

CITY OF ROCK ISLAND  
PARK BOARD MEETING  
RIFAC, Room 5  
Rock Island IL 61201

2/20/24– Minutes

1. Call to Order

President Fred Dasso called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

2. Attendance

Members Present: Fred Dasso, Mike Foley, Paul Hansen, John McEvoy

Members Absent: Venessa Taylor, Bill Anderson

Staff Present: John Gripp, Executive Director; Kimberly Kruse, Parks Administrative Office Manager

Staff Absent: Todd Winter, Assistant Director

Audience: none

3. December Park Board Minutes

Mr. Hansen motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Foley seconded. All voted yes.

4. Correspondence

We have a thank you from Every Child. Their mission is a child abuse and another thank you from Jordan Catholic school. They had their Casino Royale Gala.

5. Monthly Report from Finance Department as of December

We are still waiting for the last amount recorded to see towards park maintenance. Golf is up 9% compared to this time last year. Memberships up 13%. Programs are up 15%, concessions 17%, also you'll see that our wage expenses are 11% or 288,000 and this is solely due to minimum wage increase. Supplies and services throughout 22% Just 540,000. It's a little misleading because a lot of grant expenses are in that as well. So by the while they are up, it's not a bad drastic due to inflation. You can see in the areas that we can control that we're excelling but not at the rate of keeping up with minimum wage. John thanked Fred Dasso and John McEvoy for support and speaking at the last council meeting. It has an impact and created discussions with the city manager and some of the park board members.

6. Approval of the Bills for the Month of January for \$289,866.09

Mr. Dasso: Aye Mr. Foley: Aye Mr. McEvoy: Aye Ms. Taylor: Abs Mr. Hansen: Aye Mr. Anderson: Abs

## 7. Director's Report and other reports

We were able to attend the IPRA conference for the first time at all since pandemic. There are several good sessions and networking to talk to folks while getting our CEUs that we need for our certifications. Many of us hold the Professional Park and Recreation Association Certification which may not sound like a lot but you're considered a professional in your field if you maintain this certification.

Met with the construction manager, Jeff Laxton, and talked over the RFP out for design for the Saukie Clubhouse. That is going to be out until 28th of this month and the attack is to use that side working with inspections make sure everything is per code and put that for bid to get a general contractor. We're not going to go construction manager architect oversight process from start to finish so we can put as much money as we can into the actual project. Now that Jeff Laxton is on the staff with the city, this will provide that construction oversight which is phenomenal.

I was able to have lunch with Alderman Parker just to catch up. Discussed The District project and sounds like they opened up it and they're going to be reviewing those later this week. We have to understand or come up with a plan for what our role will be in the downtown because Schwiebert Park is downtown and there's been a lot of separation in the past and want to partner so that events do not seem competing. This communication will assist to ensure coordination for bookings, street closures and inclusion of all areas.

Met with the Eagle Scouts to talk about structures at Saukie, Highland and parks to take on as projects that need attention. It's great working with the Scouts as a partnership because they go through their program twelve years to get to this point and it is a big achievement.

Met with QC Passport that celebrate historical places within the Quad Cities. They pay for very nice signage that they put up at those locations, one of them being at Longview Park. Unfortunately, it was taken off the post and taken repeatedly so working to have a more reinforced sign that is harder to take.

Met with Augustana College, they had started a master plan for Longview Park and gathered information around the park and neighborhood. They have started up a class that incorporates the park and to determine projects to prioritize and what will help best the community and what is needed.

Attended the state of the city address at Bally's Casino. It about a lot of positive things going on, a lot of parks mentions and successes along with grants awarded. It was very positive in general for employees.

ARPA projects are coming along nicely however there were some supply chain issues for the RIFAC. Members really want to use the locker room but hoping it will be open in the next couple of weeks, but still under renovation. There is also masonry work on the

outside with the effervescence being cleaned off and inspection of the outside and addressed.

March 1st, Mel McKay will be fully completed and ready for play.

Assistant Director report, January brought the Saukie Clubhouse Grant. Also, there were two rentals at Highland Springs Clubhouse. It is getting popular and can be rented through the front office.

There was a winter golf tournament that raised funds for Christian Care.

The new golf software, Fore UP is underway. It will give the ability to sign up for online tee times, yield management to better see trends and allow for dynamic pricing and promotions during slow times.

Updated Action Steps to work more with the Library and MLK Center to host some community events.

Met with managers to discuss concessions needs for the year. At the beginning of every season, prices and products are discussed to keep the best profit margins while providing in demand items.

Secured several sponsorships so far this year that we even secure sponsorship for Monday and Thursday golf leagues out at Highland for the first time ever. There's an insurance guy that is motivated to get their name out there. Also met with Bally's to talk about golf needs. They are having a lot of people that come into town and play golf especially from Chicago because it's so cheaper. So working with them for a partnership of having a shuttle service between Highland Springs and the Casino. They are going to purchase some clothes and have already booked two or three different large groups for the 2024 season. There will be a few sets of clubs available for rental as well.

For RIFAC, preschool continues to do very well. Michelle is really knocking it out of the park. They've incorporated learning to swim programming in the school. This is so parents don't have to take their kids home and then come back. RIFAC memberships and programming numbers are up. January was a little bit slow as far as memberships but that due to extreme colder and snow.

