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WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

City of Westfield  
Parks and Recreation Department  
Commission Meeting -City Hall Room 315 at 6:30 pm  
October 16, 2023

Commission Present: Kenneth Magarian, Peter Lurgio, Sara Unger, Douglas-Moran,  
Scott LaBombard, Vincent Olinski and Jane DeBarbieri  
Commissioner Absent: Michael Tirrell  
Office Staff: Scott Hathaway, Deputy Supt.

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 pm with Scott LaBombard presiding explaining the 3-minute public speaking time 15 minutes max.

Motion made by Kenneth Magarian to approve the September 11, 2023, minutes, motion seconded by Jane DeBarbieri Vote as follows: Kenneth yes, Peter, yes, Douglas yes, Scott yes, Vincent yes, Sara Yes Jane yes (7)  
Motion passed

Public Participation: City Councilors Brent Bean and Bill Onyski, Kaitlyn Bruce, City Clerk. Colleen Cekovsky, Brandon Cekovsky and Chris Cekovsky

City Council Communications: (City Council concern August 17, 202 minutes stated Councilor Onyski offered a motion to add a light to the parking lot at Papermill Playground at the baseball field.

1. Brent Bean explained to the commissioners the lights at the Paper Mill ballfield path to the parking lot are not lit and they received several complaints due to a safety issue where parents and kids can't see walking from the ballfield to their cars at night and they don't feel safe some of the parents put their lights on from vehicles so people can walk to the cars. He also said that city counselors were looking at lights and areas of safety issues and they know that Little League put a light in by the field but they're looking for the blessing of the commission for the city council to add lighting to the section by the parking lot up the hill the first right or replace the existing pole. He also mentioned near the concession stand there's a lot of brush and trees that need to be trimmed. Brent Bean explained that the City Council will find the funding or find a way of getting the lights up at that field all they need is the commission's blessing and they will move forward on the lighting safety issue to add lighting for the children and the parents. He also praised Bill Onyski was the one who spearheaded the request at the August 17 city council meeting due to several parents' concerns.
2. Scott LaBombard asked about the path behind the school property and Brent Bean responded that that was lit five years ago Little League added lights to the field but the path to the parking lot was not visible and explained the City Council wants the lights to be compliant with the city ordinance.

Motion made by Douglas Morash to allow City Council members here tonight the permit process to add the second light near the Papermill Playground parking lot around the existing light and trim the trees near the light pole motion seconded by Vincent Olinski.

Vote as follows: Kenneth yes, Pete, yes, Douglas yes, Scott yes, Vincent yes, Sara Yes Jane yes (7)

Motion passed

3. Councilors Brent Bean and Bill Onyski thanked the commissioners, and they will move it forward.

#### Items For Discussion

1. Kaitlyn Bruce, City Clerk is here tonight at the request of Michael Tirrell for permission to place signage at Park Square for residents regarding elections for folks that don't have Facebook or Internet to advise them on upcoming elections. She stated she received a quote from the sign shop for a 2 x 4 lawn sign or she was even thinking of a banner and she would like to place it at Park Square two weeks prior to the election on the pavilion or the stage area or wherever the commission thinks the signs or banners would be a good fit. She also brought up that Fran Cain is putting electric signs in other areas of the city as well.
2. Scott LaBombard brought up that if we do this for one group we have to do it for all groups. He is suggesting that Kaitlyn Bruce contact the law department and search the ordinance regarding signage in parks on the request of the city and then let the commissioners know.
3. A conversation was made by Kenneth Magarian the commissioners have a policy in place for groups that want to hang banners or signage and are allowed to put them up the day of their event and had to take them down after the event but this situation is a little different since this is a city park and we have a city department requesting to place a lawn sign or banners at Park Square for information regarding city voting.
4. Sara Unger asked her how long she wanted to have the signage up and Kaitlyn responded two weekend tops. Sara responded that this is the first request regarding informational voting signs in the parks.
5. Scott LaBombard suggested instead of a banner use a couple of yard signs that would look good near the traffic lights where people can see them.
6. Vincent Olinski also brought up electronic signs over by the schools on West Silver Street we're good viewing as you drive by to possibly check with the school for permission. Kaitlyn responded that she has electronic signs going by the turnpike and other areas of the city working with Fran Cain.

Motion made by Peter Lurgio to allow and approve lawn signs for voting information at Park Square pending law dept. Motion seconded by Douglas Morash to approve the information and nature contingent upon discussion with Kaitlyn Bruce and what the Law dept. findings are on city signage policy in Parks on a request of the city and or sign ordinance and do a follow-up with the commission.

