

**Carmel/Clay Board of Parks and Recreation
Tuesday, April 12, 2022, 6:00 p.m.
John W. Hensel Government Center
10701 North College Avenue
Carmel, Indiana 46280**

Member(s) Present: Jessica Beer, James Garretson, Louise Jackson, Joshua Kirsh, Linus Rude, Rich Taylor

Member(s) Absent: Jenn Kristunas, Mark Westermeier, Lin Zheng

Others Present: Michael Klitzing, Department Director/CEO; Kurtis Baumgartner, Department Assistant Director/COO; Doug Kowalski, Kroger, Gardis & Regis, LLP

Roll Call; Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Board President Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Mr. Rude to call the role. Mr. Rude announced that there was a quorum. Board President Taylor called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. and asked everyone to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Presentation on Capital Funding

Board President Taylor introduced Curtis Coonrod, Certified Public Accountant, with C.L. Coonrod & Company. The company is a CPA firm focused exclusively on local governmental units in Indiana. Mr. Coonrod presented information regarding the capital fund and long-term funding.

(A lengthy presentation followed with questions and answers from those in attendance.)

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Staff Reports

Assistant Director Baumgartner said that Staff Reports were included in the Park Board packet.

Finance Committee

Board President Taylor said that the Finance Committee had not met so there was nothing to report.

Minutes

February 26, 2022 Park Board Workshop

Mr. Rude made a motion to approve the minutes of the Park Board Workshop dated February 26, 2022, seconded by Mr. Kirsh, and unanimously passed 6 – 0.

March 8, 2022 Park Board Meeting

Mr. Rude made a motion to approve the minutes of the Park Board Meeting dated March 8, 2022, seconded by Mr. Kirsh, and unanimously passed 6 – 0.

March 22, 2022 Park Board Workshop

Mr. Rude made a motion to approve the March 22, 2022 Park Board Workshop, seconded by Mr. Kirsh, and passed 5 – 0 with 1 abstention (Mr. Rude).

Financial Reports

Consolidated Financial Report for February 2022

Mr. Kirsh made a motion to acknowledge receipt of the Consolidated Financial Report for February 2022, seconded by Mr. Garretson, and unanimously passed 6 – 0.

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CCPR P&L Statements for February 2022

Mr. Kirsh made a motion to acknowledge receipt of the P&L Statements for February 2022, seconded by Mr. Garretson, and unanimously passed 6 – 0.

CCPR P&L Statements for March 2022

Mr. Kirsh made a motion to acknowledge receipt of the P&L Statements for March, seconded by Dr. Beer, and unanimously passed 6 – 0.

Claims

Claim Sheet April 12, 2022

Mr. Kirsh made a motion to approve the Claim Sheet dated April 12, 2022, seconded by Dr. Beer, and unanimously passed 6 – 0.

Clay Township Claim Sheet April 12, 2022

Mr. Kirsh made a motion to approve the Clay Township Claim Sheet dated April 12, 2022, seconded by Dr. Beer, and unanimously passed 6 – 0.

CCPR Payroll for March 11, 2022 and March 25, 2022

Mr. Kirsh made a motion to approve Payroll for March 11, 2022 and March 25, 2022, seconded by Dr. Beer, and unanimously passed 6 – 0.

Monetary Gifts, Grants, Partnerships, and Sponsorships for March 2022

Assistant Director Baumgartner announced the Department received one donation from an anonymous donor in the amount of \$100 earmarked for employee appreciation.

Mr. Kirsh made a motion to accept the donation as presented, seconded by Dr. Beer, and unanimously passed 6 – 0.

New Business

Consideration of Quotes to Purchase Fitness Equipment

Assistant Director Baumgartner requested the Board approve the purchase of 20 new treadmills for the Monon Community Center. The last request for fitness equipment replacement was in November of 2019. The existing treadmills are seven years old and the useful life of treadmills is five to seven years. Staff gained input from the MCC members on three different types of treadmills by providing demo equipment in the fitness center. Based on feedback, staff is requesting all three types of equipment.

Assistant Director Baumgartner gave details on the treadmills and the quotes received from sole source providers who are authorized dealers in the area for these particular manufacturers. The quotes include trade-in of existing equipment valued at \$24,000, 5-year parts and labor warranty, shipping, and installation.

Mr. Kirsh made two consecutive motions.

Mr. Kirsh made a motion to accept the quote from Direct Fitness Solutions and authorize the Chief Operating Officer to execute a purchase order in the amount of \$152,514.20 to purchase the identified Precor and Freemotion fitness equipment. Furthermore, Mr. Kirsh made a motion to accept the quote from BGI Fitness and authorize the Chief Operating Officer to execute a purchase order in the amount of \$56,596.00 to purchase the identified Matrix fitness equipment.

