

Porter Park Board

January 17, 2006

Call to order: 7:00 pm

Roll Call: Zathoe Sexton, Patty Raffin, Rondi Wightman, Sherrill Newman, Park Superintendent Jim Miller, Park Administrator Stephanie Miller

Election of Officers: Rondi Wightman nominated Zathoe Sexton as Park Board President. A second was made by Sherrill Newman. All were in favor. Sherrill Newman nominated Patty Raffin as Vice President. A second was made by Rondi Wightman. All were in favor. Patty Raffin nominated Rondi Wightman as Secretary. A second was made by Sherrill Newman. All were in favor.

Minutes: A motion to approve December 20, 2005 minutes was made by Patty Raffin and second by Sherrill Newman. All were in favor.

Public Input: Mr. Larry Mudd representing Saint Patrick's Church, Chesterton, Indiana asked the Park Board if he could hold his yearly fundraiser at the Community Center. He proposed a Poker Night with food and coolers of beer as a fund raiser to benefit Saint Patrick's School. He asked for the night of Friday, April 21, 2006 (all three rooms) at a reduced rate. The Park board talked about the necessity of a Security Guard and the new no smoking policy in the Community Center. Mr. Mudd agreed to cooperate with both of these issues. Sheryl Newman made a motion to allow Mr. Mudd and his group to use the Community Center under these conditions at the old reduced rate of \$150.00. A second was made by Rondi Wightman. All were in favor. Next month the Park Board will review its rates and decide on a new rate and plan for all not for profit organizations.

Town Councilman Bill Sexton welcomed the three new members of the Park Board.

Claims: A motion to approve the claims was made by Patty Raffin and second by Sherrill Newman. All were in favor.

Superintendent's Report: Jim Miller gave hand outs to the Park Board which included the budget, 5-year plan, Cedit, TOP Employee Handbook, Parades and Assemblies, and Meetings. Bill Sexton explained to the new Park Board members how the budget process works. Paul Childress (the new Park Board liaison to the Town Council) elaborated.

24 Community Center chairs were repaired that were waiting for parts. All the chairs were checked for damage and cleanliness. 24 more chairs were removed that need seats and/or backs. I would like approval to purchase 25 seats, 6 backs, and screws to make those repairs. Cost estimated to be \$260.00. A motion to approve the purchase of chair parts at \$260.00 was made by Rondi Wightman. A second was made by Sherrill Newman. All were in favor.

All the Christmas decorations have been removed and stored.

Routine building and park property checks have been made.

Park grounds were cleaned and the sticks picked up.

I would like approval to remove a dying tree in Hawthorne Park. It is located on the corner of Porter Ave. and Rankin. A motion to remove the tree was made by Sherrill Newman. A second was made by Rondi Wightman. All were in favor. I will notify the Public Works Department that the Park Board approved the removal of this tree and ask them if they would remove it.

I attended an Urban Tree Care Workshop in Valparaiso. It was very informative. If the Town of Porter wants to become a Tree City, they have to comply with certain criteria. Bill Sexton suggested that Jim bring this up at the next Town Council Meeting.

A weld broke on the "Ten Tire" piece of playground equipment at Hawthorne Park. It was very awkward and difficult to fix, but I repaired it.

The Security Lights for the Pole Barn and Arts and Crafts Building are being repaired. The ignitor was bad in both fixtures.

The water fountain near the baseball fields at Hawthorne Park has been vandalized.

The Army Corps of Engineers (Detroit) has responded to the Dune Meadows Park issue. They said that we will have to submit an application expressing our intent. I will do that and the Army Corps of Engineers will either approve or deny.

Current electric checked out the Gazebo for problems. They found that 1 of 2 power supplies going into the Gazebo wasn't working. Next we went to the meter to check that power supply. The same problem existed there, so I called Nipsco. They came out within a few hours and restored power. The Dome light works which is controlled by the photo eye. However I'm still unable to reset the photo side of the outlets. I'll do some checking before we call an electrician. A minor problem was corrected in the Memorial and those lights are now working.

