

**La Porte Park and Recreation Department  
Board Meeting  
May 20, 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, Jake Huelat, Mark Schreiber, Kyle Cashmer, Brett Binversie, Karyl Feikes, and Roberta Mumaw.

**Recognitions**

The La Porte Park and Recreation received the 2019 NSA/BPA outstanding park award. Mark Schreiber commended Pam Carroll and her recreation staff as well as the maintenance and office staff for all that they do in helping us to be able to successfully run tournaments and leagues.

**Minutes**

The previous months minutes were unanimously approved on a motion by Nicole Messacar, seconded by Karen Ellison.

**Bills and Claims**

The bills and claims in the amount of \$48,993.34 were unanimously approved on a motion by Karen Ellison, seconded by Jake Huelat.

**Public Comment**

None

**Sub-Committee Reports**

None

**Old Business**

Nicole Messacar updated the Board on the Kiwanis/Teledyne improvement plan, stating she has been working with Nick Minich to get the permit submitted to Army Corp of Engineers. He does have a proposal prepared that is very basic and the same design that has been discussed. He is currently waiting on feedback from the contractor regarding the plan. The plan should be submitted to Army Corp within the next few days, with plans to begin the work within the month. Nicole Messacar stated this is a 3-year grant which we are currently in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. There will be a cost share program available to those owning land along the shoreline who are wanting to make shoreline improvements, such as buffers or native plants or anything to naturalize the area.

Mark Schreiber informed the Board that with Governor Holcomb moving the date for Phase 3 up to May 22 we are currently staying within the guidelines and following the restrictions that have been put forth. Currently playgrounds are still closed as sanitation is an issue. It has been challenging to keep individuals off the play equipment. The park restrooms will be open beginning Saturday, with some discussions still being held regarding portable restrooms. Most parks are placing port a pots and opening pit toilets or similar types of restrooms. Drinking fountains will remain off, basketball courts will be opened with the rims being reinstalled, the fitness court as well as the skate park will also open back up. Cummings Lodge and shelters will open back up for rentals for gatherings of up to 100 people. Youth sports practices will begin the week of May 26, with concession stands remaining closed for the season. Beechwood will still be encouraging 1 person per cart and the club house will be open at 50% capacity. We will hold off until June 14 to decide about the summer playground program. The Civic Auditorium will be hosting events for 250 people or less beginning June 14, with Brett Binversie working on additional social distancing measures for those events. Lifeguards at Stone Lake Beach will not start until July 4, and the City Band as well as Arts in the Park will begin their season July 8. Mitch Feikes asked if the Fox Park concession stand will be open this year. Mark Schreiber stated that the opening of the Fox Park concessions would be a discussion to have with Arts in the Park. If the concession stand is finished and ready to be opened when their season begins on July 8 we work with them to make sure they understand all the necessary rules and procedures needed to open. Kyleen Fuller asked if there was a time estimate as to when drinking fountains and water bottle filling stations would be turned on. Mark Schreiber stated that the water bottle filling stations still need to be

installed. Once they are installed, Mark will have to find out if they can be turned on even though the drinking fountains are still too much of a contagion to be turned on.

### **New Business**

Mark Schreiber requested permission from the Board to seek bids for the kayak launch on Stone Lake. This will be done through a grant funded through the La Porte Healthcare Foundation. Each member has received a general layout and cost estimate of the project. In addition to the launch there would also be 4 kayak lockers installed to begin with, with hopes to add more in the future. A motion was made by Karen Ellison, seconded by Kyleen Fuller to allow Mark Schreiber to solicit bids for the kayak launch at Stone Lake. Nicole Messacar questioned what the kayak rental line item meant in the quote that was sent. Mark Schreiber stated that was a credit card swipe system that would allow rental of prestocked kayaks, vending machine style. The cost is approximately \$20,000 plus the cost of the kayaks. This may be something to add on in the future. The grant total was \$112,180, plus there has been additional memorial gift donations to go towards this project. Nicole Messacar asked if this grant could be used as a match to acquire another federal or state grant. Mark Schreiber stated that this grant must be used by the end of this year and felt there would not be time to secure an additional grant. Mitch Feikes stated this is a great project and is really needed for the community, along with the tennis courts at Allessee Park, but with getting grants is it possible to get additional monies for future maintenance of these projects? Mark Schreiber stated that the Park Foundation and the Healthcare Foundation have agreed that anytime an infrastructure project is completed, the Healthcare Foundation will fund an additional 10% per project that will be held by the Park Foundation for maintenance. There is currently approximately \$100,000 that will go to the Park Foundation for maintenance projects for the Kayak launch and Stone Lake Shoreline Improvement project. Some of the maintenance funds have been; used to purchase a bristle brush to sweep the trails, as well as a snow box to clear the trails. These will attach to a skid steer that was purchased with Capital monies in 2019. The motion to allow bids for the kayak launch was unanimously approved.

Mark Schreiber requested permission from the Board to bid all 3 tennis court projects at the same time. The improvements to be done at the Kesling Courts was approved at the April meeting. After reaching out to contractors that are more specific to tennis courts, the general reaction is that if all projects are done at once, the costs could potentially be better. Mark has spoken with the Park Foundation and they have agreed to fund an additional \$48,000 which closes the funding gap to do the Kesling Courts, new construction at Allessee, and the renovation of the Rumely Court. Mark has also spoken with the tennis association for possible funding, as well as having other gifts to benefit youth programming these will potentially close the gap. A motion to approve the request was made by Kyleen Fuller, seconded by Drew Mullen. Motion passed unanimously.

Mark Schreiber asked that the Board adopt our internal policy for severe weather. We currently have 6 lightning detectors that were purchased through a grant from the LaPorte Healthcare Foundation. The detectors are located at Beechwood Golf Course, Dennis F. Smith Amphitheater, the Skate Park, Stone Lake Beachhouse, Lions Field, and Bill Reed Tennis complex. We would like to have a policy in place for all park employees, as well as volunteers to understand. This would also be put out to the public so they would understand what to do when the sirens go off. Mark Schreiber asked the Board to adopt the formal policy. A motion was made by Drew Mullen to accept the policy, seconded by Nicole Messacar. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Board Member/Department Comments**

Mark Schreiber thanked his staff for dealing with the difficulties and additional work that has been created due to COVID-19.

Mitch Feikes inquired about a privacy fence behind the Park Department. With the row of houses being recently torn down, it leaves that back our facility visible to the public. Once new development is complete there will be a strip mall on that property. Mark Schreiber stated fencing may need to be added for security, and possible greenery as well.

Kyleen Fuller stated that the staff has done a great job with the social distancing procedures in place for the youth sports programs and appreciates that the season will be played.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Kyleen Fuller, seconded by Nicole Messacar.