

Thorntown Park Board Meeting Minutes

June 25, 2022 – 6:00 PM

Location: City Hall

Attendance: Derek Babcock (via phone), Lisa Vitaniemi, Leslie Doctor, MJ Fairfield

Vice President MJ Fairfield called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

Approval of Minutes

Leslie Doctor moved to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2022 special meeting. Derek Babcock seconded. Minutes approved. Lisa will provide signed copies of the minutes to Koren Gray for the Town Council. Note: after providing the minutes, it was noticed that one of the dates had the wrong year. This is corrected to 2022.

It was noted that the regular June 27 meeting was canceled due to lack of quorum.

Public Input

There were no public comments.

Town Council Update

Derek Babcock attended the last town council meeting. He updated the council on park news. There was discussion about mowing since Little League has completed for the season. Derek provided information about someone willing to mow using the park's mower and the park providing the gas. However, he would not have the equipment to keep the fields looking as nice as they have all summer. The council did indicate that the park has looked really nice this summer.

Old/Continuing Business

Review Work Days/Future Work Days – A lot of work has been accomplished during our work days and it was decided to continue one per month alternating between the park and the trail. Next month will be the trail on August 27. MJ will look into renting a machine to cut out brush. Lisa will post on Facebook page seeking volunteers.

It was noted that we still have not received an invoice from Green Cycle for the playground mulch. It should be slightly less than \$1,000 when received. The mulch that has been placed around equipment is staying in place well, is safer and looks nice.

Master Plan – The Master Plan was provided to the board by Dax Norton. It looks fantastic. There are still a few items that need to be completed. The main item to complete is public input regarding park needs/desires. Lisa will work on creating a questionnaire to obtain this information. Derek will poll residents and business owners while on patrol. One of the goals of the plan should be to bring people into town and for the community to utilize the facilities. Lisa advised that she is still in the process of obtaining quotes for improvements to include in the plan.

Park Foundation Update – Lisa advised that the 501c3 application is still ongoing but has run into a hurdle with a \$600 filing fee. Dax indicated that he would discuss this regarding payment and provide further information.

Summer Program Review – The summer program for children 3rd through 6th grade has now completed. It was a success in that all participants enjoyed. The numbers were not as large as we had hoped; but being a new program, it is expected. We would like to budget for the program for next year and continue.

Little League Update – Little League has concluded for the year. The diamond closest to the school and the press box have been demolished as part of the school's improvement project. The plan is to replace the diamond toward the back of the school's property. The Little League will clean up the area with regard to extra fencing materials. The lights will be placed on the new diamond once complete.

Wyant gift – Lisa advised that park funds cannot be used for gifts. Each board member agreed to pay personally to provide the Wyants with a thank you gift. Lisa will put it in a card and get to the Wyants.

Flowers – Lisa moved that we spend \$100 on fall flowers to place at trail heads. MJ Fairfield seconded. Motion carried. Derek will get some mulch to the trailheads. Leslie will continue to maintain and plant the mums. MJ will provide info about obtaining mums.

Thank You Notes and Acknowledgements – A thank you card was sent to Shawn McClintock for the donation of Gatorade for the summer program. Lunch as been purchased (using personal funds) three times for the utility workers this summer for their help. Dax advised that the sign for the donations at the cleanup day is complete and he will drop off.

Sign on small shelter – Lisa contacted Mount in Lebanon. They did not make the sign but will make one to replace it. MJ inquiring from family what was on the sign or what they would like on the sign.

Mats – The mats have been installed around the merry-go-round, the spinners and the gaga pit. Special thanks to the utility guys and the coffee club for helping place the mats.

New Business

Mowing of ball diamonds – The board discussed the pros and cons of continuing with Jon Thompson or having someone use the park mower and mow the remainder of the year. Derek Babcock moved that we continue with Jon Thompson for \$200 per mow for the remainder of the year. Lisa Vitaniemi seconded. MJ Fairfield abstained due to conflict of interest. Motion passed.

Grants – There was a discussion about pursuing grants. Lisa will work with Dax.

Additional summer activities – Lisa advised that she would like to plan a community/family event for Monday, Labor Day, September 5 to include a horseshoe tournament, pickleball demo and matches, parent/toddler kickball game, etc. This will be an opportunity to include a survey of park needs/desires for the master plan.

Trail map sign – Lisa advised that she had received quote from Signworks for \$1500 for a trail map sign. It was decided that was too much at this time to spend.

Farmer's Market – The plan is to assist with a winter market to transition to the farmer's market next year. Leslie is currently working with the Art Center on this project. Derek will get in touch with the Lion's Club about using their park for the market.

Contractor to finish work at the park this summer – Currently we need someone to finish the playground mulch, gravel and to improve the area for the gaga pit. The mats do not lay correctly because the ground isn't prepared well enough. Derek will look for a contractor interested.

Budget for next year – Lisa advised that we currently have \$8,152.15 in regular budget and \$12,723 in the donation fund. There was discussion regarding putting together a budget for next year.

Budget Items:

Park Maintenance - Derek advised that the utility workers would not be able to mow next year so we would need to hire someone all year. It was discussed about including in the budget a part-time maintenance person for the park to take care of things all summer and to do the mowing. It was decided that we start with a plan for 20 hours per week May-August at \$20 per hour.

Equipment Maintenance – Although we are in the process of bids for updating the park, a yearly amount for maintenance of 10% should be included.

Summer Program – We would like to continue summer programming and need to include in the budget.

Mulch – This year we were very fortunate to be gifted with mulch. It has made a big difference in the aesthetics of the park. More mulch each year will need to be purchased with less needed after the initial amount around all areas. Include in budget 60 yards at \$30 per yard.

Walnut Tree removal – Remove walnut trees either as part of the update project or a couple each year. The trees are not in good shape and make such a mess in the park and make mowing more difficult.

Dumpster fees, supplies, etc.

Trail Maintenance – We will need to put some money into repairs on the trail including roots in the asphalt and fence posts. MJ advised that Melanie Gall had communicated that several posts on the north bridge were deteriorating and needed replaced. **Note:** After the meeting Lisa advised that there are 2 that need replaced asap and we will look into replacing the rest at a later time. Derek will pick up the posts and Lisa will arrange a work time to replace.

Shelter House Rental Fees – Derek Babcock moved that we begin a rental fee and agreement for 2023 of \$25 for a full day. MJ seconded. Motion passed. Lisa will talk with Dax about getting everything online.

Little League Contract for next year – we will complete a contract the same as this year once Little League has had election of officers in the spring.

Lisa moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:44. Leslie seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting is August 22, 2022 at 6:00 PM.

Derek Babcock, President

MJ Fairfield, Vice President

Lisa Vitaniemi, Secretary

Leslie Doctor, Member