

PARK BOARD
ST. JOHN, INDIANA
May 14, 1996

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The Park Board of the Town of St. John met on this date with the following members present:

Attendee 1, Joan Millis	Attendee 4,
Attendee 2, Mary Anne Koke	Attendee 5, Fred Kish, Council Liaison
Attendee 3, Paul Haller	Attendee 6,

The following members absent:

Absent 1, Shirley Hawkins	Absent 4
Absent 2,	Absent 5
Absent 3,	Absent 6

CALL TO ORDER

The May 14th meeting was called to order at 7:07 PM with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by P. Haller to approve the minutes of the April 9th and April 10th meetings as printed. Passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

St. John Boy Scout Troop 550 - Joan Millis indicated that most of the Scouts' project would not be completed until fall. Their efforts to select materials and erect signs have been hampered by the wet weather.

- Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke to table this agenda item until the Scouts get back to the Park Board. Passed unanimously.

Sun Meadows Park Wetland – Joan Millis indicated that the Scouts have been unable to work on this project due to the wet weather.

- Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke to table this agenda item until a later date. Passed unanimously.

Five-Year Master Plan Survey - Joan Millis talked with John Kinsella today; he is mailing aerial photos of the Town, along with clippings substantiating discussions of the master plan and copies of previous surveys to apply for the grants to cover the cost of the upcoming survey. The survey will be published in the Schererville News on May 15.

P. Haller inquired whether costs could be reduced by incorporating or re-using parts of the old master plan. The previous master plan addressed individual parks and would be insufficient.

Central Park - Joan Millis indicated that both appraisals had been received, but the Board is not at liberty to know or discuss their contents; these will be reviewed by the Town Council at the May meeting (the 4th Thursday).

Kilkenny Estates / Parkland Dedication - Joan Millis indicated there had been no activity on this project.

- Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke to remove this item from the agenda until a later date. Passed unanimously.

Homestead Park Well and Starwood Estates - Joan Millis indicated she had nothing to report. Austgen Electric has not been out to the park, and there has been no activity regarding Starwood Estates.

- Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke, to table these two agenda items (Homestead Park Well and Starwood Estates) until a later date. Passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Scout Troop #289 (Munster) - The Munster Troop #289 will be installing signs in Sun Meadows and Patnoe parks; the permits were received Friday. The routing is done and the signs will be mounted when the weather is drier. The troop has mounted fifteen birdhouses, 10 in Fairway and 5 in Sun Meadows. Drawings of the birdhouses were provided.

Prairie West Park - A decision is needed on a treatment to keep the geese out and away from the pavilion. The Park Board had approved an expenditure of up to \$150 but the cost is approximately \$389; drawings were provided. Mary Anne Koke suggested using less expensive fencing but concern was expressed for the safety of the geese. The two wooden gates must be extremely sturdy due to their size and limited number of supports; \$312 of the cost is for the gates, latches, and heavy duty hinges. Public Works has been cleaning the grass with sewer jets to remove the droppings and make the park attractive to use during hot weather.

Park Board members expressed concern for the cost in relation to the current budget, durability, need to keep the geese out, charging rent for the pavilion, and timing of having staff available for installation before grass-cutting begins.

J. Millis inquired whether a donation could be located for the materials; P. Haller offered to make inquiries. Public works employees will provide the labor to install the project.

- Motion made by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to table this item pending investigation of an alternative source of materials or a donation to cover the expense. Passed unanimously.

Holy Shepherd Church Youth Group -The Youth Group has planted two trees at Prairie West; four more trees will be planted in the corners and the first two trees will be straightened and mulched when the weather is drier.

Budget - Joan Millis noted that because of the tax assessment problem, no draws or reimbursements will be made until October. Until then, the Park Board can use their funds in the bank (about \$18,600, less than half of the total year's budget). P. Haller inquired whether the new mowing equipment had been paid for; it has.

REPORTS

Lantern View

A bill for \$350 for additional grading for Lantern View park has been received. The grading built up 2-3' following the dredging of the pond.

Homestead Park

Joan Millis noted that she had pulled out the porta potty (valued at \$1500) this week due to vandalism by fire the previous week. The damage to the platform was \$350; the insurance has a \$250 deductible. Joan Millis indicated that the lift stations also have been damaged in this park.