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Dr. Beer seconded both motions.

Dr. Beer asked if the equipment was a one-to-one exchange. Assistant Director Baumgartner said yes. The Department is trading 20 and receiving 20. Mr. Kirsh asked about mileage on a treadmill with seven years at the MCC. Assistant Director Baumgartner responded he did not know the answer; however, staff does track the mileage and rotates equipment on a frequent basis as certain spots on the fitness floor receive more usage than others. Mr. Rude inquired if some manufacturers were better than others. Assistant Director Baumgartner replied that any equipment purchased for the MCC would be commercial quality to withstand heavy demands. Staff does benchmark with others, including Butler University.

Board President Taylor called for the vote, and the motions were unanimously passed 6 – 0.

Old Business**Bear Creek Park Master Plan Update**

Director Klitzing stated he was pleased to report that the draft master plan for Bear Creek Park is wrapping up. Staff met with SmithGroup earlier in the day to review the format of the actual written document, which will be ready for distribution electronically to the Park Board along with the Park Board packet for the May meeting. Representatives from the design team will present the draft master plan to the Park Board on May 10th, address questions, and record any feedback. The draft master plan will be posted on the CCPR website and accept additional feedback for a period of two weeks following the presentation. A video of the presentation will also be available for the public to view. Appropriate revisions will be made to the draft, and the final document will be brought back to the Park Board for final adoption in June or July depending on the amount of feedback.

Clay Township Impact Program Updates

Director Klitzing said he was very pleased to report progress on West Park, Inlow Park, Meadowlark Park, and River Heritage Park.

(At this time, Director Klitzing shared photos and described in detail various amenities within the construction projects.)

Director Klitzing stated that Inlow, Meadowlark, and West Parks are still on target for a Memorial Day weekend opening; however, construction progress is weather dependent. River Heritage Park is anticipated to be completed before the end of the year.

Mr. Kirsh asked if individuals would have access to portage a canoe or kayak from the parking lot to the river and gain access to the river without an official landing or public access. Director Klitzing said it would not be ideal due to the lengthy walk complicated by the small bluff and possible low water. Discussion followed.

Attorney's Report

Mr. Kowalski stated work continues on donation properties. Hoping to close on Sunrise on the Monon within the week and waiting on the final survey for Albany Village.

CCPR previously explored the possibility of using Carmel Police at the Monon Community Center. Due to turnover at the City's legal department, it may be best to have a meeting and talk through the scope of work.

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Lastly, as Mr. Coonrod stated earlier in the meeting, working on the budget process and funding for parks that need to be addressed in the Interlocal Agreement.

Director's Report

Director Klitzing announced the kickoff of the master planning process for Thomas Marcuccilli Nature Park (TMNP), located at the southwest corner of 146th Street and River Road. (*Visuals were provided.*) This is a 63-acre park with about five to 10 acres of wooded area. The TMNP will be the Department's third largest park in the park system. The park will not support major infrastructure, such as a building or facilities, due to its muck soil. However, it will be an incredible park and will definitely provide a nice nature preserve experience. The Department is following protocols (*master planning process*) similar to that of Bear Creek Park with a variety of focus groups, neighbors, key stakeholders, and other organizations.

One of the most interesting aspects of this property, as well as much of the area along the White River within Carmel, is that we know there is some Native American history in that land. The Department will be working with some folks from Ball State University within the Applied Anthropology Laboratories (AAL). These individuals have extensive experience doing research in areas that have been previously occupied by Native Americans, and they have established some very good relationships with federally recognized American Indian Tribes. We plan to do some outreach to tribes that were known to have occupied this portion of Indiana and invite them to participate in our focus groups to provide feedback.

The Department would like to do some interpretation on this site and incorporate their knowledge from their perspective. We feel it is very important to hear from them. Ball State University will be able to establish those connections. When visiting Connor Prairie, state museums, or other institutions, you have the history about the Native Americans. You see a lot of artifacts, and you hear about their histories, which is very exciting. But one of the things you do not hear is the history or knowledge base about land stewardship. There is this sort of creation myth that you hear from the National Park Service and other parks where you hear about the 'unspoiled' or 'untouched' land before European settlement. But the reality is a lot of our landscapes were managed by the previous occupants as stewards of public land. It would be exciting to tell the story about how the Native Americans stewarded the land before us and, again, using their knowledge base to help tell the story. Hopefully, through our relationship, we will put our unique spin on those who were land stewards before us.

Director Klitzing stated that on May 5th the Department will host a public meeting to get additional feedback from the greater community on this particular park. He added that he would love to see Board members attend.