We're in the middle of starting to hire staff or Whitewater Junction. We are at 90% retention of hire backs. Kudos to Nikki and the Whitewater Junction team because that speaks volume, especially part-time seasonal to come back and saves time on new hire training.

Golf maintenance, January slow down on the outside projects except for the time with the heavy snow except for a lot pine tree cleanup but they got out there and repaired what they could. They've also did a lot of inside work as far as painting the ball washers, tee markers and get them all ready back out on the courses. Employment applications are coming in and going to start reviewing those and interviewing next week and get things lined up. Reels have been taken in for grinding. Ours is down and it will cost substantial money to replace. Oakwood is more than happy to take our reels and sharpen and it is a significantly less cost over time.

Recreation reports, Summer programming is hot and heavy and creeping up quickly. Working to get golf courses open as soon as possible. Grant season is underway and applying to several foundations and trusts. Asking Woodward Trust for \$50,000.

Hosted our winter basketball league jamboree with 237 participants. It's parents, coaches and kids and what Pete has done which is genius is the jamboree reaches everybody. It's meeting your coach, getting uniforms and figuring out when practice times and places are along with any questions. The staff is trained well and it's controlled chaos but everyone walks away happy and in a good place to start the season and it elevates the participant experience.

Bus trips have been announced for Cardinals/Cubs trip for Chicago and St. Louis.

A lot of Staff training started for those returning so CPR and first aid has started. Golf Course staff had a concern brought up AED usage and staff members ability to train on that. Yes, it walks you through it but it's good to have experience with the test case first. I'm pretty much open it up and talked you through will not deliver a shot unless necessary.

Park field reports David's creating a basic maintenance schedule complex now that we will in town. It's going to be maintained as a type 4 park. John has been in touch at CED to have it listed through the Chamber of the Quad Cities as one of the premier locations as an industrial site. There are a lot of requests to relocate for industrial. We are working on decommission and repurpose everything we can such as irrigation, coolers, bleachers and so on. David is completed the interior chain at Douglas Park. An official ribbon cutting will be planned and big everyone to have everyone down there. John would like to discuss naming of the fields. Daryl Reynolds donated six figures to make the large ball field happen. Jerry Huiscomp and the multiuse field, Allen Campbell for his contributions to community sports.

## 8. New Business

### Special Event Application: Chalk Art Fest

This event brings in over 7,000 people in two days now Schwiebert Park on June 22nd and is free to the public. It will have amplified sound. They are to contract the pressure washing company to have the sidewalks cleaned within 30 days after the event. Staff recommends approval. Mr. McEvoy motioned, Mr. Foley seconded. All said yes.

### Special Event Application: Classic Bash Car & Bike Cruise In

The Classic Bash is a new event set to be at Sunset Park which is really well for car events. Expecting about 100 participants. They will have police officers, parking attendants, and security to prevent burnouts and will be responsible for any damage. Staff recommends approval. Mr. Foley motioned, Mr. McEvoy seconded. All said yes.

## Saukie Clubhouse RFP

With Jeff Laxton being our team now as far as construction management and his resource with the inspections department meaning we don't have to contract with an architect for the application for this grant which is a big help. We knew what we wanted to have and create account box for us to play in our minds and after speaking with Jeff, we were more looking for draftsman services versus architectural services and what that means is that we would work with the draft school to develop the concept that's going to go out to bid or general contractor. There isn't a whole lot of space for that lot so it will be a rectangular type of building. Also looking at putting in a golf simulator for the winter months and to be able to host events indoors while also keeping some concessions and beverage offerings.

## Adopt a Park Update

We are going to be ending the Adopt a Park program. Many do not return communication and now that there are revived Friends groups that have volunteers willing to take on projects and fundraise, it allows for a more community endeavor. There is a database of volunteers to call up on for park cleanups and minor projects. The adopters will be commemorated with a brick or something to acknowledge their efforts.

## Water Park Update

Sad to say we will not get the OSLAD grant for the amenity for Whitewater Junction but that's ok. They awarded smaller amounts of \$600,000 to several groups rather than a few large projects. An application will be submitted next year.

Alcohol license has been submitted for approval for Whitewater Junction for the adult swims. Looking to also have it on some days where alcohol sales would be allowed during the day. This will allow us a separation from other waterparks and elevate our experiences. Staff will receive their HAPS certification so that they are ready to serve. It is something that happens and this allows for us to better monitor and provide spaces rather than it being snuck in and still imbibed. This also provides additional rental opportunities and event nights.

Bettendorf will not be opening their water park this season. Moline will be open.

## 9. Other Business

None

## 10. Items Not on the Agenda

Foundation did mention something about Stonehouse. There's a couple of different funding options out there. This project is in the early stage but we were notified by CED that they were contacted by state representatives that they might have few extra 100,000 plus dollars to put towards projects. So quickly put together one page and about the Stonehouse requirements of budget and set it right away. It was mentioned

for historical value and to also renovate it so that it could be potentially rented as an Airbnb or programming again. It used to have Little House on the Prairie programming years ago. It would be nice to have it restored with a little kitchen and to be safe and usable again.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Hansen. Mr. Foley. All voted yes.

The meeting adjourned at 6:29 pm.

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Kimberly B Kruse,  
Parks & Recreation  
Admin Office Manager