

**Minutes of the Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting
Held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 36080 Chester Road,
at 7:00 P.M. on Thursday, January 14, 2016**

The Chairman, Tom Mitchell, called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL:

Members in attendance were: John Weigman, School Board Representative; Mary Berges, Council Representative; Cady Cianciolo; Jim Schmitz; Else Rolland; Lee Belardo

GUESTS:

Diane Corrao, Parks and Recreation Director

NOVEMBER 12, 2015 MINUTES:

A motion was made by Mrs. Rolland and seconded by Mr. Weigman to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2015 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission and the discussion was:

Mr. Schmitz stated that he did not receive the minutes of the November meeting and asked if they were emailed. The answer was yes.

The vote was unanimous in favor of approval of the November 12, 2015 minutes and Mr. Mitchell declared the motion passed.

Mr. Mitchell stated that they had been unsure if there would be a December meeting and as there was not. He said their December schedule called for a pool update and asked Ms. Corrao if she had any information with her or if she preferred to give that report in February.

Ms. Corrao said she did not bring information with her, but the opening went well and they are now in the process of Season Pass renewals. Those who purchased passes in 2015 are receiving 2016 passes at a 50% discount. Ms. Cianciolo asked if there is a deadline for renewals and Ms. Corrao replied that it is July 1st. She said there is an added incentive; if one parent and their children purchased passes last year, the 50% discount will also apply to the second parent. Mr. Mitchell asked if that would continue going forward and Ms. Corrao said that is only available this year; they do, however, offer early bird discounts until opening day.

Mr. Mitchell said they have a discussion regarding dog parks slated for February and he would add a discussion regarding the pool.

BIKE PATH FOLLOW UP:

Mr. Mitchell asked Ms. Corrao if there was any news regarding using utility right-of-ways or if she had any recommendations. Ms. Corrao said the electric company is willing to give the City easements on their easements, but Avon would have to gain approval from the actual property owners too. She said that from Detroit Road up to SR 611, there are four or five different property owners. She was going to

meet with Mayor Jensen and Ms. Fechter, the Planning & Economic Development Coordinator, to discuss the initial step. Ms. Corrao might be sending the property owners a letter explaining what the City would like to do. Mr. Mitchell asked about the location of the property owners and Ms. Corrao said the biggest one would be Stonebridge Homeowner's Association.

Ms. Corrao added that the Lorain County MetroParks is willing to work with the City. They would be more interested in connecting properties than in the areas where the easements would be located. She gave the example of the possibility of getting property where the Creekside development was going to be, connecting Schwartz Road Park to the Miller Nature Preserve.

Mr. Mitchell met with the Northeast Ohio Area Wide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) on a separate topic. He had their 2015 Annual Report and read information about a city bike trail connecting a park on SR 3 in Medina, for which NOACA provided \$833,000 in support. He said it is really federal funding, but rather than having to apply to the federal government, it is NOACA you apply to for these funds. He does not know how to go about securing these funds, but will be meeting with some department heads, one of which may be the head of the group dedicated to pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

Mr. Weigman suggested they contact the City of Medina to find out how they got the NOACA funds for that trail. Mr. Mitchell said he could ask who the project manager was when he next meets with the agency. Much of what they do is engineering for projects and they also do some pedestrian/street-scape type of beautification projects. Perhaps that would be something to think about when talking to some of the Homeowners' Associations. The projects NOACA did in 2013 added up to millions of dollars. Mr. Weigman asked about the counties the agency covers and Mr. Mitchell replied, Ashtabula, Lake, Geauga, Portage, Summit, Cuyahoga, Lorain and Medina counties. Ms. Berges said she heard Ryan Cummins, the City Engineer, talk about funding from NOACA and Mr. Mitchell said he felt engineers in all cities would be familiar with their funding. Mr. Schmitz suggested someone from NOACA be invited to one of their Parks and Recreation Commission meetings.

Mr. Mitchell said they actually have a bicycle and pedestrian council, which is made up of local government officials; they are not NOACA employees. They serve all of the NOACA counties. Ms. Corrao said she does not think Cleveland NOACA comes to Lorain County.

Mr. Mitchell said he did not realize that Lee Belardo, who had been present during the meeting, had been appointed as a new member of the Parks and Recreation Commission. Mr. Belardo had attended meetings in the past and Mr. Mitchell thought he was visiting. Ms. Corrao noticed that he was not called during roll call and had informed Mr. Mitchell of Mr. Belardo's appointment.

Regarding the bike trails, next steps are that Ms. Corrao will be talking to the Mayor about the easements and to Mr. Cummins about NOACA.

COMMUNITY VOICE

Mr. Mitchell checked the City's website earlier this day and there was nothing new to report regarding their commission. He said that Ms. Berges has the highest community involvement rating on the site and that communication is relatively quiet right now, but it is always good to see responses from officials.

