



**City of Warsaw Parks & Recreation Board
Regular Meeting – Council Chambers
Monday, April 21, 2025 at 5:15 PM**

Meeting Minutes

Attendance: ☒ Steve Haines, Park Board President ☒ Larry Ladd, Park Board Vice President
 ☐ Mayor Jeff Grose ☒ Jill Beehler, Board Member ☒ Michelle Boxell, Board Member
 ☐ Noemi Ponce, Board Member ☐ Juergen Voss, City Council Representative
 ☒ Larry Plummer, Parks Superintendent ☒ Shaun Gardner, Maintenance Director
 ☐ Stephanie Schaefer, Recreation Director ☒ Suzanne Stokes, Recording Secretary

I. Call to Order

Park Board President Steve Haines called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM.

II. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the March 18, 2025 meeting were approved.

(1) A motion was made by Board member Jill Beehler and seconded by Board member Michelle Boxell, and it passed unanimously.

III. Unfinished Business

a) Skate Park Relocation

- Parks Superintendent Plummer started with reminding the Board of the plan developed in 2019 to relocate Mantis Skate Park from the Boggs Park area to the west end of Richardson-DuBois Park. The grant from the Indiana DNR did not come through and the project did not happen. Plummer asked the Board if there was any interest in pursuing funding again for the relocation of the skate park. He reached out to American Ramp Company for an updated design and presented it for consideration, adding that it could be done in two phases or all at once. The ramps currently at the park were installed in 2005 through a K21 grant; they have been rebuilt several times since and require a lot of man hours for maintenance.

The new park would be entirely concrete, which is a low maintenance alternative to the current ramp system and be fenced in with a turnstile entry that would hopefully keep mopeds and such out of the skating area. The turnstile would regulate access and ensure the safety of the facility, while the fence would provide the ability to control the environment for Parks events held there. The location at Richardson-DuBois Park is more centrally located in the community, serving a bigger number of residents and visitors. It brings the park into a neighborhood situation as opposed to the trek to the west end of the city to get to Boggs. Plummer stated that he is looking for the Board's consideration and feedback on this project, as well as asking permission so that the Mayor and other City employees can begin seeking funding to make this happen again. He is unsure of where the dollars would come from exactly, but Plummer is hoping to generate grants and other sources of revenue. The price to do phase 1 and 2 together would be \$465,000



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when completed. In addition to the relocation, the updated entry system would allow the park to be unmanned. Currently the park is staffed but there have been complaints that the open hours aren't congruent with the needs of the participants. There would be a camera system installed during the relocation but the park would be wide open during park hours and skate at your own risk.

Beehler asked what would become of the skate park location at Boggs and Plummer replied there had been talk of possibly turning it into pickleball courts since it's fenced in and not residential. If not, it could be a playground. Park Board Vice President Larry Ladd asked if there's anything currently on the west side of Richardson-DuBois Park where the skate park would go. Plummer said currently Young Tiger Football use it for overflow if needed. Technically it is named Liz Frazier Field and he would get with the Frazier family to come up with a way to memorialize her legacy. Boxell agreed that the skate park needs updating and should be pursued if the funding is there. Ladd asked if Mantis was used regularly. Plummer said the numbers were down last year but there had been record attendance the year before and he believes there is still a demand for it.

Boxell motioned to allow the Parks Department to pursue funding for relocation of the skate park and Beehler seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. New Business

a) Playground Replacement - Kiddieland

- In the 2025 budget, funds had been allocated to replace aging equipment at Kiddieland. A new structure with climbing and rope-based play has been picked out, alongside an inclusive piece of equipment for wheelchair users. Plummer noted that the current structure is 25 years old and by updating it, it demonstrates the Parks commitment to safe and inclusive playgrounds, as outlined in the 5 Year Master Plan.

The playground would be installed by Parks personnel to decrease costs. The equipment itself will be \$55,486.79 with a \$3000 discount applied by the supplier. At Board of Works last Friday, Plummer presented the purchase, and it was approved contingent upon Park Board approval. This new structure would be placed right along the Center Lake Recreational Trail in Kiddieland with poured in place surfacing. Plummer asked for permission from the Board to complete the purchase of the play equipment to be installed possibly in the third quarter of this year.

Ladd motioned to approve the purchase of the play equipment, and it was seconded by Beehler. The motion passed unanimously.



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b) Dog Park Proposal with Rotary Club

- Seth Bradford, the president of Warsaw's Rotary Club chapter, approached Plummer about a potential dog park location. Bradford was hoping to identify a suitable site so that Rotary Club could raise the funds and make it a reality. Plummer believes the south portion of Krebs Trailhead Park would be the ideal location. Dogs are not currently allowed in the parks so establishing a designated dog park accommodates pet owners while keeping in line with park policy. The suggested location is right along the trail system and would allow walkers on the trail with their dogs to use the park. It is also not near beaches, playgrounds, or other parks. Plummer said that, in speaking with Bradford and other Rotary Club members in late March, the understanding is the project will not proceed until all necessary funding is secured by the Rotary Club. He reiterated that funding a dog park is not in this year's budget or next year's budget.

The design of the park would include 6-foot-high black fencing, a fob access system, drinking fountains for people and pets, waste bag dispensers, benches, and a camera monitoring system all in phase 1. The park would be split into two separate sections based on dog sizes. In order to receive a fob, potential users of the park would need to visit the Parks office to provide papers that their dog or dogs have been vaccinated and pay a nominal fee for a year's access. Phase 2 would be adding accessories like dog bridges, hoops, etc. inside the park. Plummer advised he had already spoken with the Krebs family, who donated the land for the current park, and they have said it's okay to use the land for a dog park. With the neighborhoods around Krebs Park and the new apartments going in with the Gatke project, Plummer thinks this could be a good idea.

