

PARK BOARD
ST. JOHN, INDIANA
December 2, 1997

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

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| Attendee 1, Joan Millis | Attendee 4, |
| Attendee 2, Mary Anne Koke | Attendee 5, |
| Attendee 3, Paul Haller | Attendee 6, |

The following members absent:

- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| Absent 1, | Absent 4 |
| Absent 2, | Absent 5 |
| Absent 3, | Absent 6 |

CALL TO ORDER

The December 2nd meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m. followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke, to approve the minutes of the November 4th meeting. Passed.

OLD BUSINESS

[St. John Heartland Park](#)

This item was left on the agenda for future discussions of development of the park.

[Parks - Grass Cutting](#)

Joan Millis distributed copies of a memorandum written by Charles Williams, Director of St. John Public Works, to the Utility Board. The memo objects to the proposed

schedule of payment of salaries, wages, and fees, and the distribution of salaries among the budget areas. The memo objects to a proposed allocation of \$37,337.82 of Park Board budget to supplement Public Works employee salaries (a combination of 1/2 of both Herman Monix's and Fred Tipfer's salaries, and 5% of Rick Stroh's salary.

Joan Millis noted that Herman and Fred work 6 months each year for the Park Board; Fred can drive the equipment, and does mowing and trimming. Joan also felt that some less expensive options were available and should be more seriously investigated before April 1. She has the applications received from various companies earlier this year. Joan will try to obtain the final copies of the approved budget to better understand the figures.

Mary Anne Koke inquired how to proceed with the budget issues. Joan Millis felt that the budget could be changed by ordinance for the Park Board budget.

[New Playground Equipment](#)

The additional appropriation of \$15,000 requested out of the budget has not been approved by "downstate." Funds to support the purchase of recycled materials also have not been received.

NEW BUSINESS

[Park Board Meeting Date](#)

At the request of the recording secretary, the meeting date change is proposed to move the meeting day away from adjacent nights with the Plan Commission meeting (1st Tuesday and 1st Wednesday). Joan proposed that the meeting be moved to the 4th Tuesday; the Town Council president felt there would be minimal conflict with the Drainage Board also scheduled for that time.

- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to hold the monthly Park Board meeting on the 4th Tuesday of each month, beginning January 1, 1998 at 7:00 p.m. Passed.

REPORTS

[Programs](#)

Average attendance and monies spent and received for each program for the months of October and November were presented. Aerobics is -\$88, basketball is +\$95, and coed volleyball is +\$29.

Joan Millis distributed copies of police reports filed after the police were called to a skirmish of 4 people at the ball game on November 11th. Carl Dekker, coordinator of the games, felt that three of the four should be barred from future attendance, as they have caused similar disturbances in the past. Officers were asked to attend later games to prevent any possible trouble.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Joan Millis presented the following bills for payment:

2433	Norma Yaeger	\$60.00	Recording secretary
2434	Hardesty Surveying	\$1002.50	Heartland Park sub-plat
2435	Debra Rokosz	\$100.00	Aerobics
2436	Carl Decker	\$40.00	Basketball
2437	Susan Hynek	\$100.00	Aerobics
2438	Pam Zych	\$40.00	Volleyball
2439	Post Tribune	\$112.26	Legal notice
2440	Nipsco	\$42.62	Dusk to dawn lights

- Motion by Mary Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to pay all bills as submitted. Passed unanimously.

ANY AND ALL

Paul Haller noted that at noon on November 24th, he and Joan Millis were present as witnesses at a special conference in the Clerk Treasurer's office where John Speer opened bids. At 12:01p.m. two community leaders and a newspaper reporter entered and stated that the meeting was illegal, as it was not a public meeting. An article appeared in the Times claiming that "the illegal meeting was an embarrassment to the Town President and to the people of St. John." Paul stated that if the meeting were found to be illegal, and that what he and Joan had done was wrong, then he intended to write a public letter of apology to the Park Board and the people of St. John and resign from the Board.

However, to determine whether the meeting was illegal, the Town's Clerk Treasurer called "downstate" to Jim McGaw, and was assured that the meeting was not illegal. A precedent had been set by the bid openings for new sewers. However, Paul felt that he and Joan carried a stigma caused by the newspaper's article, which he wanted to remove. He asked how best to correct this. Joan offered to write an editorial. Paul requested that the legal opinion on the legality of the meeting should be received in writing. Mary Anne Koke felt that no apology was necessary from Paul, but rather, the press owed Paul and Joan an apology; she suggested that the press be invited to further investigate the matter to straighten out any misunderstanding.

Public Remonstrance

Joe Hero of St. John remonstrated against the issuance of the Park Board bonds because:

- The area in which the bid opening was held was not a public area and the public did not have access to it.
- The prospectus put out to the bonders did not designate the liens on the property.
- A \$55,000 capacity charge has not been collected of which the bond bidders were not aware.
- At the November 4th Park Board meeting, the board modified a resolution describing how the bonds are let; a public hearing was not held on the amendment.

- The prospectus indicated that there was a contract with the Park "department" for the construction of the facility; he knows of no such contract and felt this was a misrepresentation of fact.
- The prospectus should be corrected to reflect the liens on the property and the unpaid capacity charge.
- The three bids were filled out by the financial consultant on blank sheets based on phone conversations with the bidders. On one of the bid forms, he is listed as the agent for one of the bidders. This appears to be a conflict of interest for the financial consultant, regardless of whether he received remuneration.
- The official bond sale notice stated that sealed bids would be opened and considered by the Clerk Treasurer; the meeting was continued to another time without notification to the public.
- New bids were resubmitted by fax and signed by different persons on the bid forms; the ones signed by the Town's financial consultant should be eliminated. These were not presented for public consideration.
- All the bids were not in conformance with the bond sale notice in the way they were sent to the Clerk Treasurer, as all the envelopes were prepared by Mr. Speer and given to J. Companik, therefore, the \$1.01 million bond issue is not valid.
- The meeting was reconvened at 3:45 PM after Mr. Hero left and was therefore not a public meeting.
- In addition, no rent or revenue has been collected on the land since activity started last July, although revenues have been exchanged on Town or Park Board property. The Park Board has an obligation to collect rent "or something". Any private person would have collected rent.
- The building permits should be paid. The Town Council does not have the right to waive ordinances for building permits (estimated at \$100,000) for selected individuals.

Paul Haller inquired about the source of the \$55,000.00 capacity fee. Mr. Hero said it came from the Sanitary Board meeting.

[Additional Meeting](#)

Joan Millis asked Board Members to attend a special Park Board meeting on Monday, December 29th at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke, to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

By: /s/ Norma R. Yaeger
Recording Secretary