because of the late snow in April. They never were concentrated in one area because of all of the activity in the park so they were all over the park.

Director Schrader stated he has been in contact with the USDA. USDA would first hold a public hearing meeting and if the community isn't in favor of culling geese it would never get started. The cost could be \$5,000.00. Could cull between 60-70 per year for 2 years in a row and the costs varies. It would be \$8.00 to \$10.00 per bird if taken to a meat processing plant for processing. It's ground up and distributed to kitchens that would accept it. Five to ten percent will be tested for PVB and lead. The young will be taken to a nature center and used for feed. The adults could be used for feed too and there would be no cost to process them but this issue is controversial.

Commissioner Glodosky thanked John for bringing this to the committee and stated he's in favor of something being done about the geese. This is the biggest complaint he hears from people who know he's on the Parks Commission. Reviewed health issues that arise from geese feces and the diseases they carry.

Commissioner McComb stated she is also on the Deer Management Committee and they felt optimistic and hopeful last January during their meeting when they reviewed plans and action for this spring. She's in favor of having the meat processed. We also need to beef up our publicity about not feeding the geese. It only makes it worse.

Commissioner McDonald stated we've been dealing with this goose issue for at least 10 years and she's in favor of the culling at this time. There might be some negative reaction in the community until they hear the issues that Commissioner Glodosky read tonight to the Commissioners.

President Freckmann suggested we need to look into the vegetation management because it's often said that geese congregate in areas where there is no cover for potential predators.

Director Schrader stated that in order for the vegetation to work the vegetation needs to be 30 inches high and the strip needs to be 20-30 feet wide. The Board agreed we don't have any areas that it would work. Ald. McComb would be in favor of trying it even if we don't have the 20-30 foot strips. Commissioner McDonald stated maybe we could try it in Bukolt but not in Pfiffner.

6. Director's report

Director Schrader reported

- The last few weeks of the summer was spent watering trees and sending out tree watering postcards to residents of the previous last two year plantings.
- Check out the rain garden at Mead Park. Have had it 3 years and it's beautiful.
- UWSP urban forestry students will be planting 31 trees along the reconstructed Isadore Street and another 130 trees will be planted throughout the city along streets, in parks, and city parking lots.
- Oak Wilt removal notices are being sent out. It is a bad year for the disease.
- A quote was submitted for crack filling the Goerke Tennis Courts. It was higher than expected.
- The Cultural Common project has started and the plans are here for anyone to view.
- Gus Macker is being held this weekend in the City

7. Adjournment

Motion by Okonek, seconded by McDonald, to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.