

Carmel/Clay Board of Parks and Recreation
Tuesday, April 9, 2024, 7:00 p.m.
John W. Hensel Government Center
10701 North College Avenue
Carmel, Indiana 46280

Member(s) Present: Jonathan Blake, Katie Browning, James Garretson, Judith Hagan, Joshua Kirsh, Jenn Kristunas, Linus Rude, Mark Westermeier, Lin Zheng

Member(s) Absent: N/A

Others Present: Michael Klitzing, Department Director/CEO; Kurtis Baumgartner, Department Assistant Director/COO; Eric Mehl, Administration & Planning Director/CAO; Brian Bosma, Park Board Attorney

Roll Call; Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Board President Hagan welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Mr. Rude to call the role. Mr. Rude announced there was a quorum. Board President Hagan called the meeting to order at 7:23 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Staff Reports

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

Ms. Browning asked about the decrease in ESE enrollment for the month of March and if that was normal. Assistant Director Baumgartner explained that the Department has implemented caps within most of the schools due to workforce shortages and that most school sites have waitlists for the program. ESE staff is currently working to accommodate some of the families on the waitlists.

Assistant Director Baumgartner pointed out that the Department is well prepared for the total solar eclipse.

Board President Hagan asked about the release of \$500k reflected in the budget updates. Director Klitzing explained why the City held off on approval of the original \$2m budget request within the 103 account and has now approved \$500k to use on smaller projects, which will delay funding to start the Chinese Garden. Board President Hagan asked if this money was appropriated by the City or are these Township LIT contributions passing through the City account. Director Klitzing clarified that this is money provided directly from the City.

Finance Committee

Ms. Zheng stated that the Finance Committee did not meet last month.

Minutes

March 12, 2024 Park Board Meeting

Mr. Rude made a motion to approve the minutes of the Park Board Meeting dated March 12, 2024, seconded by Mr. Garretson. The motion passed unanimously 9 – 0.

Financial Reports

Consolidated Financial Report for February 2024; CCPR P&L Statements for March 2024

Ms. Zheng made a motion to acknowledge receipt of the Consolidated Financial Report for February 2024 and to acknowledge receipt of the P&L Statements for March 2024, seconded by Ms. Kristunas. The motion passed unanimously 9 – 0.

Claims

Claim Sheet April 9, 2024; Clay Township Claim Sheet April 9, 2024; CCPR Payroll for March 8, 2024 and March 22, 2024

Ms. Zheng made a motion to approve the Claim Sheet dated April 9, 2024; and to approve the Clay Township Claim Sheet dated April 9, 2024; and to approve payroll wages and liabilities for payroll dates March 8, 2024 and March 22, 2024, seconded by Ms. Kristunas. The motion passed unanimously 9 – 0.

Mr. Westermeier asked which months will have additional payroll. Assistant Director Baumgartner replied that there will be three payrolls in May and August of this year.

Monetary Gifts, Grants, Partnerships, and Sponsorships for March 2024

Mr. Mehl reported there were no monetary contributions for March.

New Business

2024-2029 Zone Improvement Plan (ZIP) Presentation

Director Klitzing gave a detailed overview of the proposed ZIP.

Board President Hagan emphasized her position that the impact fees are meant to be used to help with the “impact” of the development and not as a tool to encourage development.

Mr. Kirsh explained his position as a member of the Plan Commission. He further explained that the Plan Commission expressed concern regarding how this impacts affordable housing within Carmel given this fee remains the same whether you are building a \$1m house or a \$200k house. The people trying to build a \$200k house pay a higher percentage of their overall cost of the home towards impact fees. He pointed out that with less development potential within Carmel in the near future, as stated by Trustee Hensel, the goal should be to capitalize on the remaining development by maximizing the fees.

Mr. Kirsh added that he received questions from other Plan Commission members asking if this will be the answer for future funding needs of the park system, to which he quickly replied “No.”

Ms. Zheng asked where the estimated future housing units are sourced from, adding that the Mayor has assigned a committee to analyze the housing market and wondering how that might be reflected in the final numbers.

Director Klitzing explained that the future projections are based off reports from the Department of Community Services which included traditional housing and multi-family housing. A lot was based on projects they know are in development or in the pipeline to start within this timeframe. He does not believe the housing taskforce has had enough time or conversation to yield much change in the reported numbers quite yet. He further expressed that he has been listening to those meetings and conversations and is sensitive to the concerns over affordable housing, which helped to influence the decision to propose the phased-in approach to the impact fee increases. Additionally, with this being a political tool, he expressed his feelings that this approach would yield the best support from all parties.

