

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

**Members Present:** Tom Solberg, Elizabeth Laffay, Matt Grieves, Eddie Wimmer

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

**Present from City of Huron:** None

**Members Absent:** Julie Spitzley

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion to approve Dec. 5, 2023, minutes as presented; by Matt Grieves and seconded by Elizabeth Laffay. Approved unanimously.

**Audience Comments:** None

***NEW BUSINESS***

**A. Old Business**

1. **HJRD Anchor Memorial – presented by Doug Steinwart:** Mr. Steinwart referenced the Save the Date attachment to the HJRD Feb. packet. The dedication and celebration will take place on Friday, May 31, 2024. The department is in the process of ordering the plaques, making a list of potential guests, and working on the agenda. An article in the Spring newsletter will be announcing the Memorial Dedication and Celebration and include the names of the individuals.
2. **Fabens Ice Skating Rink (Seasonal) – presented by Doug Steinwart:** There was a successful solid 7 days of skating. The rink was moved from the tennis courts where it was set up the past 2 years. There were many positives that outweighed the negatives with moving it to the 40 x 40 shelter at Fabens. The ice was protected from both the sun and the wind, which created a smoother more skateable surface. The department added lights on a timer for evening skating. The lights go off at 9PM at that time the rink is closed. The picnic tables were removed from the pavilion and placed on the lawn going up to the shelter and were used as a place to change in and out of the skates. Several people took advantage of the free skate loaner program we have set up. Moving forward the rink remains set up in the event the weather cooperates and provides additional days of skating. Staff received a lot of positive feedback on the ice skating program and its new location.

**B. New Business**

1. **Huron Waterfront Parks Plan Update – presented by Doug Steinwart:** Mr. Steinwart referenced the attached map of the area in focus for the Huron Waterfront Parks Plan. This is a follow up from the November conversation when the plan was initially presented. The City received a grant from the Coastal Management, Division of ODNR to help fund this project. A Request for Qualifications was posted, six firms responded. Internally staff reviewed the six respondents and used a scoring matrix to narrow them down to 3, then eventually 2. Erik Engle from Planning and Zoning will be taking the lead on this project, a steering committee will be formed. As noted on the map – the areas highlighted are all parks and public spaces ranging from The Showboat Property to Centennial Park, to Lake Front Park to Waterworks Beach. The goal of this plan is to provide connectivity, habitat restoration, and make the locations ADA accessible. The City is looking for a member of the HJRD to sit on the Steering Committee as a representative of this Board. There will be a handful of meetings that will likely take place late afternoon/early evening. This Steering Committee will ultimately make the recommendation to Council.

2. **Huron Solar Eclipse – Totality in a Great Lake Place! – presented by Doug Steinwart:** Mr. Steinwart presented the Solar Eclipse handout included in the packet. The Solar Eclipse is set to happen on Monday, April 8, 2024, around 3:12 PM. The City, particularly the Parks & Recreation Department, is partnering with the Huron Library and the Huron Chamber. The Chamber is helping to hopefully secure a sponsor or two for the glasses and involve the local businesses in the event. The library is looking to provide children's games and activities during the afternoon at the Boat Basin. There will be a Magic Show and an 80's band from Cleveland (Attraxxion's). The goal is to make it a family-friendly event for the Huron community and our visitors.
3. **Misc. Parks & Recreation:** Mr. Croucher updated the Board on the Winter Soccer Program. The program is halfway through – with 4 weeks to go. Thanks to Huron High School Soccer team and coaches for helping us with this event. The Winter Yoga program was brought back this year. It is currently on Tuesday evenings at the Boat Basin. The transition back to outside will take place sometime in May. Currently, the 2024 season is in the planning and preparation process. Contact has been made with schools, coaches, and our children's programmer. All the info will be in the upcoming Community Guide and on the website. A meeting was held with the Huron Baseball Softball Program. Their contract to rent the fields will go before Council in the upcoming weeks. Upcoming programs for this Spring include – Breakfast with the Easter Bunny, Magic Show and Egg Hunt is scheduled for Sat. March 23. Breakfast begins at 8 AM, Magic Show is scheduled for 10 AM and the Egg Hunt to follow at 1PM. The breakfast and magic show are at First Presbyterian Church and the Egg Hunt is at the Boat Basin. The City-Wide Clean-Up is scheduled for Sat. April 20, 2024, from 9-11 AM beginning at the Parks Garage. We hope to increase participation this year and have reached out to the schools looking for interested groups. The City-Wide Garage Sale is scheduled for Sat. May 18<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM to 1 PM in the Huron Boat Basin parking lot.

Mr. Steinwart introduced the Boat Basin Schedule of Events. He is pleased to bring back Boppin on the Basin, Movies by the River, and the Arts in the Amphitheater. New this year, Firelands Symphony Orchestra and Civista Bank have partnered with the Boat Basin to bring a new summer series to the Arts at the Amphitheater event. Mr. Steinwart expressed his appreciation for not only the Firelands and Civista partnership and sponsorship but all the partners who have been loyal to the Boat Basin over the years. The Boat Basin schedule can be found online, in print and will be arriving in residents water bills this cycle.

The department is partnering with the Huron Lion's Club and EHOVE to build new Safety Town buildings. The Lion's Club came to us looking for a project to do and the suggestion of new Safety Town buildings came up. EHOVE is creating a prototype for our review and consideration. We are very appreciative of the Lion's Club taking this project on.

The department is proposing a facility rate increase to Council. Increasing the daily parking ticket from \$6 to \$7 could generate close to \$7K based on ticket sales over the past couple of years. Park expenses have increased and to maintain our level of service to the park, an increase is necessary. Our season tickets price for Huron residents will remain at \$25, while the non-resident price will increase to \$40.

Mr. Steinwart referenced the Courts at Fabens Park Save the Date for the Dedication and Ribbon Cutting for Wed., May 8 at 3 PM. The date was chosen to coordinate with the school tennis teams. Internally we are working on the agenda, invitations, etc. This event is a great opportunity to recognize the partners and celebrate the project. Following the ribbon cutting, there will be a reception in Shelter #2. We are working on a reservation system for the courts, our new website will offer scheduling features that will show block out dates and times for public use. Dr. Laffay inquired about the reservation process and Mr. Steinwart replied with at this time the department is looking to schedule 2-hour slots at a time. Due to the amount the park is used on weekends during the summer with baseball and softball tournaments the thought is to keep weekends open to first-come; first serve.

This week our department has been attending the Ohio Parks & Recreation Association conference at Kalahari Resort. Over 850 Parks Professionals are registered for educational sessions, attending a trade show, and learning about what's trending in the world of Parks & Recreation.

#### ***CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS***

Mr. Solberg thanked the board for attending and welcomed Mr. Wimmer to the Board! Mr. Wimmer commented he is excited to be a member of the HJRD board and looks forward to working with Parks & Recreation as a township representative. Mr. Reinbolt echoed what Mr. Steinwart mentioned about the Ice Rink. He added that aside from a chiller system, setting up under Shelter #2 at Fabens is the best way to control weather elements. It keeps the snow and wind off of the ice and creates a smoother skating situation. No other comments were made.

Mr. Solberg announced the next meeting to be Tuesday, March 5, 2024.

#### ***OTHER MATTERS – ADJOURNMENT***

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Grieves; second by Mr. Wimmer.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Kilbury  
Huron Parks & Recreation