

PARK BOARD
ST. JOHN, INDIANA
January 27, 1998

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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, Eileen Butcher
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 January 27th meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- Motion by Joan Millis, seconded by Mary Anne Koke, to nominate Eileen Butcher as President. Passed unanimously.
- Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Eileen Butcher, to nominate Mary Anne Koke as Vice President. Passed unanimously.
- Motion by Eileen Butcher, seconded by Joan Millis, to approve Norma Yaeger as Recording Secretary. Passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Eileen Butcher, to approve the minutes of the December 29, 1997 meeting and the January 19, 1998 Executive Session as printed. Passed unanimously.

The minutes of the January 19th Executive Session were signed by Eileen Butcher and Paul Haller.

OLD BUSINESS

[St. John Heartland Park](#)

Joan Millis asked David Wickland for an update on the Ice Rink. He indicated he would attend Park Board meetings during the remaining construction until it is operational, and until the ground lease is assigned to the Park Board. He stressed that St. John is not involved in the financing; it is only the landlord of the ground lease.

On January 13th the developer, i.e., tenant or lessee of the ground (St John Limited Liability Company) was supposed to close their loan. The intent was to pay the contractor and subcontractors all unpaid sums. Information was received on Jan. 14 that they did not close because of the Gomeztagle litigation, and because the on-site manager, Carl Sutton, shorted the construction costs by about \$1 million. As of January 13, no rent has been paid under the lease; December and January payments are in default. The sewer capacity fee and one month's NIPSCO bill had not been paid; all payments were expected to become current upon the close of the loan. In addition, they had allowed mechanic liens to be filed by the subcontractors, in violation of the lease.

The Town had already received notice of the insurance company's intent to cancel insurance as of February 1st without payment. Because David Wickland felt the Town should be protected, he and John Taylor agreed to issue a notice of default on January 15th pursuant to the terms of the lease. The developer's attorney responded that the financing would be worked out, and asked for a 30-day extension. David Wickland and John Taylor agreed to a 10-day extension, beginning Monday 1/26, if they paid the insurance and the Nipsco bill; these have been done in good faith. Their attorney has stated that financing is expected to proceed, and that the facility would be complete and operational in a 30-day period, including the second sheet of ice and the health club.

David Wickland noted that the intent is for the Town to assign the ground lease to the Park Board. It is inappropriate to assign it now because of the litigation and because the structure is incomplete. The manager has been removed and replaced by another investor. Future negotiation and possible litigation precluded additional discussion.

[Parks Grass Cutting](#)

Joan Millis noted that now is the time to pursue a decision; applications from last summer are on file in the Public Works office. The ordinance was changed last year to a minimum \$7/hr wage, same as the meter readers. Mary Anne Koke expressed her interest in finding college students to work with Freddie, whose salary is already allocated in the budget for \$15,000. Freddie is familiar with the equipment, the parks, and land contours.

[New Playground Equipment: Lantern View Park](#)

Joan Millis indicated that NuToys is requesting colors for the new equipment. Eileen Butcher felt that the colors of the equipment at St. Margaret Mercy are attractive. Joan Millis reminded Board members that a 40' stretch of sidewalk needs to be installed once the equipment is in place.

[Nipsco Grant](#)

Eileen Butcher reported that she has been in touch with Nipsco to determine what they want to see in the grant for the Bull Run area from 93rd to Homestead, east of Olcott. The application is due on February 14th. Nipsco has requested additional information on the timeframe for the project. Approval for the project has already been received from the County Drainage Board.

David Wickland noted that Nipsco is building a transmission or transfer station in St. John, which will require a special use permit. The property has been purchased and they have agreed to donate part of their property for use according to the Master Plan. They are interested in working with the Town, and may be more receptive to the grant application.

NEW BUSINESS

[Prairie West Park Chemicals](#)

Mr. Colin McNamara of Aquatic Weed Control at 113 N 600 W, Valparaiso, discussed his treatment of the Homestead, Lewis, and Prairie West ponds last summer. He noted that Prairie West required 14 gallons of a widely used chemical defoliant known as Reward, however, this amount should have serviced a 30-acre lake, not a 4-acre pond. The chemical carries no restrictions for use of the lake (fishing or swimming) during application.

Mr. McNamara explained that this 4' deep pond retains water and has an exotic plant known as Eurasian watermilfoil, which thrives in this climate and grows a solid mass of plant from the bottom to the top. He felt that starting in July last year was too late to affect the growth. The chemical that should have been absorbed in the first 3 hours could not penetrate the mass of foliage. Two weeks later, another 4 gallons were added. The pond would need to be 8-10' deep to control this plant.

Homestead pond, about 2 acres, receives less nutrient runoff from lawns and does not have the same kind of plant growth. It reacted very well to the 3 gallons of Reward. However, he noted that when the watermilfoil was under control, its reduced use of the nutrients allowed the algae to thrive. But he felt the algae will always be problem given the legal limits on the amount of chemicals that can be used. The Cutrine chemical used on algae is a copper solution that settles to the bottom, but will cause the bottom to turn blue and rises to the surface as a scum.