While I was working on the Ten Tire playground equipment, I noticed a large branch lying on a wire going to the basketball utility pole. I called Nipsco to report the problem. They said they would come out and take care of it.

I spoke with Regional Industries about why we didn't have a dumpster next to the Hawthorne Park Community Center yet. They were under the impression that the Park was just a pick up for a few bags of garbage. I explained to Regional Industries that we need an eight yard dumpster and they said that it would be taken care of it.

Park Admin: Stephanie Miller explained the hand outs she gave the Park Board which included the minutes of the last meeting, a financial report, an up to date Community Center rental form, a list of area banquet centers and halls for price comparisons, and a list of area shelters for price comparisons.

Old Business: Joan Nibb representing the Food Pantry told the Park Board she asked Jim Miller if she could add another refrigerator downstairs for their use in Food Pantry. She said that the Food Pantry helped 162 families for the Christmas Holidays and could use some more refrigerator space. Jim suggested replacing a unit instead of bringing in another one. Food Pantry currently has ten units. He told the Park Board that it costs approximately \$80 a month for the electricity to run these units. In addition the Food Pantry uses electricity for lights and gas for heat. For this the Food Pantry pays the Park Department \$100.00 a month. He is also concerned about overloading the circuits downstairs. He said the whole Food Pantry area needs better organization. Rondi

Wightman said that she will look into possibly getting a large commercial unit that is more efficient to replace the small refrigerator that is there. The Park Board decided to table this decision and work on improving the Food Pantry area. The Park Board, Jim Miller, Stephanie Miller, Bill Sexton, and Park Liaison Paul Childress went downstairs to look at the Food Pantry area after the meeting.

The Park Board briefly discussed an increase to the rent of the Community Center. Since this is primarily a new Park Board, it was decided to table the decision until the next Park Board meeting in February of 2006.

Stephanie Miller brought the Park Board up to date on several policies that are in place including the Friday night discount.

The Park Board discussed the need for a new Fire Security System for the Community Center. The cost for the new Martin Fire System would cost \$1,375.00 to install and \$25.00 a month as a monitoring fee. Sherrill Newman made a motion to approve the installation of the new system by Martin. A second was made by Rondi Wightman. All were in favor.

The Park Board meeting was turning out to be very long so it was decided to table two subjects until the next meeting. These were: Updating the wish list, and reviewing the five year plan.

The Park Board discussed the savings and efficiency of installing two "Set Back Thermostats" in the Community Center. Many times the renters forget to turn the heat down or air conditioner off after their function. By installing this unit it would save energy and money. Sherrill Newman made a motion to allow Jim Miller to install two Set Back Thermostats at a cost not to exceed \$199.00. A second was made by Patty Raffin. All were in favor.

New Business: The Park Board discussed how they could honor the three retired Park Board Members. It was decided to plant three new trees in Hawthorne Park with bronze plaques beneath them. One tree will be planted for each of the retired Park Board members, Bud Tilden, Juan Magana, and Nancy Whisler. Sherrill Newman told the Park Board she could purchase the trees at a good discount. A motion was made by Sherrill Newman to purchase the trees and plant them in the spring. A second was made by Rondi Wightman. All were in favor. It was decided to ask the newspaper to come out and take a picture after the plantings are complete. Also a picture of the new front porch could be included since the landscaping around the new structure would then be complete.

Meeting Adjourned: A motion to adjourn the Park Board Meeting at 9:20pm was made by Sherrill Newman. A second was made by Patty Raffin. The next Park Board Meeting will be on Tuesday, February 21, 2006 at 7:00pm at the Hawthorne Park Community Center.

President

Vice President

Secretary

Member

Minutes taken and report prepared by: Park Administrator – Stephanie Miller