Vote as follows: Kenneth yes, Pete, yes, Douglas yes, Scott yes, Vincent yes, Sara Yes Jane yes (7)  
Motion passed

7. Scott Hathaway's research on parks and rec property lines to the Little River playground and the fire department property lines. Scott Hathaway responded that the GIS system has one big square around the fire department property and the Parks and Recreation property so he is working with Fran Cain as he was on vacation last week to see if he can locate the property lines. Per his last conversation with the fire department chief was, they didn't want anyone parking there and there's not much parking to begin with.
8. Scott LaBombard suggested to Scott Hathaway to do more research with the assessor's office or law dept. and bring back the information next month on the property lines and jurisdiction of the Little River Playground because the area is in horrible shape.
9. Brent Bean brought up that it was a nice area years ago he played tennis there. There could have been a change in property ownership when the Fire dept. did the renovation and made it larger, he suggested checking with the building department if any permits were taken out, they could have property lines on file as well.
10. Douglas Morash suggested checking with the planning department and assessor's office.
11. Scott LaBombard responded that once we find out the jurisdiction at that playground that is in tough shape and we know this playground was brought up for renovations in the past we're just looking for who has current jurisdiction and add it to the next month's agenda.
12. Colleen Cekovsky brought up that her son Brandon is working on an Eagle Scout project and he wanted to build a fire pit at the little river playground where they can burn old flags. Colleen said just today the fire department safety chief said that they did not want to have a fire pit at the Little River Fire Station because they own the property.
13. Brandon Cekovsky stated he is working on an Eagle Scout project and went over all the research that he has looked into regarding fire pits he went to the assessor's office looking for property ownership he went to the fire department they had no record he wants to build a fire pit to burn retired old flags and went over how last year at Barnes airport they were burning flags but there were too many flags to burn and not enough time to burn then all so he thought another location or the general public could bring their flags and have a burning ceremony two times a year. He said in July he contacted Julie Barnes from the Veterans office, and she brought up the city ordinance regarding no burning of any parks so now he's requesting to build a flag fire cremation unit at Parker Park instead of the Little River Playground and stated he has four letters from the veteran's group American Legion and others in support of his Eagle project.
14. Chris Cekovsky explained they had hoped to have it at the little river playground it was like a little triangle, and they were just going move the benches and coordinate in that area but as of today, we have to find a new place.

15. Brandon Cekovsky responded that the fire department safety officer recommended he build a cremation fire pit that's locked up with a key and then he presented pictures of his designs and his findings for the property. A conversation was made about who would hold the key to the fire pit and he suggested that the veterans department have a key so that when we they do the flag burning with his group Eagle Scouts and share duties along the marines leaders supervising it. He said he found a fire ordinance, a burning ordinance, a fire safety ordinance but no fires in any city parks.
16. Colleen Cekovsky responded cooking is considered a fire pit so if he makes an incineration fire pit with a lock on it that is his goal for safety.
17. Peter Lurgio praised Brandon Cekovsky for all his research and loved that he had all the answers we looking for including his prepared documents and his presentation of his Eagle Scout project of a flag burning pit or incineration fire structure and stated his parents must be very proud of him and to keep doing his research and we will bring this up on another meeting once we find out what's going on at Parker Memorial Park possibly we can incorporate his Eagle Scout project.
18. Scott Hathaway went over the Parker Park project that was supposed to begin this past summer with the Westfield Technical Academy students and Nate Sperry however the project was not funded he received information from the mayor and purchasing we need to get an architect to design the park and he just felt that after all the work that Nate Sperry and the students did last year and presenting their models and structures sub-committees held regarding all designs to Parker Park. He said the commissioners approved the design and the planting of that park and he just felt like it was a waste of everyone involved and was upset he couldn't get the funding. It included irrigation plant materials and sidewalks.
19. Vincent Olinski mentioned CPA funds can possibly help to fund the project.
20. Scott LaBombard responded that they will have a sub-committee which will be Peter Lurgio, Kenneth Magarian and Vincent Olinski and himself and have a meeting with the Mayor to discuss Parker Park. Scott LaBombard responded what is this commission for if we approve a project within a park we would hope that the city would be funding it based on our goals and our approvals.
21. Douglas Morash explained to Brandon Cekovsky that we will revisit your plan at Parker Park for an incinerator and thanked him for his planning on his Eagle project and for now and we must wait to see what is going on with the Parker Park plans and our policies.
22. Scott LaBombard informed Brandon to keep up with his homework and get everything in writing and to let you know the commission supports you and we will revisit your request for Parker Park and a flag-burning cremation unit. Your presentation tonight was a big help to the commission and all your research.
23. Scott Hathaway also brought up the espionage near the rail trail where the fire pits were built we were told by the fire department they were illegal to use so they were built for nothing due to no fires pits in any parks.

## Reports

1. Scott Hathaway went over his report on Whitney Playground that work has been done and it will be completed by spring and informed the commission can arrange the dedication to the Chico field one in the spring. (Vincent Olinski will update his wife Karen Veronesi)
2. Scott LaBombard went over Jim Blascak's report regarding pee wee soccer, basketball, and suburban tryouts. Attached

Schedule of bills -Attached.

Vincent Olinski brought up that there were some complaints at the football game at Bullen's field from the neighbors and the folks that attended the football game that the music was very loud. He will do a follow-up with the football president and ask him to turn the music down.

Motion made by Peter Lurgio to adjourn motion seconded by Vincent Olinski all in favor  
Vote as follows: Kenneth yes, Pete, yes, Douglas yes, Scott yes, Vincent yes, Sara Yes Jane yes (7)  
Motion passed

Motion passed

The meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

The next meeting is November 13, 2023

## Documents:

Eagle Scout documents and letters of support

Schedules of bills

Reports

City council communication

Reviewed and approved by Douglas Morash, Secretary of Commission

DM/pg

