

December 11, 2021 Swansea Park Board Meeting Minutes

Thompson Civic Center (a.k.a. Swansea's Cozy Winter Wonderland), Melvin Price Park

Members attending: Rose Conner Barb Kimutis Mike Koeneman Matt Lynch
David McGhee Jonas Wilson

Village Liaison: Marilyn Neumeayer Guests: Mike Buehlhorn (arrived at 7:17)

President Mike opened the meeting at 7:00 am with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes: Motion was made by David, with second by Barb to approve the minutes from the November Park Board Meeting. All present voted in favor of approving the minutes.

Play Equipment at Mel Price Park: Mike K. said there was really nothing new to report on this topic, but he requested to have it left on the agenda to remember to ask for the grant money at the appropriate time. There was a question of whether the grant money would pay for repairs or replacement, and it was stated that the current equipment would remain, but additions would be made to what is existing. The question of the rubberized coating which seems to be wearing off, and the missing tire swing was brought up. Mike K. said he will ask Public Works Director Rick Tucker. David inquired where the new equipment would be placed, and Mike K. said his best guess is that it would be added at the current location. Marilyn added that there is plenty of room to expand there.

A Park Foreman position was again mentioned, and Marilyn said she is hoping to get this position approved and filled. It is still not on the Village Board Agenda. She believes a priority list is needed for the Parks, and that there is a lot of liability on the part of the Village with the bridges, trails, trees, etc. The position of Park Foreman would help set priority projects. David asked again, (as he has for many, many meetings) where the benches which have already been paid for are at. He added, that to his knowledge, trees that have been purchased still have not been planted.

Mike K. said it would not be wise "to put the cart before the horse", and added that a timeline is needed. Along that same line, he mentioned that Brian McGuire suggested that a timeline could occur at Village Budget time which is March/April of 2022. Marilyn suggested getting a feel for the best place to layout trails, keeping in mind that this is a conservation park, and this must be considered when the trails are developed. Matt asked if the existing trails are going to be ripped out and replaced, and was told that some may be repaired, and others would be new. Marilyn noted that the golf cart paths are not in the right place for a conservation park. Mike B. added that TWM can identify the Conservations Areas in the Park, and when questioned about the Lollipop Trail, responded that there would be no Lollipop Trail, as the grant was lost. Matt asked about a spreadsheet of items/wish list for the parks for Brian McGuire to use that would request a Park Foreman. Mike B. agreed there needs to be a plan to follow, and that the cart paths aren't in ideal locations. Marilyn asked for clarification of the trails laid out by TWM that are going to be used. Mike B. emphasized that a Park Foreman is needed, a plan is needed, and State bonding money needs to be looked into. State bonding money allows money to be spent first, and then it is reimbursed. Mike B. indicated the \$1.8 million the Village has been granted will not be available for the Parks.

Matt proposed an agenda topic for next month, where a session could be held to set goals, and look at everything we want to happen. After we have the list, we can begin to prioritize a plan. Marilyn was asked

to bring the TWM maps she has in her possession to discuss the Clinton Hills Conservation Park. David reiterated that we need a Foreman first. Mike B. emphasized there needs to be clear direction between the Village Board, Park Foreman and the Park Board. Previously, things got done, and then the Park Board found out about it. He feels it is important, and the new Park Foreman should be made aware, that he/she will be expected to attend the Park Board meetings.

David asked if plaques for the purchased benches could at least be purchased, and shown to the families who purchased a bench, so they know progress is being made, and the donation has not been forgotten or overlooked. Mike B. explained that it takes a lot of time to put all the project steps in order.

Santa House: Marilyn covered the spreadsheet of income and expenses from the 2021 Santa House she had distributed at the start of the meeting. Matt said he needed no pay for his role. Several ideas were discussed about advertising, and why our numbers are low thus far. Rose suggested a sign along Hwy. 159 advertising the Santa House hours and location. Marilyn said she was pushing this to make some money for the Patriots to give to the Parks. We haven't had any functions that have made money in quite a while, and returning to a Patriot's Auction doesn't seem feasible with the number of members we currently have on the Swansea Patriot's.

Mike B. said we need to get Mike Anderson on board in October next year for signage. Matt suggested that after we close the Santa House this year, a post-mortem should be done to decide what worked and what did not. Marilyn said she couldn't imagine anything else we could do as far as advertising. We can never seem to get the Belleville News Democrat to put any pictures of our Santa House in the paper, or give it any sort of recognition. Marilyn said she would like to see us go back to using a camera instead of a phone to take the pictures.

Mike K. suggested that it is his belief that we need to change the time line to participate in Swansea's lighted parade, and then open up the Santa House. Marilyn said there were 13 kids in the first week, and Mike reiterated that the Park Board needs to take a look at how we can do this better.

It was noted the main light for the Santa House has been fixed.

At this point, Mike Buehlhorn mentioned that he is not getting the Park Board emails. Mike K. said he will ask the Village Staff to make sure he is put on the email list.

Condition of Clinton Hills Bridges: It was revisited that Village Administrator Ben Schloesser was going to talk to someone who inspects bridges.

Pavilion & Building Rentals: Mike K. asked everyone to review the fees of some nearby municipalities, noting that our fees are some of the cheapest. Mike K. feels that a deposit on pavilion rentals is needed, and it should be a minimum of \$100.00. The question of how to prove the pavilion was cleaned up was discussed, and Mike K. suggested the best way he has heard is to have the renter take a picture upon arrival and email or text it to the Village Hall. When rental use is complete, another picture is taken and again emailed, or texted to the Village Hall. He asked for other suggestions to help figure out a better way if there is one. He thinks the rental fees are in line, but the addition of a \$100.00 deposit with the picture proposal should be suggested to the Board of Trustees.

Matt said the \$100.00 deposit takes the emotion out of it. The deposit can be set so that it covers the average cost of cleanup should the Village have to take care of it. Mike B. stated that the rules need to be permanently posted on every pavilion. Security cameras piped into the Police Department would solve everything. He added that he thought we had received grant money for this.

Mike K. continued by discussing the Park Building rentals. Our building rental fees are not out of line. He added that a change should be made to the kitchen usage costs for the Thompson Center. These costs should not be separate. Sidebar discussion took place about replacing the industrial stove with an electric range, and who initially purchased the industrial stove, or if it was donated. It was suggested that after the current industrial stove is replaced with an electric range anyone should be able to use it, but the deposit should be changed to \$250 in all circumstances.

Mike K. said he doesn't think the amounts on the Norm Lehr need to be changed, and the deposit in theory would cover damage, but if we have to fix something it becomes more difficult. Mike B. added that most places ask for 2 checks. The rent check gets deposited immediately, and the deposit check is returned if all is in order. The Village has been depositing both rent and deposit for a while, and then a Village check is written when everything checks out with cleanup.

Matt was excused at 8:04.

New Business: It was reported the Village has received a request from a gentleman who wants to use the Clinton Hills Conservation Park for a Friday/Saturday musical event. 3,000 to 5,000 people would be expected to attend. Food trucks would be invited. Discussion ensued, regarding infrastructure, bathroom facilities, parking, and the fact that Fletcher's would probably not appreciate the competition from food trucks. Mike B. suggested Mike K. speak to Steve Johnson to inquire if it could be feasible. Mike K. said the simple answer would be that there is not adequate parking. David asked about the parking maximum at the Park/Fletcher's. A best guess was estimated at about 250 cars.

Mike thanked everyone for attending. David made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Rose, with all in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:11 am.

Respectfully submitted by: Barb Kimutis