



MINUTES OXFORD RECREATION BOARD

Municipal Building 15 South College Ave. Oxford, Ohio 45056 Second Floor Conference Room

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2023 AT 11:30 AM

Call to Order

Roll Call

The Oxford Parks and Recreation Board meeting was called to order by Craig Bennett on Monday, September 11, 2023. Members in attendance were: Craig Bennett, Chair; Adam Beissel; Alex French; Holli Hansel, Jake Richardson and Jacob Young.
Staff Members in attendance were: Casey Wooddell and Deanna Barbour

Approval of Agenda

1. Approval of agenda for the 9/11/2023 Oxford Recreation Board meeting.

Motion – To Approve

(Voice Vote) 1st Ms. Hansel 2nd Ms. French

AYE # 5

NAY # 0

ABS # 0

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of minutes from August 14, 2023 meeting.

Motion – To Approve

(Voice Vote) 1st Ms. Hansel 2nd Ms. French

AYE # 5

NAY # 0

ABS # 0

Reports

1. Parks and Recreation Department Report

Mr. Wooddell stated August was a month of perfect pool weather. Just about every weekend in August was sunny and busy at the Aquatic Center. One of our biggest revenue weekends was Labor Day weekend. Mr. Young asked, is there still room for improvement? Mr. Wooddell said absolutely, however, the average attendance for summer is over 400 customers a day. Our facility can handle more.

Ms. Hansel asked what the legal capacity is. Mr. Wooddell noted the legal capacity is 1600 people, but we never want that many people in the water at one time. 400 is a lot of people on its own. 1600 would be too much.

Mr. Wooddell advised this year's doggie day at the pool was the biggest one yet with 110 dogs in attendance. Mr. Young said, so obviously, dogs are off leashes during this event. Mr. Wooddell said, yes, and there were no fights or other big issues.

Fall season is coming. Mr. Wooddell noted this is the time when Parks and Recreation transitions into the fall season. A few years ago, we had an article published in PRB magazine and we were on the front cover of the magazine for the aquatic center. PRB did a special facilities' addition for September this year and there is a 4-page article in there about the renovation of one ball field at the Community park into 3 ball fields. This allows us to now have play on 6 total fields instead of 4, making room for more youth play. Mr. Wooddell advised this cost around \$85000 to do the whole thing and was funded by 3 sources; the Community Foundation; the Rotary Club and Miami Little League, in addition to the City of Oxford.

Mr. Wooddell said a quick update on the playground project is 99% done. There is something not quite right with the ADA whirl. However, the installer is working on it to see what will be the best fix. Otherwise, it's basically done, but we haven't paid for it yet. Also, the knob on the wheel to turn the ADA whirl is like a bus driver's handle and is not easy to use. We are also getting that looked at and fixed for better use.

Bats - Mr. Wooddell advised the bat company came in and sealed everything that could be sealed at the Community Park Concession stand. When out there, if you look really close, you can see clear cones. Those are where the bats are living, and they can get out through the cone, but they cannot re-enter. Give it a couple of weeks for the bats to move on, and then those cones will be removed and sealed off. It should be completed in the next 2-3 weeks.

Mr. Wooddell advised the old concession trailer that used to sit in the TRI parking lot by the ball field was given new life. It has been repainted and repurposed by the Streets department mechanic, and it now has new lights and new signage. This repaired and improved trailer will be used at City events.

Mr. Wooddell stated the capital improvement meeting with city council will be held tonight. Parks and Recreation are looking at \$25,000 in repairs for the Aquatic Center, \$25,000 for the Community Park and \$90,000 for the new dog park.

2. Talawanda School & Athletics Report

Mr. Richardson noted Talawanda is in the middle of fall season already. The first senior night is tonight with girls golf and will finish' up in a couple of weeks. Mr. Richardson stated they're already in week 5 for football, and the volleyball team is doing really well also. Mr. Wooddell asked what the football record is so far. Mr. Richardson stated they are 0 and 4, adding we have a ton of young freshman kids playing against 18 yr olds. Mr. Wooddell said he enjoyed watching Cale play as quarterback. Mr. Richardson noted it is a work in process; it's always a challenge keeping assistant coaches. Ms. Hansel stated it would look a lot better in a couple of years. Mr. Richardson has a good thing going with the assistant coaches doing outreach in the halls with the kids building those relationships.

