

**PARK BOARD**  
**ST. JOHN, INDIANA**  
**July 27, 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, Paul Haller              |
| Attendee 2, Joan Millis    | Attendee 5, David Wickland, Attorney |
| Attendee 3, Mary Anne Koke | Attendee 6,                          |

The following members absent:

- |                                      |          |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| Absent 1, Fred Kish, Council Liaison | Absent 4 |
| Absent 2,                            | Absent 5 |
| Absent 3,                            | Absent 6 |

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to approve the minutes of the May 25<sup>th</sup> and June 22<sup>nd</sup> meetings. Discussion: Mary Anne Koke noted that the date on the May 25 minutes should be changed from May 26 to May 25. Passed unanimously on voice vote.

**OLD BUSINESS**

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

In the absence of a girls softball representative, this agenda item was tabled until later in the meeting.

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

Eileen Butcher noted that the volleyball league now has 8 teams playing at Homestead Acres. Additional interested teams were turned away due to lack of space. Joan Millis explained that only one bid was received from the three letters sent out requesting bids for the courts. Metro's proposal for the cost of construction included two alternatives: one for sand, stone and drainage fabric came in at \$21,630; the other method uses sand, stone and cover tile for \$16,950.00.

- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Joan Millis, to approve the expenditure of Metro's bid for \$16,950 for six sand volleyball courts at Heartland Park, contingent on the condition that no viable or real offers to purchase the Ice Arena are received by the Town Clerk before the next Park Board meeting, subject to review by David Wickland.

Discussion: Paul Haller questioned the need for additional courts, since there are eight teams this year, the same as there have been in the past. He asked how many more could be accommodated with the new courts. Mary Anne Koke noted that last evening there were 34 cars at Homestead Acres, with at least 45 young people and families at the park using the two volleyball courts, the children's playground equipment, and the picnic facilities. She felt the park facilities are serving a valuable "taxpaying" element of the St. John residents. Joan Millis noted that Pam Zych's teams provide the maintenance for the courts, i.e., raking and weeding. Eileen Butcher noted that Larimer and Civic Park have poles that could accommodate nets, and that the parks could be better utilized more evenings of each week. She noted that the construction cost of the courts does not include additional costs of netting, balls and "other finishing work."

Paul Haller inquired whether the courts had to be sand, and whether the teams could play on grass or gym courts as a way to provide the courts at a reduced cost. Joan Millis noted that the sand courts are designed as outdoor courts. Paul inquired whether the organized leagues had specific court requirements that he is not aware of.

A member of the audience inquired whether funds would still be available to finish the girls' softball fields, since 175 girls are already committed to and active in their sport. He felt that the Board should concentrate on existing facilities that need finishing before diversifying into other sports. He suggested that Larimer and Homestead be more fully utilized. Mary Anne Koke responded that the six adjoining volleyball courts are as necessary for that sport as the four adjoining softball fields are for the softball players.

Eileen Butcher stated that there very possibly is a viable buyer for the Ice Arena. Paul Haller inquired who the buyer is; David Wickland responded that, for the Town Council's and Ad Hoc Committee's negotiating purposes, he was not at liberty to override the confidentiality of the process. Paul Haller asked how he could "be honest with a phantom buyer." David Wickland confirmed that there is no concrete proposal, but that one may be expected shortly. Paul Haller and Mary Anne Koke expressed some frustration with the Park Board's exclusion from the information and their resulting inability to work with the Ice Arena and Heartland park development.

Eileen Butcher requested another 30 days to conclude Ice Arena matters; Mary Anne Koke concurred that that was her intent in the statement of the motion. Paul Haller, in reference to the Park Board's last meeting which was cancelled due to meeting rule

legalities, concluded that “the same group has deceived the Park Board”. He suggested the group was being represented by Mr. Jerry Rudy who had provided a copy of the meeting rules. Mr. Rudy objected that he speaks only for himself as a town resident. Paul Haller continued to feel “deceived and misled”, creating suspicion “of this group and their constant demands.” He expressed his intent to fulfill his Park Board obligation to provide the Town with recreational facilities.

