

PARK BOARD
ST. JOHN, INDIANA
June 22, 1999

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

Attendee 1, Eileen Butcher	Attendee 4,
Attendee 2, Mary Anne Koke	Attendee 5, David Wickland, Attorney
Attendee 3, Paul Haller	Attendee 6,

The following members absent:

Absent 1, Fred Kish, Council Liaison	Absent 4
Absent 2, Joan Millis	Absent 5
Absent 3,	Absent 6

CALL TO ORDER

The monthly meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

In the absence of copies of the minutes, the approval was tabled until the July meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

[St. John Heartland Park / Girls Softball Fields](#)

Eileen Butcher noted that no fencing for the softball fields has been started by Reeves Fencing. Joan Millis has called them numerous times, since the work was supposed to have been started last week. Mary Anne Koke felt the bidder is no longer interested, and suggested that the project be put out to bid again; bids were taken last fall for the awarding of the contract in October. David Wickland has suggested to Eileen that the Park Board pass a resolution asking him to send Reeves a letter, setting a date for the

initiation of work, e.g., two weeks. Paul Haller agreed that it would be good to have the legalities in writing.

John Homolka, speaking from the audience, noted that regardless of the fencing, the two fields planned at Heartland are inadequate for girls softball and he is not willing to split up the league. He then inquired about the location of the walking path which appears to go through the softball fields; it appeared he had the February 1997 version of the drawings which have since changed. John requested a copy of the Park Board's 5-year plan, and requested clarification on the proposed soccer fields (none are now planned - volleyball courts are proposed). The walking path passes through the separation of the softball fields.

John inquired about the location of the proposed gazebo and concession stands; girls softball is dependent on the income from their concession stand to support the league. Eileen Butcher reiterated that the Town will not build a concession stand to compete with girls softball. The stand at East Complex is not portable, plus the softball league would construct a larger facility at Heartland. Eileen Butcher and John Homolka referred to a problem in Dyer regarding the concession stand.

John discussed his preference for an arrangement with the Park Board for exclusive access to the fields for the active months of their season, i.e., to prevent rental to other teams. Eileen Butcher suggested that the girls softball teams be given access on certain days; men's softball is not interested in the fields without lighting. John noted that the boys baseball have been given a dedicated place to play on Town property (Civic Park), and that girls should receive equal treatment, e.g., fields with access to sewer and water, etc. He cited Grant Park and Cedar Lake as having dedicated fields. Eileen noted that Civic Park belongs to the Town, not to the Park Board. John inquired how long the boys have been playing there; it has to be 15 years or longer.

Eileen suggested that John approach the Town Council for additional funds, noting that for the first six months, the Park Board budget has been \$56,000.00, the majority of which is committed to grass cutting. On July 1, the Park Board expects to receive another \$20,000.00 allocation. She noted how many subdivision parks still have no playground equipment. The implementation of the impact fees will help somewhat.

Returning to the recommendation on the fencing issue, Paul Haller felt that Reeves had broken their commitment to the Park Board and preferred to start over. Mary Anne Koke recommended setting a date by which work must begin, such as July 7, and at the same time, request new bids to be received by July 15.

- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to request David Wickland to write to Reeves Fencing, spelling out the urgency of the need for fencing in Heartland Park. If work is not started by July 7, the previous agreement will be rescinded to seek other bids for the job. Paul Haller inquired about the work agreement versus contract. This was acceptable to other Park Board members. Passed unanimously on voice vote.
- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to actively pursue open bids for fencing for the girls softball fields to be received to July 15 to be awarded at the regular July meeting. Passed unanimously on voice vote.

Eileen Butcher noted that John Taylor met with Reeves Fencing last week to review the fencing for the boys baseball fields. The factual basis of this was uncertain. As for the rumor that the contractor might not get paid, P. Haller noted that the funds are already allocated out of the bond money.

Eileen Butcher inquired whether the girls softball representatives present were prepared to pay half the \$65.00 fee for the special porta-potty; there were.

[St. John Heartland Park / Volleyball Courts](#)

Paul Haller requested that this item be tabled. Eileen Butcher noted that she had visited Wicker Park to review the poles and whether they could be replicated.

[Basketball Courts \(Homestead Acres / Lancer Estates\)](#)

Resurfacing is waiting on a source of funding. Mary Anne Koke inquired whether the courts are playable; they are, they just need upgrading. Eileen Butcher noted that Civic Park was recently resurfaced.

[Sun Meadows Easement Encroachment](#)

David Wickland recommended that the Park Board take action to request Tim Foley or Kenn Kraus to visit the site and shoot some shots (sightings, not photographs) to find out who is still encroaching. David Wickland will then send individual letters, allowing 30 days for compliance; after that, the Town will sue. Eileen Butcher offered to contact Tim and Kenn to determine their schedules; Mary Anne Koke offered to be available to accompany them. Paul Haller inquired about possible costs. A survey was estimated at \$6,000.00; this is not the intent of this recommendation.

[Prairie West / Fountain](#)

Eileen Butcher presented a letter from Aquatic Eco-Systems, Inc. explaining an estimate for \$585.20 to repair the fountain that was mailed to them earlier this month. Each of the Park Board members gave verbal approval on 6/8 or 6/9 for the expense.

