

Approved Minutes

**Mt. Pleasant Parks and Recreation Commission
Electronically Conducted Regular Meeting
Tuesday, April 27, 2021, 6:00 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER – 6:02 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

WELCOME NEW MEMBER – Dr. Vincent Mumford

ATTENDANCE/DECLARATION OF QUORUM – ROLL CALL AND LOCATION IDENTIFICATION

A. Commission Members Present: Jim Batcheller, Liz Busch, Brian Mitchell, Vincent Mumford, Desirea Woodworth

All members present in Mt. Pleasant, Isabella County, Michigan

B. Commission Members Absent: Pete Little, Brian Sponseller

C. Parks and Recreation Staff: Brune, Bundy, Longoria, Way

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES & COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Changes/Approval of Agenda – motion by Batcheller, second by Busch to approve the agenda as presented. All Ayes.

B. Approval of Minutes – motion by Mitchell, second by Busch to approve the meeting minutes from Tuesday, March 23, 2021. All Ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS - none

PUBLIC HEARING

A. Adopt-a-Bench – Debra Lynn Schwiderson - Public hearing opened by vice-chair Woodworth. There were no comments and the hearing was closed. Motion by Busch, second by Batcheller to approve the bench application petitioned by Ruth Barnard to be located in Island Park and directs staff to complete Lifecycle Agreement for installation and maintenance of bench. All Ayes.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Parks – Director Bundy reported on the following at his last meeting after 32 years' service with the City:

- Parks and Grounds I position posted internally and will be opened to the public next week if no internal bids received.
- Mill Pond Adams Street - fishing and bridge decks being replaced; project should be completed in the next two weeks. In addition, contract awarded for repairs to parking lot as well as new curb and gutter.
- Island Park Pickle Ball Courts contract approved by City Commission at their 4/26 meeting.

Parks Coordinator Craig Brune gave an update on park operations:

- Staff readying Riverside Cemetery for Memorial Day and sports fields for opening day.
- Summer hours for restrooms will begin May 1. Park rangers also begin in May, with sporadic hours throughout the month.
- Opening of City Hall Pond and Nelson Fountain.
- Staff helping with downtown Broadway Central closure and setup.

B. Recreation – Director Longoria reported on the following:

- Youth sports testing began this week for athletes in our soccer program over age 13 per guidelines provided by Michigan Safer Sports Testing Program.
- Practices started this week for youth soccer and tee-ball.
- Covid quarantines in our sports programs (players and coaches) have staff looking for last minute replacements.
- Farmer’s market starting a month early this year (May 6). Hired market assistant that started this week.
- Two new Recreation Assistants hired on and starting next week.
- PEAK six-week Summer camp is open for registration; weekly camps are now on a waitlist.
- Chippewa River Master Plan – working on visions, goals and trail management.
- Beginning work on 2022 budget.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

- A. Dog Park Lighting Project Review and Recommendation – Director Longoria gave an overview of the dog park project and the collaborative effort of the governmental entities involved. For more than a year, the Friends of the Dog Park have been fundraising in order to add lighting to Hannah’s Bark Park. They are proposing a 1/3 cost share for the remaining amount needed between FODP, City and Union Township

Public Comment: John Dinse, 1206 E. High St.

I would like to use public comment in support of the City’s help in funding lighting at Hannah’s Bark Park located in Mission Creek Park. As an original member of the Mt. Pleasant Friends of the Dog Park Board and as a current Union Township representative on the City’s Dog Park Advisory Board, I am well aware of the origins, construction, and operations of Hannah’s Bark Park.

Although the dog park has been a success, with over 230 fee paying members (pre-Covid) who help fund support for park maintenance, there always has been two major concerns about the lack of lighting at the park. First, there are obvious safety concerns about myriad negative consequences that can occur if dogs and their owners are subjected to darkened conditions immediately before and after sundown. Secondly, many users of the park are working individuals who would like to have playtime with their dogs in the evening hours. Increased use of the dog park likely would increase membership and enhance the overall amenities already offered to area residents via the City’s great park system.

The initial estimate from Block Electric for a minimal lighting plan \$12,196. This includes 8 LED lights with motion dimming. The Friends of the Dog Park Board has set a fund raising goal of \$12,500 for the project. We have raised \$8,000 up to this point. We had hoped to have lighting by this fall, 2021 as the days shorten. Our proposal for the remaining \$4,500 is to return to the original funding formula for construction of Hannah’s Bark Park, namely, 1/3 cost sharing by FDP, the City, and Union Township. In other words, the three partners would each provide an additional \$1,500 for a total of \$4,500 to add to the already \$8,000 raised.

Friends of the Dog Park will be presenting our proposal to the Union Township Board in May. We ask that the Mt. Pleasant City Parks and Recreation Commission act positively on our request to share in funding this worthy project.

Thank you.

After further discussion, motion by Busch in support of recommending that the City Commission positively support the cost-sharing proposal between the City, Union Township, and the Friends of the Dog Park for installation of lights at Hannah's Bark Park. Second by Batcheller.

Comm. Busch commented, this adds to the overall health and safety of the park.

Batcheller commented how Hannah's college fund was used to originally start the funding for the park and how the two bodies of government working in cooperation made the project work; it seems like a good idea to continue this for such a low cost.

All Ayes.

OTHER BUSINESS/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS – Comm. Busch announced a fundraiser for Friends of Isabella Seniors called *John Buckley's 80 for 80*. On May 12 Mr. Buckley will attempt to paddle 80 kilometers of the Chippewa River between Lake Isabella and Mt. Pleasant in 24 hours.

ADJOURNMENT 6:44 p.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88982278065?pwd=OTRmRWRBL1EzcUFUNzZRRWtUbFFYQT09>

Meeting ID: 889 8227 8065

Passcode: 264030