Beehler inquired about the fee for use and Plummer replied that it would be whatever the Park Board set. Several Rotary Club members have used similar dog parks with fob systems in the Carmel and Indianapolis areas, and they all agree that having a free dog park promotes bad behavior and uncleanness. There is a higher level of responsibility among owners if they have to come in and make a purchase for fob access. Ladd asked about seating within the park, and Plummer said there would be two benches for now. Ladd also inquired about parking concerns in the neighborhood. Plummer said there are approximately 8-10 parking spots on the east side of Krebs Park, but he anticipates it will be mostly foot traffic from the trail and neighborhoods and thinks there will probably be 3-5 people there at a time. Boxell asked if the proposed area would be enough space, Plummer replied that the area is bigger than you think. Beehler questioned if there would be a limit on a number of dogs at a time, but that would be up to the users to judge whether or not there were too many dogs.

Beehler motioned to allow a portion of Krebs Trailhead Park to be used as a dog park pending Rotary Club raised the funds. Boxell seconded and the motion passed unanimously.



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c) Maintenance Report

- Maintenance Director Shaun Gardner provided updates on opening the parks for the spring. Most of the water lines are on and all the restrooms have been opened. Hawkins Water Tech will be coming tomorrow to get the Castaldi Fountain going. There's a specific start-up process with the three water softeners they assist with. Gardner said there is also a little bit of irrigation to fix yet, too. Pike Lake Campground is open now and spots are filling up. He noted that it was an easy opening as far as maintenance was concerned with the campground.

The metal roof on cabin 3 at Lucerne Park has been completed. Gardner said the carpenters struggled with the weather, often fighting days being too windy, but it is finally done. Cabin 4 needs the roof replaced still, and once the weather cooperates, Gardner said they will be out there. Tables have been spread in all the parks as well as at all the picnic shelters. Sand has been hauled into both beaches and smoothed out with the surf rake. Once the season gets going the beaches will be raked daily.

d) Recreation Report

- In the absence of Recreation Director Stephanie Schaefer, Recreation Director Assistant Lynnae Miller was in attendance to present the report. A total of 143 participants attended spring break activities, spread over two paint classes, ceramics, and the Earth Day celebration. Miller said the goal was to provide something for everyone during that week. Last week was the Egg Hunt, where 20 eggs plus 1 golden egg were hidden around each one of the parks, and it only took 3 days for all eggs to be turned in.

Upcoming events include: Super Hero Academy on April 28 (National Super Hero Day), with 12 participants already signed up; the Mommy & Son Dance on May 2, with just a small portion of the tickets left for purchase; and the opening day of Mantis Skate Park on May 17. At the skate park opening, there will be door prizes, give aways, and Jimmy John's for participants. The event is free and open to everyone, and Mantis will be open for school hours following that day until summer break arrives.

Plummer praised both Miller and Schaefer for how busy they've been and how they've worked to offer programs to all ages of the community.

V. Other Matters That May Come Before the Board

a) March 2025 Team Member of the Month

- The winner for the March 2025 Team Member of the Month was Maintenance laborer, Chris Holsclaw. Plummer commented on his dedication to and leadership within the department. Notably, Holsclaw identified a sinkhole at Kiwanis Park after a company installing fiber internet



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had unknowingly drilled into a Stormwater pipe. He also recently assisted a father with his son who was having a complete meltdown in the park and was able to help the boy calm down.

VI. Meeting Review

- At the conclusion of the meeting Plummer brought the Board's attention to a recent memorandum of understanding that passed through the Redevelopment Commission that would have a direct impact on the Parks Department. The MOU is for potential development of the area on Canal Street where the former Parks office was, the site of the old water building, the current maintenance shop, and the maintenance shop parking. The proposed plan is for a 4000-6000 square foot building with 60-80 apartments. Plummer stated the demolition of the equipment shop would directly affect Parks projects, staging, and equipment used to support Central Park and broader community assets. The loss of that space would be felt across everything the Parks Department does. Plummer encouraged the Board to engage with the development proposal to be prepared for the needs of the department moving forward if the development happens.

The MOU is with Fab Incorporated. Plummer said he believes the process is that Fab will create a design and come back to the City with it to present to the Redevelopment Commission. He hopes that the Parks Department and Board will be able to be included in input on the design. Maintaining storage space in the Central Park area is vital to the processes of the Parks Department and he conveyed to Mayor Jeff Grose that without said space, it is a hindrance to Parks operations. Ladd asked about the land where the former Owen's store sat and if there has been progress there with building the proposed apartment building. He also asserted that once the green space is gone off Canal Street, it will never be recovered. One of the many reasons the proposed ice rink from years back was never approved for Central Park was that it would take too much green space from the lakefront at Center Lake and Central Park. Parking would present another issue with the development of the proposed apartment building on Canal Street, as parking already becomes scarce with large events in Central Park or at the Zimmer Biomet Center Lake Pavilion. Haines commented that he felt it strange that, with all the new apartment buildings going in around Warsaw, that they would still push to develop more without the others being finished. He said that the goal has always been to make Central Park a destination, as seen with the Castaldi Fountain and its water features and the recent artwork installation, and he feels bringing this development to the area would not help that cause.



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VII. Adjournment

With no other matters brought before the Board, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ladd and seconded by Beehler. The meeting was adjourned at 5:54 PM.

Minutes taken by:

Suzanne Stokes

Park Board Recording Secretary