

Chairperson Sugrue called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

- Members Present - Tammy Sugrue, Chairperson
Marisa Fallacaro-Dougherty
Carol Jarczyk
Meichle Latham
Caron Morris
Michael Smolen
Robert Breidenstein, Councilmember
Lauren Masset, Recreation Supervisor
- Absent - Matt Bauer
Brian Adams, Highway Superintendent
Judith Kindron, Director of Finance
-

MINUTES TO BE APPROVED

Motion by Chairperson Sugrue, seconded by Ms. Fallacaro-Dougherty, to approve Meeting Minutes of the March 20, 2024, and April 17, 2024, meetings.

Ayes: All

Noes: None

Motion Carried

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER

Caron Morris is the Elementary Teacher representative and is a Universal Pre-Kindergarten teacher at Northwood Elementary School.

CONTINUED BUSINESS

- A. Playground Initiative - Phase II
 - 1. Chairperson Sugrue stated the Sunshine Park community build was a success despite the weather and is unsure if the playground has been opened. Councilmember Breidenstein stated he is aware the weather delayed pouring the cement pad and will follow up with Highway Superintendent Adams for status.
 - 2. Chairperson Sugrue stated the community build at Fisher Court Park is scheduled for May 16, 2024, and residents of the neighborhood are being encouraged to participate through word of mouth and social media.

- B. Playground Initiative – Phase III
 - 1. Chairperson Sugrue stated she does not have an update for Fireman’s Park, Dorrance Road Park, or Harlem Road Park. Councilmember Breidenstein stated he is not aware of any additional developments either. Chairperson Sugrue stated the commission will wait for Highway Superintendent Adams and designs.

- C. Commission led events

1. Trivia Night - Chairperson Sugrue stated she does not have an update and will not be able to devote time to planning events over the summer and suggested resuming this in September with a regular schedule.
2. Scavenger Hunt - Chairperson Sugrue stated she has contacted the Burchfield Nature and Art Center as a walkable location. While she would like to have a hunt around the entire town, feedback received after last year's event indicated participants did not want driving involved. The BNAC requested the commission contact them mid-June. The tentative date for the event is August 10, 2024.
3. Field Days – Mr. Smolen stated the entire commission will need to be involved in planning and running an event and the tentative date is July 7, 2024, at Fireman's Park in the grassy areas. Ms. Latham stated Mr. Smolen brought the idea forth to create community and bring West Seneca residents together for a day of fun. The event is currently in the early planning stages with the goal of engaging other service organizations and local businesses. The Recreation Commission would like to sponsor events with the support of the Recreation Department and vice versa. Chairperson Sugrue stated field day games often include three legged races, tug-of-war, and moving water with sponges. Recreation Supervisor Masset requested the Recreation Commission members confirm availability of equipment with the Recreation Department prior to advertising an event. The Recreation Department is running two or three field day events this summer and would like to avoid scheduling conflicts. Mr. Smolen suggested the Recreation Commission not duplicated the Recreation Department's efforts and not plan a field day event citing the lack of volunteers to plan and organize the event. Recreation Supervisor Masset advised her staff are not scheduled to work on Sundays and reminded the Recreation Commission members that they must be available to participate with any of commission sponsored events as well as assist with Recreation Department events. Chairperson Sugrue stated she is unaware of Recreation Department events and requested better communication between the commission and Recreation Department. Recreation Supervisor Masset suggested the commission members bring ideas to herself and Ms. Reimondo as well as review the department's website for the schedule of events. Mr. Smolen expressed frustration with the lack of participation with the planning of the field day event and shared the events he envisioned noting the event was to be at a minimal cost to the taxpayers. Recreation Supervisor Masset stated future events can be coordinated with her department and staff can be scheduled accordingly.
4. Walk in the Park – Ms. Latham stated the West Seneca Chamber of Commerce is interested in participating in the event as a service organization but will not be available until later in the summer. The goal of the events is to have a West Seneca service organization sponsor a walk in a different park each month. These events will introduce residents to the parks in town. The sub-committee comprised of Chairperson Sugrue and Ms. Latham will continue to develop this idea and welcome other participants. Councilmember Breidenstein requested notification of upcoming meetings and will attend when available. Ms. Latham questioned the location of the field day events. Recreation Supervisor stated the events will be held at Veterans Park and in the gymnasium if necessary. Ms. Latham stated Sunshine Park might lend itself to combining events.

Recreation Supervisor Masset requested Secretary Martin include a link to the Recreation Department's calendar on the meeting agenda. Ms. Martin confirmed and stated the link can be added to the Youth and Recreation Commission webpage, also.

Councilmember Breidenstein provided an update from Highway Superintendent Adams about the status of the playground at Sunshine Park: target date of the opening will be Monday May 20th but the opening is dependent on the weather. The opening will be announced on social media.

Ms. Jarczyk encouraged the Walk in the Park events to include senior residents and spoke about previous events she attended with her father.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mitchell Staunch, Flohr Avenue, provided a handout titled "A practical guide to converting rails to trails" and made the following comments and questions:

- ✓ Mixed use trails bring value to communities and questioned why West Seneca does not have one
- ✓ Rails to trails program would be a good opportunity for West Seneca – Recreation Supervisor Masset stated the Environmental Commission investigated this program and suggested Mr. Staunch follow up with them.
- ✓ Referred to the handout he presented and commented that West Seneca has not changed or become more accessible to bikes – Ms. Jarczyk stated she agreed with Mr. Staunch's comments about the lack of bike racks throughout the town and suggested he contact civil groups for funding.
- ✓ Many grants are available to the town

Chairperson Sugrue stated she is interested in the results of the recreation survey the town's engineering consultant is conducting and questioned how the rails to trails program works, for example, what responsibilities would the Town of West Seneca bear. Mr. Staunch stated the trail manager could be any entity and would work with the municipalities the trail passes through.