A member of the audience expressed her feeling of deceit with the Town Council and specifically with John Taylor’s various statements and contrary actions. Paul Haller expressed his personal preference to have the Arena sold, but as a Park Board member, he wants to meet the residents’ demands for sports courts in the most cost effective way. The audience member concurred that the Town should act as a municipality, not a business. Another audience member suggested that the vote be delayed 30 days, since the volleyball season is almost over. Eileen Butcher recommended that additional bids be sought in the meantime. An audience member inquired how much of the original \$1.001 million bond money remains; there is \$41,000.00. Audience members inquired about the urgency of completing the courts this summer. Joan Millis suggested that considerable time can be lost if construction is delayed until the spring. She also noted that several companies had donated time and services to work on the ditch and remove dirt to prepare the ground at the park, since Public Works’ backhoe could not handle the load. Speaking from the audience, John Herr suggested that if bids came in too high, they should be rejected, and new requests issued based on new specs. David Wickland responded that the request was for proposals, not for formal bids. He felt there was no problem in asking for additional bids. John agreed with the suggestion that the decision be postponed, as courts could still be installed before winter and be ready when next summer’s league begins playing.

Pam Zych, volleyball director, explained that while there are different divisions, St. John can only participate in one division; more courts would enable more teams to play in more divisions, and generate more income for the Park Board. Two teams were turned away when the eight teams reached the maximum that could be accommodated. P. Haller inquired whether there are local people in the different divisions; they are drawn from the entire area. He inquired whether the courts are available to casual players; they are. He inquired about the court specifications for sand volleyball; Pam explained that the sand is safer when players dive and fall. She noted that the Lake County Convention and Visitors Bureau is looking for a site to host a tournament, as there are few available in the state of Indiana.

Paul inquired whether the sand courts required a lot of replacement sand; Pam responded that they do not. Courts that were installed two and four years ago have not required refilling, but that drainage can be a more significant detriment to the sand. Paul inquired whether the volleyball leagues would expect the Park Board to provide uniforms or logos; they will not. Only the nets and balls would constitute an ongoing expense.

An audience member inquired who would decide if an offer to purchase the Ice Arena is a “viable” offer. David Wickland responded that the Town Council and the Ad Hoc Committee would make that decision. Eileen Butcher closed the discussion and called for the vote.

- Motion died on a tie vote: (Aye) Mary Anne Koke, Joan Millis (Nay) Eileen Butcher, and Paul Haller.
- Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke, to seek companies to submit additional bids for construction of the courts. Passed unanimously on voice vote. Eileen Butcher offered to locate additional companies.

#### [St. John Heartland Park / Continuing Disclosure Agreement](#)

David Wickland explained that an annual review is required by the bond counsel to update the status of the bond issue, as required by the provisions of the bond. He offered to find out how often this expense would recur (\$2600 this year). Eileen Butcher noted that this year, the bill will be paid out of bond money, but the future expenses would have to come out of the Park budget.

Motion by Joan Millis, seconded by Paul Haller, to approve and sign the Continuing Disclosure Agreement. Passed unanimously on voice vote.

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

There is no change in the status, as insufficient funds have been identified for the resurfacing. About \$6,000.00 may be available from recycling funds; Kathy Willman will check on this.

#### [Sun Meadows Easement Encroachment](#)

Eileen Butcher reported that she and Tim Foley had walked around the park and found it difficult to tell from the boundary markers which homeowners were still encroaching on the park property. David Wickland suggested that she contact Kenn Kraus for assistance in making this determination before letters are sent to homeowners.

#### [Prairie West Park Fishing](#)

David Wickland reported that this item will be on the agenda for the July 29<sup>th</sup> Town Council meeting to make fishing in St. John ponds available only to St. John residents. Paul Haller inquired about the developer's original requirements for the property; David Wickland felt the issue had been resolved.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### [Kilkenny Estates Park Water Storage Tank](#)

Ken Johnson and Jerry Rudy of the Water Works Commission expressed their intent to work with the Park Board in selecting a location for the new west water tank which was included in the final approvals granted by the Plan Commission. Jerry posted a site preparation plan of the Kilkenny and Edgewood Parks (7.81 acres) which abut near Calumet Ave and 89<sup>th</sup> Ave. Access is from a cul-de-sac and from Edgewood. Approval for the tank is needed in 1999-2000 to begin construction on the new tank to provide stable water pressure, fire protection for the west side, and to reduce demand on the pumps. The current maximum storage capacity is 610,000 gallons; all residential water

currently comes from storage. By 2010, the Town will need between 1.3 and 1.7 million gallons of storage and probably another facility on the East side of Town.

Jerry questioned whether the Park Board had accepted the land; it has not. He explained that the fenced and elevated water tank needs about to be located

- on land about 100' x 100' (or larger depending on the final shape of the bowl),
- on the highest possible ground that will support it,
- away from residential homes,
- with occasional access for maintenance,
- with the least negative impact on the two parks.