REPORTS:

COUNCIL

Ms. Berges reported that Mayor Jensen appointed Mr. Belardo to the Parks and Recreation Commission, stating that he had done a great job as a Council member and that he would make good contributions to this body.

Ms. Berges also reported that Council approved the season pass membership fees for the pool for the 2016. They are still working on the daily rates, but wanted to get the season pass rates set before the holidays to make them available for people to purchase as Christmas gifts. Mr. Belardo asked if it was correct that a daily pass to the pool could not be purchased and Ms. Corrao said yes. Mr. Belardo asked if there could be a discussion permitting anyone who works in the City to use the pool with a daily pass, rather than a full season pass. Ms. Corrao said when the pool is open, if you live in Avon, you can purchase a daily pass and you can bring a guest from anywhere. If you work in the City of Avon, but do not reside here, you must buy a summer membership to use the pool. Mr. Belardo said he thought that it had to do with verifying employment within the City. Ms. Corrao said that would be very difficult. Mr. Belardo wondered about a level between a daily pass and a season pass, like a "ten pack." Ms. Corrao said that may be something to discuss and bring to Council. Mr. Belardo said there is a balance between having too many people in the pool at some point and getting enough people in the pool to make a profit, or break even. Ms. Corrao said there is a lot to think about regarding who, how many, family members, guests, etc. Mr. Belardo said it is something he would like to explore.

Ms. Berges continued, stating that Council also approved the transfer of the lease agreement for Lake Erie Baseball, LLC. This is for the Crushers, whose ownership is being taken over by Blue Dog Baseball, LLC. Council approved the transfer of the agreement without changes and the new owner needs to get approval from the Frontier League.

Ms. Berges final item was that she had been reappointed to the Parks and Recreation Commission as Council's representative for the remainder of her term.

PARKS:

Ms. Corrao said she is also excited about the new owner of the Crushers. He will be bringing some new programs this year, but ultimately he is interested in having events scheduled in the stadium when the Crushers are not playing. Mr. Weigman asked where he is located and Ms. Corrao said he is a Westlake resident and is from Cincinnati.

SCHOOL BOARD:

Mr. Weigman reported that at the Board Meeting held on Tuesday, January 12th, he became their representative to this commission for another year. The School Board meetings are lightly attended. Erich Frombach, the Athletic Director, attended this January meeting to give a report. They usually have someone there to give a presentation / report, or students come in to display something or to speak.

Mr. Frombach was happy that the Middle School position is not being cut; they are cutting programs, but they still have a lot of sports offerings. There is lots of opportunity for seventh and eighth grade kids to stay involved in sports. They have been random drug testing in the High School since the fall and

parents can opt their kids in. They are planning on doing this in the Middle School as well. The Board is trying to get the kids at the age when they are tempted to try drugs. This is not to catch kids who have been using drugs as much as to give them an “out.” They can say they do not want to try something because they are drug testing at school. He said they are pleased with the results so far and there has been parental cooperation. Mr. Weigman said only kids in in anything extra-curricular are in the pool of about 1,000 and it breaks down to about one in twelve.

Mr. Schmitz said that he attended a program at the Avon Police Station where an Avon freshman was his “instructor.” He said the program was well attended and it was Avon students doing the teaching. A teacher was also present in case the student-instructors needed help.

Mr. Weigman suggested that if anyone gets a chance to attend any of the school music events, they take advantage of that. In a couple of weeks they will have Band Ala Mode on a Saturday.

Mr. Belardo asked if the school would be interested in a community theater to get more programs in the high school auditorium. Mr. Weigman said that would be a question for Mr. Laub and he would be happy to talk to him about it.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Continued Bike Path Discussion
2. February pool update
3. February re-visit the prospect of a Dog Park... the focus should be on whether or not to have one. Ms. Corrao said location should be part of that discussion. Is there a good location for one? She said it cannot be around homes/residential; it is very loud. Mr. Mitchell asked members to gather information, pros and cons, from other communities and acquaintances, i.e.: would you use it, why would you not want one, etc.
4. Contact person interested in the Halloween event
5. March re-visit of the upcoming survey/when to have it

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS:

Mrs. Rolland said she was appointed by Mayor Jensen for another five years as a commission member.

Mr. Mitchell reiterated his welcome to Mr. Belardo as a member of the commission. He reported that Avon High School baseball workouts have begun. They are using the new Middle School gymnasium, which is a wonderful asset. He will send members Avon Softball and Avon Baseball joint fundraising campaign information. They are trying to get electronic scoreboards installed at the High School softball field and at the Avon Early Learning Center baseball field.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by Mr. Schmitz and seconded by Ms. Cianciolo to adjourn the January 14, 2016 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Mr. Mitchell declared the motion passed.