3. Miami University Report

Ms. Hansel asked what the start to the school year was like. Mr. Bennett advised there's been a shift in higher education. Currently, our biggest competitors are Ohio State and UC. We are expanding to who we recruit.

Mr. Beissel stated higher education as a whole is going to have to shift. We are in that middle spot, and it is challenging because there is a really competitive landscape for students out there. Mr. Wooddell asked are there any program areas that Miami is considering, adding that other universities are not? Mr. Bennett said nursing, and Mr. Beissel added analytics, at the undergraduate level, and more vocational classes.

Mr. Beissel stated with the cost of things, the benefit of going to college doesn't always outweigh the cost of going to college. Ms. Hansel noted this is a big conversation at Talawanda as well. Students wanting to become teachers are shown starting out they will be paid really low then once you move up with additional education, then you make more. Ms. Hansel added that, obviously, you need an education to be a teacher, but it's the cost deterring people.

Mr. Beissel advised the first wave of college-educated labor (baby boomers and gen x) will be moving out in that next phase, but this is all at the undergraduate level, not the graduate level. Then society will need college-educated workers back in the workforce filling those types of positions.

Ms. French stated Miami just passed a new thing that every credit over 18 credit hours is an additional \$600. This will definitely impact those students that used to take 19+ credit hours a semester.

Mr. Beissel noted 70% of Miami students are in 30 majors, so if you do not have massive student enrollment, your major could be in jeopardy. One thing students want is that college experience, so Miami does their best to get them to campus, so they can fall in love with that experience.

Old Business

1. Discussion - Merry Day Park

Mr. Wooddell advised City Council voted to not rezone the Merry Day park and to not have a housing project in that park. Ms. French agreed adding and Council can't revisit that idea for another 12 months.

Mr. Young said he spoke with TOPSS about the programs they have and with the green space there are things they could offer to kids. He also spoke to people at Merry Day and people uptown, about usage of green space and what the capacity would be. Mr. Young asked about when the students leave can we get a bus stop that would head out to the park or community park or even Leonard Howell. Mr. Wooddell said there was a point in time when there was a lot of discussion on adding an RTA stop and it was very expensive. Ms. Hansel added it was very cost prohibitive to do that, they wanted an extra stop at THS and it wasn't possible.

Mr. Wooddell noted we did add soccer goals and a port-o-let to that park. Merry Day hasn't had one there in the past due to vandalism, but it's been a while since we've had any problems there, so we've added it back. Mr. Young asked does the water fountain work at Merry Day. Mr. Wooddell doesn't know, but will have that on the list to check for next spring.

Mr. Wooddell advised 2025 playground replacement plan for that playground to be placed in the plan. It was in for '24 but was bumped to '25.

2. Discussion - Partnership with Enjoy Oxford for Creative Placemaking

Ms. French stated a couple of things are happening with the half-marathon, adding it's now a 14k and has met with Jessica Green, Chief John Jones and Kim Daggy of Enjoy Oxford.

This run covers 4.3 miles from Talawanda high school to the covered bridge. They talked about only doing the 14K for the next couple of years, adding Cincinnati is doing one this weekend. They are really good for training for those running the Flying Pig. This will only have one road to cross and the run will start and finish at Leonard Howell. The route would travel to Talawanda, back to Leonard Howell, go past it and onto the covered bridge and back to Leonard Howell.

Ms. French is meeting with Chelsea Myers and with graphic design, social media, marketing, etc. then meet with Ms. Green and meet with Kim Daggy and Enjoy Oxford to discuss and meet with their board for approval. All the funds will come through Enjoy Oxford.

Ms. French said it would be easier for her to get a check for a timer from Enjoy Oxford. Mr. Wooddell added they are set up better as a pass through with the funds, since the city cannot do that. Mr. Wooddell said the Parks and Recreation Department will definitely be a part of this event.

Ms. French advised the cemetery tours are on with some revisions to the times and marketing.

New Business

1. Next Meeting - Oxford Area Trails Public Presentation

November meeting - wants a presentation in our meeting for the OATS trail. They have to have so many meetings for the public. Our meeting will be held at the library on November 13th. OPTAB will also be there to be a part of the meeting.

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn - Mr. Bennett @ 12:39
(Voice Vote) 1st Ms. Hansel - 2nd Ms. French
AYE # 6
NAY # 0
ABS # 0