A corner location is preferred, ideally the southwest corner of Kilkenny, just north of Edgewood Park on high ground, bounded on two sides by heavy tree cover, where the fewest homes would be built. The tank will take about 18 months to build once the site is identified. Soil borings and preliminary engineering need to begin immediately; he requested approval for two locations so that soil borings could be done at the same time. Water and Sanitation are scheduled next week to make decisions about the site. Construction timing makes it imperative that the tank not sit idle over the winter months.

Joan Millis inquired whether the water tank needed to be located near the 12" line coming in from Calumet Ave. Jerry noted that there is a 12" line approved for Edgewood, creating a 250' run to the tank. Joan noted that there is an easement from 89<sup>th</sup> Court, which gives access to Edgewood Park. Mary Anne Koke inquired about fencing; Jerry explained the need for security from sabotage, so the fence would probably be at least 8' high.

Mary Anne Koke also inquired whether the 7.8 acres did or did not include room for the water tank; J. Herr noted that the Plan Commission allowed additional space for the water tank without reducing the proportionate size of the park for the number of lots in the development. Jerry inquired whether the Park Board has the deed: Joan Millis noted that when some developments are finalized, the park is noted as "public park dedication" which may replace the deed, but since the land is not developed, it is still owned by the Kilkenny developer. David Wickland offered to contact Mike Muenich regarding the deed.

Paul Haller inquired whether the water tank plans had any implications for bringing Lake Michigan water to St. John. Jerry noted that two groups are actively studying the financial, economic and engineering options for the next 20 years, with reports due in late August. He offered to provide the results of the reports to the Park Board, along with the results of the soil borings.

- Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke, to approve the request from the Water Works Board to start testing for the suitability of the proposed west water tank in Kilkenny Park. Passed unanimously on voice vote.

**REPORTS**

Eileen Butcher reported that summer volleyball collected \$765.00, men’s basketball collected \$13.00 over expenses, and co-ed volleyball collected \$38.00 over expenses.

Following reports, Eileen Butcher re-opened the discussion of the girls’ softball fields. Tom Kayes, a member of girls’ softball board, inquired about the progress or costing of the infields. There was no information to report. D. Wickland reported that while he had had discussions with Mr. Burns at ANR, he had not received any official responses.

Eileen Butcher reported receiving a letter from Jay Harris offering to start another girls travelling softball league in St. John. She inquired whether St. John Girls’ Softball would work with another team; Tom reported that his board had voted down the request, pending the outcome of the number of fields at Heartland Park. The Town’s girls want to be assured they have enough fields and playing time before bringing in other groups. He noted that travelling teams usually have try-outs so that membership is not limited to one municipality. Eileen Butcher encouraged them to work together in the future.

**PAYMENT OF BILLS**


Motion by Joan Millis, seconded by Mary Anne Koke, to approve the bills as read. Passed unanimously on voice vote.

**ANY AND ALL BUSINESS**

Mary Anne Koke read from the Indiana State Statute, 36-10-3-8 “Board of park and recreation: meetings, regular, special; election of officers; quorum” Section 8, (b), noting the ways that special meetings of the board may be called. A special meeting of the Board last Thursday evening was abruptly adjourned on the mistaken interpretation that it was an illegal meeting, due to misinformation provided by a member of the audience. Since all the members of the Park Board were present at the special meeting, the meeting could have continued as a legal meeting.

Mr. Rudy responded that he had located the information on the Internet and did not realize that it was incomplete; he explained that there was no intention to deceive. Paul Haller accepted Mr. Rudy’s apology.

A member of the audience extended her thanks to the members of the Park Board for the work they do for the residents of St. John.

Joan Millis indicated she had received a letter from Mr. & Mrs. Fred Kish, Jr. indicating their intent to vacate the home located in Heartland Park at the end of August or early

September. David Wickland agreed that the rent could be prorated for any additional time they might need in September. He felt the Board should begin advertising for new renters. Joan noted that the renters had made a \$500.00 security deposit which would be returned following a satisfactory inspection.

- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Joan Millis, to advertise the rental property at 10616 White Oak, and to prorate the rent in September, if necessary. Discussion: Joan inquired whether the prorated rent could be deducted from the security deposit. David Wickland responded that it would depend on the terms of the lease. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Joan Millis, to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 p.m. Passed unanimously on voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

By: /s/ Norma R. Yaeger  
Recording Secretary