

**La Porte Park and Recreation Department
Board Meeting
April 15, 2020**

Due to the COVID-19 virus, the April 15 meeting of the LaPorte Park and Recreation Board was held via zoom.

The meeting was called to order by President Mitch Feikes who led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Also present were Karen Ellison, Nicole Messacar, Drew Mullen, Kyleen Fuller, Mark Schreiber, Pam Carroll, Kyle Cashmer, Brett Binversie, Karyl Feikes, and Roberta Mumaw.

Recognitions

None

Minutes

The minutes from the previous month's meeting were unanimously approved on a motion by Kyleen Fuller, seconded by Karen Ellison.

Bills and Claims

The bills and claims in the amount of \$44,812.32 were unanimously approved on a motion by Karen Ellison, seconded by Drew Mullen.

Public Comments

None

Sub-committee

None

Old Business

Mark Schreiber informed the Board that there has been no real progress on the Kiwanis-Teledyne project. Mark recently spoke with Nick Minich and he has not yet completed the plans to present to Mark and Nicole Messacar. Mark is hopefully to get the plans soon so that the project can proceed. Nicole Messacar stated that although the project is a bit behind schedule, it is just in the 2nd year of the 3-year grant.

New Business

Mark Schreiber requested permission from the Board to proceed with acquiring bids for the renovations of the Bill Reed Tennis courts in Kesling Park. We have received a grant from the Healthcare Foundation of La Porte in the amount of \$165,000 to fund the work. Mark has enlisted help from Planned Environmental Associates to look at this as well as other tennis court projects. Costs are estimated to be at about \$168,977 with a \$16,897 contingency. There are other possible funding options available should the bids come in over budget. The renovations would be for all 6 tennis courts plus the practice court. The courts would be reconstructed with saw cutting, fill and resurfacing. Five of the courts will be for tennis, one court will be exclusively for pickle ball, with an additional court stripped but not exclusive for pickle ball. All existing fencing will remain. The recommendation to put the Bill Reed Tennis court renovations out to bid was approved unanimously on a motion by Nicole Messacar, seconded by Drew Mullen.

Mark Schreiber updated the Board on the batting cage project at Kesling Park. With the La Porte Building Trades not able to participate in the project, Mark has investigated other options for the facility. Another option for a structure would be a pulped fabric facility. This project will be funded through a grant received from the Healthcare Foundation of La Porte. Mark hopes to have more information to the Board at the May or June meeting.

Due to Beechwood Golf Course being closed on an executive order from Mayor Tom Dermody from April 4 through May 1 due to COVID 19, Mark Schreiber is requesting approval from the Board to offer an option of a full refund to anyone that purchased a season pass, or a 25% refund to those who have purchased season passes but would like

to keep their pass active. Also, once the course is re-opened, Mark would like to be able to offer a season pass at a 25% discount. A motion to approve the recommendations to discount Beechwood season passes was made by Nicole Messacar, seconded by Drew Mullen. The motion passed unanimously.

Mark Schreiber requested permission from the Board to waive the fees associated with Concessionaires for the upcoming Foodie Tuesdays. The request was unanimously approved on a motion made by Karen Ellison, seconded by Drew Mullen.

Mark Schreiber wanted to let the Board know that during the stay at home order, the parks are still open, with some exceptions. Families can be out in the Parks, they can walk, bike and exercise. However, the play structures (Including Fort La Play Porte), Thrill & Spills Skate Park, the Healthcare Fitness Court are all closed. Trails, basketball and tennis courts, ball diamonds as well as other amenities where groups can gather are all open, however we asked that its limited to no groups, or only members of the same household. The Park Office, Cummings Lodge, Civic Auditorium, and Beechwood Golf Course are all closed, all recreation classes are currently cancelled through April 30. At this point we are remaining optimistic as to having some type of season. The decision will be made when the time is right, we do not want to decide to early. All park restrooms will remain closed until it is safe to open them. When the stay at home order was issued there were 2 crews working on Mondays and Fridays to pick up trash only. As of last week, the Mayor requested to increase that. Currently we are using 2 6-man crews (Including the Civic Auditorium staff and an employee from code enforcement) who alternate days. They will be picking up trash, liter and will get into mowing within the next week. Shifts are staggered, lunch is not to be taken in the breakroom, and each person is in a separate vehicle, and trucks will be cleaned properly. Mitch Felkes asked if employees are being paid during this. Mark Schreiber stated that yes, all full time and part time employees are being paid. Kyleen Fuller inquired on the park vandalism. Mark stated that vandalism continues to be an issue lately with spray painting being done at Allesssee Park and the Stone Lake Beach house was heavily vandalized with sidewalk chalk. So much so that the Fire Department was called out to clean up the area. There is also a lot of out of state traffic throughout the Parks.

Board Member/Department Comments

Nicole Messacar stated that she has had numerous call and emails regarding the amount of dog waste around Stone Lake. Are there any suggestions on solutions? Mark Schreiber stated this is an ongoing problem at all locations. Mark stated that there will be dog waste stations placed in this area when the Stone Lake shoreline improvements are complete. This all comes down to personal responsibility. Mark stated that he will not ask the maintenance staff to pick up dog waste. Another issue that Mark stated continues is home trash in the Park receptacles. This makes it particularly difficult when we are working with smaller crews. It's very difficult when a trash cans fill up in one-day with bags of home trash being dumped in them. Another problem is lawn waste being dumped in the Parks. This has become a problem since the county recycle site has been closed. The staff is staying on top of this as best they can.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Karen Ellison, seconded by Drew Mullen.

Mitch Felkes, President



Roberta Mumaw, Secretary

Approved: 5-20-20