Mary Anne Koke inquired whether the Park Board could legally have a park without facilities; Paul Haller inquired whether the entire park should be closed until the Homestead Homeowners Association assists the Board in monitoring the park. Mary Anne Koke responded that the homeowners association has voluntary membership.

Paul Haller expressed considerable frustration over the ongoing damage. The Board discussed several options:

- Placing a notice in the newspaper,
- Requesting the cooperation of the police,
- Posting a hardboard notice at the park explaining the penalty for vandalism,
- Closing the park by removing the equipment and picnic tables,
- Putting a notice in the water bills adding an assessment to Homestead Acres due to vandalism,
- Establishing a crime watch area (although only two houses have a good view of the park),
- Adding more light.

The problem seems related to people driving illegally through the park at night. There is an ordinance with a stiff fine for juveniles arrested for vandalism; no one has been caught.

Joan Millis reiterated her support for locating a Crime Watch Captain, and noted that the police have filed a report for every incident of vandalism. Paul Haller supported removing the tables, and reiterated taking action to:

1. Post a sign,
2. Put a notice with the water bills (need to check with Judy Companik),
3. Establish a crime watch,
4. Request an article in the newspaper (details of the vandalism were reviewed with a newspaper reporter in attendance from The Times), and
5. Pull out all equipment if there is one more incidence of vandalism.

Fitness Program - Joan Millis noted that the volleyball and basketball programs finish at the end of the school year. Aerobics and Fit for Kids are done.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Joan Millis presented the following bills for payment:

#958	Norma Yaeger recording secretary	\$60.00
#959	Ruim Equipment – tractor repair	\$46.97
#960	Ruim Equipment – lawn mower repair	\$23.52
#961	Cindy Anderson – wood for birdhouses	\$116.12
#962	Cindy Anderson – birdhouses	\$31.55
#963	United Horticultural Supply – grass seed	\$300.00
#964	Leon Fisher – aerials (park development fund)	\$18.00
#965	J & S Photo – photo development	\$6.24
#966	Joan Millis – photo album & film	\$27.97
#967	Schilling Lumber – treated wood	\$37.68
#968	Schilling Lumber – refinished benches	\$54.02
#969	Nelsons Construction – grading	\$567.86
#970	Wheeler Appraisers – appraisal	\$1,050.00
#971	Willie & Stern – appraisal	\$1,100.00
#972	Kevin Gates – basketball	\$40.00
#973	Pam Zych – volleyball	\$60.00
#974	Liz Feeney – aerobics	\$57.00
#975	Nipsco – Homestead Park light	\$50.16
#976	Nipsco – Larimer Park light	\$17.54
#977	Merrillville Herald – survey	\$235.00

Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke, to accept the submitted bills as read. Passed unanimously.

ANY & ALL

Carnival Fundraiser (Wabash Valley Shows) – Joan Millis presented information about a 4-day carnival available the week proceeding July 4 as a fundraiser for the Park Board. She noted that St. John Evangelist holds a carnival July 19-21. The carnival handles their own electrical power and manpower. Local people sometimes sell and collect tickets at the event; no pre-event ticket sales are required. Paul Haller noted the potential for fundraising; Board members expressed concerns for providing land, insurance (they have their own), land owners insurance, parking, the short notice (6 weeks, with commitment required by next week), security, visibility, booths for other organizations, and advertising. The 5-acre site north of the Apollo on Hwy 41, east of Wall Street, was discussed as a possible location.

J. Taylor expressed reservations about the close timing with the St. John Evangelist event. He offered to talk to the Parish Council about the possible conflict.

- Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke, to table the proposal to have Wabash Valley Shows put on a carnival until more information is available. Passed unanimously.

Prairie West Water Fountain - Linda Bolin inquired whether a water fountain would be installed in Prairie West Park. Joan Millis indicated that the fountain is scheduled to be installed as soon as the weather is appropriate.

St. John Evangelist Overflow Parking - Joan Millis presented a request from St. John Evangelist to use Prairie West (near the modular home) for overflow parking during their carnival. There are sidewalks from the park to the church for pedestrians. Paul Haller expressed concern for the possible damage to the grass and cars driving over the sidewalks; it was noted that sufficient parking has always been available for the event.

Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded that the Park Board not approve the request for overflow parking in Prairie West park for the summer carnival. Passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to adjourn the meeting. Passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

By: /s/ Norma R. Yaeger
Recording Secretary