Director Klitzing announced that he was pleased to report that the new turf has been installed at Midtown Plaza. He is grateful to the Mayor and the City for transitioning from natural grass, which was unable to sustain the wear and tear of the general public. The new turf is canine friendly and designed for weekly cleaning based on the manufacturer guidelines.

Director Klitzing met with the City of Carmel's HR Director and the insurance broker to explore the potential of providing medical benefits to part-time staff. This is one of the greatest challenges in attracting and retaining part-time staff. The Department offers competitive pay for its positions in addition to PTO, MCC membership benefits, and participation in our deferred compensation retirement program. The one thing we are lacking is medical benefits, similar to Target or Starbucks. Director Klitzing said he is optimistic and thankful to Lisa Hartz for helping initiate these conversations.

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Director Klitzing referenced a recent resolution of interest passed by the Park Board regarding a one-acre parcel of land just north of River Heritage Park. Shortly after the Board meeting, he received a phone call from Citizens Energy Group who also expressed an interest in that property. Citizens Energy Group indicated that this land and land north of the water plant might address their reservoir needs instead of using the front portion of River Heritage Park.

Director Klitzing said he had a wonderful conversation with Mayor Brainard regarding a proposal to put all of the City's property, not currently used for utility purposes, under a management agreement with the park system. The Department would control, for planning purposes and ultimately park purposes, the area south of 116th Street. Director Klitzing will ask legal counsel to begin preparation of the management agreements. The Department would not assume any management or maintenance responsibilities for those properties until we develop them. This gives us better control, especially if we start pursuing grants for the south extension of the White River Greenway.

Mr. Garretson asked about employment. Director Klitzing responded that the Department is seeing an uptick in applications. It appears that the high school and college age students are waiting until the beginning of summer to apply for jobs. This creates challenges to insure the employees receive the extensive training required before they start their jobs.

Mr. Garretson asked about the Carmel Dads' Club Fieldhouse. Director Klitzing replied that the Fieldhouse was constructed with Clay Township bonds. As part of the agreement between the Township and the Carmel Dads' Club, there is a provision to make the facility available during the summer months for summer camps. CCPR has had numerous meetings with Jack Beery and his team and will be hosting a sports themed summer camp in the Fieldhouse.

Board President Taylor asked about the prairies within TMNP. Director Klitzing said that based on an assessment of the current prairies, there are a few good areas, but all of it can be improved. The assessment has been shared with MKSK so they are working to understand the existing conditions. Also, the Department is in conversations with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources to reallocate wetland credits to help develop the park. Lastly, CCPR is working with the Hamilton County surveyor to release the legal drain.

Mr. Kirsh asked about maintenance costs for the new Midtown turf. Director Klitzing said the recurring maintenance expenses will be no greater than the original turf. Assistant Director Baumgartner completed a very good recommendations report. The ultimate conclusion was that new turf was probably the most economical and best long-term solution.

Board President Taylor asked if there would be budgeting issues if an insurance component is added to attract talent and hire staff in this market. Director Klitzing responded that based upon some of the preliminary estimates, he believes the Department can absorb the costs. We still have to see the numbers so there is no guarantee, but there is a distinct possibility it will be within our grasp to do this year. Discussion followed.

Mr. Kirsh said he was excited to hear about integrating ancient peoples back into the land. He spoke at length about his personal experience with a Native American Indian artifact and how he was fascinated to learn it came from a period of time when people were here between 8,000 to 10,000 years ago. He believes that using this or any artifact creates an opportunity to talk about how native people cultivated the land.

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Mr. Kirsh said we may have finalized the comprehensive plan at this point. The plan goes back to the City Council for its final checks and balances. Mr. Kirsh said he is available to answer any questions.

School Board

Ms. Jackson said Carmel Clay schools are back from spring break, and everyone is excited to enter the final corner of the fourth quarter of the year.

(Dr.) Tim Phares, currently the Principal at Creekside Middle School, has been selected as the new Principal of Carmel High School.

Parks Foundation

Director Klitzing said the Foundation plans to meet soon. He submitted a proposal to the Foundation expanding some of the funds they already approved, consistent with their historical practices, for invasive species removal and restoration projects in Central Park and West Park. Director Klitzing has extended opportunities to the Foundation Members to tour the park system.

Park Board Comments / Discussion

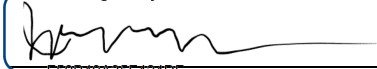
No comments and/or discussion.

Adjournment

As there was no further business, Board President Taylor adjourned the meeting (7:41 p.m.).

Approved,

DocuSigned by:



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Signature

5/11/2022

Date

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Signature

5/11/2022

Date

Meetings of the Carmel/Clay Board of Parks and Recreation are recorded and may be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/channels/parkboardmeetings> or see the archive of meeting recordings at <https://www.carmelclayparks.com/about-us/park-board/>.