Katie Adrian, Barnsdale Avenue, made the following comments and questions:

- ✓ What is the status of swim lessons – Recreation Supervisor Masset stated the department is planning for swimming lessons and a final schedule is not available. Councilmember Breidenstein stated the first June Town Board meeting is the target for approval of the schedule.
- ✓ What playgrounds will be updated next and requested confirmation that all playgrounds across the town are being considered – Chairperson Sugrue stated a survey of all parks was conducted and due to the deteriorating conditions at some parks the priority list has changed. Ms. Latham stated she recalls the Highway Superintendent evaluated the safety conditions of all playgrounds and funding opportunities. Councilmember Breidenstein stated budgeting is a factor and an annual inspection of all parks is performed by the Buildings and Grounds staff with the town's insurance provider.
- ✓ The next meeting is scheduled for June 19, 2024, the Juneteenth holiday, and in the interest of diversity and recognition requested the meeting date be changed

Courtney Fallon, Treehaven Road, made the following comments and questions:

- ✓ Why is a waitlist not available for programs - Recreation Supervisor Masset stated currently there is not a demand for a waitlist and if spots become available they are posted on Facebook.
- ✓ How often do spaces go to waste – Recreation Supervisor Masset stated she feels that no spaces go to waste when a positive youth development opportunity is provided.
- ✓ Excited about the playground program and stated in the past field trip opportunities were provided – Recreation Supervisor stated the field trips were offered through the full day day camp program.
- ✓ No programs are offered in place of the full day day camp and if the playground program is being reinstated it would be a good idea to bring back field trips
- ✓ Pop up and play program should be made on par with the previous playground program and the many activities offered
- ✓ How will the program be publicized – Recreation Supervisor Masset stated the regular methods will be utilized.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Recreation Director's Report – Councilmember Breidenstein stated additional aquatics staff members will be appointed at the upcoming Town Board meeting. The swim lessons schedule is in process. Meetings were held recently with the youth sports organizations. The hockey organization is celebrating their 50th anniversary this year and noted they were able to purchase two Zambonis used by the Buffalo Sabres. The Summer Soccer Celebration is scheduled for August 3rd. A request was made by Mr. Holmes, an advocate for biking and skating, to speak to the commission at an upcoming meeting about skate park improvements at Fireman's Park. Recreation Supervisor Masset stated additional summer programs are being discussed, and the hiring process is in place and going very well. Volunteers are needed for the Kick off to Summer event on June 28th and any help is appreciated.

COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Fallacaro-Dougherty stated the details are being finalized for the On My Way to K event to be held at West Seneca West Senior on August 21, 2024, and questioned if the commission would like a table at the event. The event was well attended in 2023 with over 500 people. Recreation Supervisor Masset stated the Recreation Department and commission have shared a table in the past and will share this with her staff. Ms. Morris volunteered to attend.

Ms. Latham reminded all of the town's engineer CPL's survey soliciting improvements for facilities, parks, and recreation. Councilmember Breidenstein stated budget meetings will be starting and the commission should provide their wish list to Recreation Supervisor Masset by mid to late July. Internal discussions of addressing more than one or two playgrounds per year are occurring as it will be less expensive to do them now than in the future and the playground improvements will most likely be bonded.

Ms. Jarczyk questioned when the commission will attend the Farmer's Market. Chairperson Sugrue stated the commission opted not to participate this year and questioned if the commission would like to have a table at the National Night Out event on August 6, 2024, noting they have until July 23rd to respond.

Chairperson Sugrue stated CPL requested the commission members assist in generating survey responses at upcoming events. Ms. Latham stated the survey is targeted to all ages, not just youth. Recreation Supervisor Masset suggested the Lions' Bandshell concerts in the park, Shakespeare in the Park, and the Farmer's Market as good venues for promoting the survey and will discuss the best way to promote this with the Supervisor's Office.

Chairperson Sugrue stated the commission should investigate bike racks for the town.

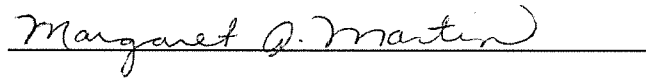
Chairperson Sugrue would like to investigate other sign up options for the recreation programs and noted the first come first serve option has resulted in frustration. Recreation Supervisor Masset stated there are limitations with the current software used by the department. Additionally, Mr. Staunch's bike rack suggestion have been forwarded to the Highway Superintendent and Buildings and Grounds Department. Councilmember Breidenstein stated bike racks can be a budgetary recommendation as well as better software. Chairperson Sugrue stated online payment should be an option. Recreation Supervisor Masset stated the pool is a separate issue and will

be discussing payment options with the Director of Finance, card payments are currently accepted online and at the teller window. Chairperson Sugrue stated there was a problem with payments for the scavenger hunt the previous year and only cash payments could be made.

Councilmember Breidenstein suggested the commission check availability of a meeting room if the June 19th meeting is rescheduled.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Chairperson Sugrue, seconded by Ms. Fallacaro-Dougherty, to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 P.M.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Margaret A. Martin", is written over a horizontal line.

Margaret A. Martin
Deputy Town Clerk/Secretary to the Youth and Recreation Commission