Joan Millis inquired about the effectiveness of the new aerators and fountain on the algae. Mr. McNamara noted that they stir up the nutrients and are beneficial to the fish, but they slow down the growth of the macrophytes (submersed plants) and help platonic algae bloom. The weeds killed by the nutrients fall to the bottom, rot, and release additional nutrients for the algae, being spread by the fountain. Joan noted that the

fountains and aerators will be reinstalled when the weather gets warmer. Mr. McNamara recommended starting the chemical program the end of May; he further recommended reducing the number of geese.

Mr. McNamara also discussed a new chemical, Sonar, for Prairie West which he has found effective for other retention ponds. It has been expensive but is expected to become less expensive through Griffith Industries. This size pond would require 5 quarts two times, at \$400/quart (at current prices). It has no restrictions, is slow to work, and must be concentrated for 14 days, starting the end of April or when the plants are present.

Mr. McNamara was asked to prepare another proposal for the ponds prior to the April meeting, including Reward and Cutrine, and to plan to attend the meeting to review his suggestions.

Mike Ryan inquired about the toxicity of the chemicals. They are not toxic and do not accumulate in the fatty tissues of fish. Once it reaches the bottom clay, it remains bound there.

REPORTS

Programs

Average attendance and monies spent and received for each program for the first three weeks of January were presented. Net results are as follows:

- ◆ Aerobics: -\$49
- ◆ Men's Basketball: +\$43
- ◆ Coed Volleyball: +\$51
- ◆ Net income: +\$45

Paul Haller inquired about the attendance at aerobics. The average attendance of 8 in January is significantly reduced from prior levels. Joan felt that Kolling might have another room available for Men's Basketball so that another session could be offered by the same instructor.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Joan Millis presented the following bills for payment:

80	Norma Yaeger	\$60.00	Recording secretary
81	Bingham	\$22,000.00	Legal services
82	Carl Decker	\$30.00	Basketball
83	Susan Hynek	\$50.00	Aerobics
84	Debra Rokosz	\$100.00	Aerobics
85	Pam Zych	\$60.00	Volleyball
86	Nipsco	\$44.96	Dusk to dawn lights
87	Meyer's	\$80.00	
88	B & D Sewer	\$14,694.64	Ice rink dirt hauling

- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Eileen Butcher, to approve bills 80-88 as submitted. Passed unanimously.

ANY AND ALL

Joan Millis received a letter from Bill Swindle of the Girl's Softball League requesting sponsorship of a team, which the Park Board has done in the past for \$250.

- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Eileen Butcher, to sponsor a Girl's Softball team for \$250. Passed unanimously.

Joan Millis presented a quote for \$750.00 from Ruim Equipment for service maintenance on two tractors to be ready for spring grass cutting. She asked Jerry Spohn of Public Works to determine whether he could do the work; he agreed he could for the cost of his hours and parts.

- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to approve the preparation of the two tractors by Jerry Spohn of St. John Public Works prior to grass cutting season. Passed unanimously.

Joan Millis noted that the extension on the rental of the house at 10616 White Oak Avenue at Heartland Park will be handled through the Town Council as lessor, since it is properly owned by the Town.

Joe Hero approached the Board and requested that copies of his remonstrance at the December 29th meeting be attached to the minutes of the Board meeting. He asked that copies of his current remonstrance be attached to the January 27th minutes.

Mr. Hero asked that the Park Board Chairman request an investigation by the State Police into the financial matters concerning Heartland Park, the general obligation bonds, and the lease. He inquired about the location of the money needed to pay the general obligation bonds, liens, electric and sewer bills, i.e., the rent expected since last July. The property has been occupied since July, but the capacity fee has not been paid and he asked how the project could go on so long with it being collected. He stated that the Park Board is required to have and accumulate funds to pay off the general obligation funds.

He asked the Park Board to take legal action to secure the payments and to notify the bondholders of "whatever is going on" and further suggested that the Park Board check to be sure that the electric and insurance bills have been totally paid.

Mr. Hero inquired about the location of the waiver of liens for the money paid by the bond issue. He asked how the Town Council could vote on the lease on 12/30/97, given all the current problems and liens in place, and asked that this be investigated. He asked who was the "real beneficiary" of the lease, suggesting that it was not the people of St. John. He inquired about the location of the letter of commitment for the funds or letter of credit for construction. He felt the people of the Town of St. John were not properly protected.

Why did the Town file the lease in the Recorder's Office on January 15th on the same day the notice of default was given. Since the Park Board is the taxing body for the Town for this bond issue, and the money must be accumulated to be paid back, how will this be done.

Mr. Wickland responded that Mr. Hero's statements were too outlandish to merit a response. However, if the Park Board so requested, he would look into the questions and respond by letter. He felt most of the questions have been answered both tonight and in the past, but most of them were meaningless. Paul Haller inquired whether having the letter from Mr. Wickland would result in an apology from Mr. Hero; members agreed this was not likely. The Park Board declined the offer. Mr. Wickland stated he felt everything was in order.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Joan Millis, to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

By: /s/ Norma R. Yaeger
Recording Secretary