

**Huron Joint Recreation District  
Regular Board Meeting – Minutes  
Tuesday, Oct. 1, 2024, at 6:30 PM  
City Municipal Building, Huron, OH**

**Members Present:** Tom Solberg, Julie Spitzley, Jonathan Merckens, Roger Blevins, Missie Huntley, Elizabeth Laffay, Eddie Wimmer

**Present from HPRD:** Doug Steinwart, Brian Croucher, Rick Reinbolt

**Present from City of Huron:** None

**Members Absent:** Matt Grieves

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion to approve Sept. 3, 2024, minutes as presented; by Eddie Wimmer and seconded by Jonathan Merckens. Approved unanimously.

**Audience Comments:** No, however Missie Huntley shared an email from her neighbor, Gary Payne. Email read: Maybe 5 years or so back, I think the Dreffer family offered land over by Woodlands School to the School System. They declined and the City agreed to take ownership of it. As far as I know, they still own it, but it is just rented out for a farmer to use for beans or corn, at least that is my understanding. I think it would be great if there could be some kind of dirt, wood chip or crushed limestone trail around the perimeter of the property for people to use. Nothing elaborate, but maybe a 5 foot wide path or so. The property is east of Woodlands and is I think about a half mile around the perimeter. It would also be nice if it could somehow be tied into that tractor path that runs off the bike path north towards Cleveland Road, out west of where Wexford is. It seems it would not be difficult for whoever plants the field to just leave 5 feet or so around the edge of the property, minimal investment on the part of the City. Seems somehow some tree service or something could dump wood chips out there to cover the path.

Mr. Steinwart verified the Dreffer family did donate 7+ acres to the City, just east of Woodlands. There are some stipulations on the donation. The City does lease it out to a farmer as stated in the email. The terms are unknown to the board. The terms do suggest “educational/recreational purposes” time will tell what the schools plan is and if that parcel will be an asset to them or not as discussed when the property was donated.

**A. OLD BUSINESS**

1. **Berlin Road Park Naming – presented by Doug Steinwart:** Park Naming, 624 Berlin Road. An online survey was completed, over 110 suggestions, some were duplicates, however over 100 people responded. An internal committee was formed to narrow the 100 suggestions down to 10, the 10 then were presented to the HJRD Board for discussion and narrowing down to the top 3. HJRD voted and came up with: Berlin Road Park, Old Man’s Pond and The Fishing Hole as their top 3. A motion was made to forward the top 3 selected to send on to Council. Mr. Steinwart reviewed the top 10 names and briefly explained the significance of them. The board continued with their motion to forward their top three to Council. Dr. Laffay made the motion, Eddie Wimmer seconded the motion, the board unanimously agreed in favor with no opposition. The top three names will be forwarded to the City Manager in the morning and then presented to Council for final selection.

**B. NEW BUSINESS**

2. **Waterfront Park Plans & Connectivity- presented by Doug Steinwart:** Staff is working with OHM Advisors. On Tuesday, Oct. 8 at 5:30 PM in Council Chambers there will be a work session for City Council, Planning Commission and HJRD to review and discuss in detail the presentation provided by OHM. They are looking for some feedback to support their online survey. The handout attached shows the highlights for your preview.
3. **Pumpkin Fest – presented by Brian Croucher:** The 15<sup>th</sup> annual Fall Family Festival is on Sat. Oct. 12 from 11 AM to 5 PM at the Huron Boat Basin. It is an opportunity for families to come out and enjoy a fall day. The day will include a petting zoo for the kids, inflatable rides, bounce house, balloon artist, a Magic Show and Jungle Bob Animal Show, obstacle course, assortment of kid's games, face painter, the library will host pumpkin painting and crafts, a "Pumpkins for Business" display and food vendors. The Huron Police and Fire will be present for a Meet & Greet. Huron High School track team will be volunteering their time to help with the event. The Drop will take place at 2:30 PM with Barnes Nursery. Additional sponsors for this year's event include Berardi's Restaurant, AkzoNobel, and Abundant Life Counselling.
4. **Misc. Parks & Recreation, presented by Mr. Steinwart:**
  - A. **Fall Ball** – weather held out for the most part. 30 teams running from Aug. 17 to Sept. 15. Baseball/Softball Program ran concessions as a fund raiser.
  - B. **Winter Fest** – Sat. Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> from 1-6:30 PM. Beginning with the parade, Santa & Mrs. Claus will be at the HBB from 2-6 PM, carriage rides, followed by a Tree Lighting Ceremony and ending with fireworks at 6:30 PM. More details will be forthcoming as the partnership with Greater Sandusky Partnership (GSP) (merger with the Huron Chamber) are ironed out and finalized. GSP will be working with the businesses and hopefully getting them on board for the afternoon of winter fun.
  - C. **Boat Basin** – Staff is seeking their gold status eligibility membership for the Clean Marina certification through ODNR. Using and encouraging solutions to keep the water resources clean. With Fall Fishing being so prevalent – this eligibility is important to Huron.
  - D. **Working on 2025 Sponsors and Schedule for the HBB.**
  - E. **Kedas Fishing Tournament** – Unfortunately was cancelled this past weekend due to weather, however they continued to have their fundraising event at the Yacht Club. Staff met with Lynn Kedas today to select dates for 2025.
  - F. **Nickel Plate Beach Warning System** – Was shut off for the season today – Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. A review of the full safety system was discussed by Mr. Steinwart.
  - G. **Rotary Club Trunk or Treat** – Event will take place at Fabens Park on Oct. 29, 2024.
  - H. **Fall Maintenance** – The weather this fall so far has allowed us to catch up on some projects that we normally would not have gotten done. A message board was installed at the Courts at Fabens Park. The slide at Lake Front Park was fixed on the 25-year-old playground. It has been pushed back on the Capital Replacement schedule the passed two years. The Fish Cleaning Station has been maintained routinely. As we head further into the Fall season staff will keep an eye on the temperatures and try to keep it open as long as possible. The Berlin Road sign was included in your packet as a sample of the potential park signs that will be used moving forward. In this case – the Berlin Road name was used as an example and the City is working with the Township as the location of the sign will actually be in the township. A variance will be needed to place the sign. Mr. Widman asked about the Courts at Fabens, Mr. Steinwart stated we are still working off a punch list that the contractor has not completed yet. OHM Advisors are working with the contractor to get them out there prior to the weather turning. \$18K has

been withheld until the project is completely completed. The courts are very playable, and the punch list items are not impeding their use. Mr. Widman also mentioned his appreciation for the Parks crews during this past long hot summer.

**C. CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

Mr. Solberg announced the next meeting to be Tuesday, Nov. 4, 2024. Roger Blevins stated he has been very impressed by the program since it began. He said it is a great example of the City identifying a problem and seeking out a solution to try to make the beach as safe as possible. Also – circling back to the Dreffer property. I know Gary Payne very well, have coached his kids, as a former coach it seems like a great way to get our kids off the roads which is safer and less injury prone, so for a minimum cost it may be something that gets more use than people realize from our citizens and the Huron students.

Mr. Steinwart thanked Mr. Blevins for bringing the National Honor Society to Nickel Plate Beach to collect trash and plastics. Mr. Blevins explained he has been doing it now for 3-4 years. It is part of the Alliance for the Great Lakes, Adopt a Beach Program. This year the group collected over 200 lbs. of stuff, primarily plastics and strange things that wash up. The group travels all the way east to where the beach runs out from Nickel Plate. Mr. Steinwart stated the timing was perfect after the lake activity recently and the beach comber done for the year.

**OTHER MATTERS – ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Ed Wimmer; second by Julie Spitzley

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Kilbury