Motion by Paul Haller, seconded Mary Anne Koke, to accept and approve the cost of the repairs as submitted by Aquatic Eco-Systems. Passed unanimously on voice vote.

[Prairie West Park / Fishing](#)

Joan Millis sent a letter to the Town Council regarding the Prairie West residents' concern over the number of out-of-town residents fishing at the pond. David Wickland has suggested that the Park Board recommend to the Town Council that only St. John residents be allowed to fish in the ponds. Paul Haller noted that when the land was donated, it was specified that there would be no formalized sports and no fishing. Eileen Butcher noted that the Boy Scouts have had an annual fishing outing at the pond.

Paul has noted Illinois cars parked at the park; these may be new residents just moving to the area. He noted that his car is registered to his business in Illinois. He inquired

how the Town would enforce an ordinance banning non-residents; the Police Department could request proof of residency and would have to handle each situation. He did not want to punish the Town for the actions of a few. Mary Anne Koke suggested that since the residents around the lake are the most bothered by adults fishing, they will have to call the police to do the checking. She suggested that only reason to re-do the ordinance is to give the police "some legal bite."

Mary Anne Koke noted that Joan's letter requests an opinion from the Town Council; this has not been received. Mr. Wickland has offered to conduct the discussion with the Town Council at their next study session.

Mary Anne Koke suggested that fishing be limited to instructional or recreational fishing, i.e., and an adult with a child. Paul recalled that the Park Board at one time had intended to limit fishing to children only. Homestead Park already has a sign posted for no fishing or swimming. Eileen Butcher inquired whether the Prairie West pond is stocked; it is stocked by an anonymous donor.

- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, that the Park Board, with the unanimous approval of the Town Council, passes an ordinance limiting fishing at all St. John ponds to St. John residents. Discussion: Paul suggested adding the recommendation that children should be accompanied by or supervised by an adult. The age limit of the children could not be agreed upon. Passed unanimously on voice vote.

[Sierra Pointe Development, LLC](#)

A new development on the east side of U.S. 41 is working with the Plan Commission to commence construction on a 40-acre site on the northeast corner of 93rd and Marquette, consisting of 70 single family home sites to be developed in three phases over three years. Rich Wolf indicated his preference to donate the impact fee rather than land, as all the land for the homes is needed to make the project feasible. A two-acre detention basin and a two-acre wetland are impacting the site, and neither is appropriate for parkland. The development is very near East Park Complex, and even though the Town will be losing the use of the park, the Board preferred to receive the funds as offered by the developer (about \$720.00 per home site permit). Fifteen to twenty homes are scheduled to begin construction by the end of the year.

- Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke, to accept the developer's offer of the impact fee in lieu of land donation for the Sierra Pointe development. Passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Mary Anne Koke inquired whether the Boy Scouts could be asked to return to weed and improve the circle of plantings in front of the Town Hall. This is not the purview of the Park Board.

REPORTS – PROGRAMS

No program reports were presented. Eileen Butcher reported that Pam Zych has 8 teams participating in volleyball. She will determine whether the funds were deposited in the Park Board budget (about \$900.00) instead of the Fitness Center.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Mary Anne Koke inquired whether the funds remaining in the budget had to be spent before the allocation from the second draw on July 1; she and Paul felt that funds not spent would be returned to the Town. The bills to be approved at this meeting, plus the repair to the fountain, would not equal the balance of the funds remaining. She inquired whether the Park Board could put \$10,000.00 toward equipment or a project; however, a purchase order would be necessary. She then inquired whether the funds could be “earmarked” or “escrowed” for the Sun Meadows survey project and related legal fees. If the funds were not needed, they would be returned to the Park Board.

Eileen Butcher read the bills as follows:

1533	Norma Yaeger	\$60.00, recording secretary
1534	Quality Auto Parts	\$10.42
1535	Pam Zych	\$159.96, 4 new volleyballs
1536	K-Mart	\$61.85, stakes and rakes
1537	St. John Postmaster	\$33.00, stamps
1538	Mail Boxes USA	\$60.79, fountain shipment
1539	Nipsco	\$42.62, lights
1540	Lake Central Schools	\$93.13, rental of volleyball courts
1541	Bruce’s Septic	\$480.00, porta-potties
1542	UAP / Richter	\$4,250.00, lawn seed
1543	J.M. Crist	\$8,000.00, parking lot entrance
1544	AAA Supply	\$291.84, 8” corrugated pipe

It was unclear what voucher 1544 was for, as no explanation was provided. Park Board members preferred to know about the expense before approving it.

- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to approve the bills as read except Voucher #1544 to AAA Supply, and 1543 to J.M. Crist Co (\$8000) per note from Joan Millis to hold, and to approve Voucher 1542 to UAP (\$4250) for grass seed which comes out of park bond fund. Passed unanimously on voice vote.
- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to place \$11,000.00 in escrow to be used for surveying and legal fees incurred with the Sun Meadows Park encroachment. Passed unanimously on voice vote.

ANY AND ALL BUSINESS

Eileen Butcher noted that in July the Park Board will have some extra funds, and would like to receive bids to complete the park at Prairie West, i.e., playground equipment. The next park for review would be Edgewood. Mary Anne Koke recalled that Sun Meadows requested re-grading for a field. There is a field and the playground equipment is on a hill.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 p.m. Passed unanimously on voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

By: /s/ Norma R. Yaeger
Recording Secretary