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Mr. Westermeier asked Director Klitzing if he was able to get feedback from the Mayor. Director Klitzing replied he did have those conversations and her preference is the phased in approach.

Mr. Westermeier asked if the Central Core has any projected projects in mind or if it is just a placeholder in case something becomes available. Director Klitzing replied that we do have a couple of items identified to expand current park properties, developing the Japanese and Chinese Gardens, as well as, knowing there is a need for additional dog park spaces. That being said, this is a broader placeholder to allow for flexibility in determining when and where appropriate to spend the money.

Mr. Westermeier suggested in future presentations to include other examples of how high impact fees could be if being used for other development projects like roads and bridges, and show what those other communities are charging in totality and not just the park impact fees. This may illustrate that the surrounding communities are actually charging more than Carmel since Carmel does not charge impact fees to support anything other than parks. Director Klitzing agreed with this point and further explained what communities can elect to use impact fees toward.

Board President Hagan pointed out that a number of Board members attended the Plan Commission meeting along with Trustee Hensel, and she appreciated the participation.

Mr. Rude asked if any of the other comparable cities are accredited and award winning like CCPR. Director Klitzing replied that the most recent Indiana agencies that are accredited and Gold Medal winning within the past 10 years, none are in Hamilton County besides us.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure for Kroger, Gardis & Regis, LLC

Mr. Bosma provided an overview stating the need for this disclosure should KGR be hired to represent the City of Carmel's Common Council. He explained that there is understanding that Board President Hagan had some initial reservations, and he understands that if there is any reason for pause, they will revoke the letter.

Board President Hagan spoke about her conversation with Tony Green and felt it cleared up any issues. She feels comfortable moving forward with the proposed letter.

Mr. Blake made a motion to consent to the representation of the Carmel Common Council by Kroger, Gardis & Regas, LLC, seconded by Mr. Kirsh. Motion passed unanimously 9 – 0.

Old Business

There was no Old Business to address.

Attorney's Report

Mr. Bosma gave a brief update on projects:

- The lawsuit has been dismissed voluntarily which means without prejudice and can be raised again if needed.
- Finalized the previously approved bus transportation for summer camps.
- Finalizing the contracts for the White River North Extension and Westermeier Commons playground renovation projects.
- Finalized the Conner Prairie easement agreement.
- One of the partners has been helping to guide on some employee matters.

Director's Report

Director Klitzing provided an update on current projects including pointing out the quarterly contract log to be sure board members review for potential conflicts of interest. He noted that there may be a future item for the board to consider at an upcoming meeting regarding a donation of land bordering Meadowlark Park due to a childcare facility development. This area is already identified as an easement to Parks for the trail through it.

Information Items

Plan Commission

Mr. Kirsh said he had no additional information.

School Board

Ms. Browning reported CCS recognized nine students who received perfect ACT scores. CCS has also recently been ranked #1 out of 46 school districts in Hamilton County; #2 of 290 in Indiana, and #81 of 10,932 in the nation.

Park Board Comments / Discussion

Mr. Kirsh reported he gave a tour to students from the University of Illinois around Midtown Plaza and were blown away by the city and our park system. Additionally, he was recently on an early morning walk with a group who took note of the extra effort a CCPR staff member took to stop their truck along the trail to pick up a hair-tie off the trail before moving on.

Ms. Kristunas asked if there are any updates on the red-tailed hawk sculpture for 106th and College. Mr. Kirsh gave an update on the information he currently has.

Ms. Kristunas asked for an update on the bison statue, to which Director Klitzing replied that we do not have a shipment date yet, but are working on the foundations needed for the placement once it arrives. Mr. Rude followed up asking if these sculptures are meant to be interactive or will they be roped off. Director Klitzing explained that the intention is for them to be interactive, but not meeting playground safety standards there will be signage placed.

Adjournment

Mr. Kirsh made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Blake, and without objection. Board President Hagan adjourned the meeting at 8:38 p.m.

Approved,

DocuSigned by:
LD Rude
B879793C48A14AA...

Signature

5/21/2024

Date

DocuSigned by:
Judy Hagan
CA2258752C0140B...

Signature

5/15/2024

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/>.