

**PARKS BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

June 21, 2023

6:30 PM

Nina Schroeder called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call: Don Buchert, Marty Hura, Nina Schroeder

Other Village Personnel Present: Council President Tammy Meyer, Councilman Steve Thorn

Citizens/Others Present: None

- ❖ Motion to excuse Chuck Peterson and Cookie Vanek made by Don, seconded by Marty; all “ayes.”
- ❖ Motion to approve May 17, 2023 minutes made by Don, seconded by Marty; all “ayes.”

Old Business:

- Nina asked the board to use the restrooms project and related conversations to inform the completion of the Memorandum of Understanding template and to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of said document.
- The board discussed the location of a restroom, and Don speculated that the cheapest option is to attach restrooms to a current structure at Buchert Park, but the board acknowledged that the Village’s engineers never verified this to be true amid the last round of restroom discussions, when Phil Rath of the Downtown Mantua Revitalization Corporation presented architectural renderings.
 - The board acknowledged another barrier: it still does not have access to concrete data about the locations and depths of existing utility lines.
- Nina acknowledged the vandalism that has occurred at the park, which has always concerned the board, including light/superficial vandalism, like graffiti, as well as heavy vandalism, like broken fixtures and windows.
 - She wondered if attaching a restroom to the lodge distances it from the road and tucks it behind the red pump house, theorizing that vandalism can be minimized using an “eyes on the street” philosophy: what can be easily seen from the road is less likely to be vandalized in plain sight. Other research suggests that lighting should be sufficient but should not cast shadows, and that there should be a perimeter of visible space around the structure. Don recommended sufficient security camera coverage, too.
- Don suggested spaces to the west or east of the pump house, like where the Lions Club concession stand sits, and Tammy agreed that a location near to the street promotes greater access from both sides of High St.

- Marty remarked that the concession stand was once meant to be open all summer long but closed after one year because the Lions Club didn't have enough volunteers to run it, so it became storage for Village's vending machine stock.
- Steve recommended not getting too constrained by existing utility lines; the most important thing is to put the restroom where the people are, and that may mean incurring the one-time cost of digging/placing new lines, but the restroom will have been constructed where it is most useful and convenient to the public.
 - The board seemed to agree that centralizing the restroom in the front area means that people using the ball fields, the playground, and the pickleball, volleyball, and basketball courts would all be accommodated.
 - Marty countered and recommended an addition of the east side of the lodge, where the concrete slab is, because of the existing lines.
 - Cost-saving measures could also include modular or pre-fabricated construction options in addition to minimizing ground disturbance.
- The board discussed the functions of a restroom, and Nina asked the board to be mindful of how this project can continue to meet the needs of the community for 25-50 years, so that decisions are made with the expansion and progress of the park in mind.
- Don recommended two toilets; Tammy recommended four; Nina recommended at least two unisex toilets (including running water, sinks, changing areas for children, and space for adults to change, too) in addition to a fully ADA-compliant restroom (including wider pathways, an adult-sized changing station, hands-free dispensers, an automatic door push plate, a no-step entryway, etc.).
- Nina asked the board to consider different types of construction and the pros and cons of each: basic vault vs. utility-free flush (holding tank underneath/mechanical room in between toilets) vs. fully operational (including all utilities), for example.
 - The board would like to rule out the vault option because of the trash dumping they tend to invite, because of the visibility of the waste, and because it does not seem like a long-term solution.
 - Research showed that utility-free flush facilities tend to provide "greener" solutions; they can allow for a community to use its natural resources, like the collecting/processing of flood or rainwater through high-efficiency filters; they tend to boast better flush efficiency, metered flow sinks, waterless urinals, and to be equipped with hand dryers or heated water powered by solar energy.
 - The board acknowledged the need to discuss seasonal use, winterizing the facility, how to prevent freezing, and determining the park's most dormant months.
- Regarding landscaping, Tammy and Nina would like to see more softscapes, natural berms, planters, and baskets that incorporate plants of various textures and colors to border, soften, and beautify the park, and would like to see programs implemented (e.g., leaf scavenger hunts; routes from one informational placard to another) that get visitors moving around/invested in the space.

- Steve expressed the need for community buy-in and increasing citizens' vested interest in the park, resultantly lessening Service's load. Tammy recommended reaching out to related community clubs/academic programs for volunteer input and manpower.

New Business:

- Steve asked about the namesake of Katie's Meadow, and Don explained that someone by that name originally took it upon herself to clean up the area; Steve, Tammy, and Nina recommended a placard or signpost to honor this local history.
 - Tammy and Nina recommend adding an ADA-accessible swing to the playground.
- ❖ Motion to adjourn at 7:17 p.m. made by Nina, seconded by Don; all "ayes."