

**Huron Joint Recreation District
Regular Board Meeting- Minutes
Monday, May 5 at 7:30pm
Huron Boat Basin Marina Bldg, Huron, OH**

Members present: Tim Golling, Dave Dreffer, Terry Graham, Steve Hohler, Tom Solberg, Jr., Chuck Thompson, Scott Slocum, Don Ritzenthaler, Wayne Foster. Present from HPRD: Chris Basting, Brian Croucher, Doug Steinwart, Andy White

Members absent:

Visitors to this meeting: Joe Dike, new owner of “The Gym”.

First order of business was the approval of minutes from the April 2, 2007 meeting. All were in favor. Minutes approved.

Audience Comments: Mr. Joe Dike, owner of “The Gym” introduced himself to the members of the HJRD. Mr. Dike stated that as a new business owner in town, he is looking forward to getting involved in the community/community events.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Recreation Program Coordinator-Doug Steinwart

Doug Steinwart introduced Brian Croucher, Program Coordinator. Mr. Croucher discussed that he has been in a similar position for the last 4 years, previous to that he was with the Boys & Girls Club for 6 years. He expressed that he is excited to be here and is eager to get new programs implemented.

Mr. Steinwart explained that Brian has been being trained on the current programming, software program, policies/procedures and concentrating on meeting community business members.

B. Recap of City Wide Clean Up-Chris Basting

Event was held on Saturday, April 21st. Participation doubled this year to 104 volunteers. Participants picked up 106 bags of trash throughout the city. This year we did not have any teams participate, it was mainly general public participants; families, brownie troops, scouts.

Mr. Basting mentioned one little boy in particular, Nathan Atkins, who took the time to come out and help on his own. He was assigned the skate park area at McCormick and did a fantastic job.

Erie County Environmental Services, Huron Lagoons Marina, Huron Chamber of Commerce, Gerkleys Industrial Supplies all contributed to making

this event a success. Mike Foster donated his time once again to take pictures of the event.

C. Kalahari Classic Tournament-Chris Basting

The Perkins Bombers Baseball Team ran a tournament at Fabens Park this past weekend. This was a privately run tournament. HPRD did not have any involvement other than running the concession stand and preparing the fields prior to tournament.

The revenues collected from this tournament were \$1250 for facility rental and \$3800 for the concession stand. This was an event that was not anticipated as far as revenues for the 2007 budget. There were 37 teams involved this year and they are hoping to increase that to 50 in 2008. They would like to do this every year. This was a fundraiser for the Perkins Bombers Team.

Board members asked if there were any conflicts with the Lighthouse Run going on. No complaints were known. Board members asked if there was any downside to allowing this tournament to take place. Mr. Basting stated no problems were encountered, additional revenues achieved and that he felt having the fields prepped and ready for this tournament may have even benefited the Huron Baseball/Softball program in that fields are ready, and bases are set at 60' feet, so that should help their organization. Mr. Hohler stated that Huron Baseball will probably have to make some minor changes to distances on certain fields, but that wouldn't be a problem. Mr. Hohler then asked why the Perkins Bombers chose Huron to have this tournament.

Mr. Basting stated that he felt that Perkins simply doesn't have a facility like Fabens. The location and the conditions of fields were certainly factors in coming to Huron. Andy White added that he thought since Kalahari was sponsoring the event, and they are members of the Huron Chamber of Commerce, this may have been a factor in bringing the tournament to Huron.

Board members inquired about the impact of teams participating in tournaments in Huron and the affect on the local businesses. Mr. Steinwart explained that we will try to get a survey from our Dawg Daze teams on where teams are staying, restaurants they visited any information that impacts our city.

Mr. Hohler mentioned that he thought this will definitely grow as teams are in favor of participating in these early tournaments.

Mr. Thompson asked how the field facility fee was decided. Mr. White stated that the fee schedule came from the ordinance that is in place.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Huron Riverfest Donation-Doug Steinwart

The Huron Riverfest Committee donated \$850.00 for Mutt Mitts that go in the parks. This donation will cover a 2 year supply for our parks. HPRD wishes to acknowledge the Riverfest Committee for this generous donation.

Mr. Graham inquired about the Riverfest contract status. Mr. Steinwart explained that presently Lee McDermond and Eric Muelhauser were still working on the terminology. However, it will come before City Council on the 22nd or 24th.

B. Woodlands-McCormick PTO-Doug Steinwart

HPRD was contacted a couple weeks ago by the Woodlands-McCormick PTO. The PTO had decided they were going to donate proceeds from Market Day in June to HPRD. Today, however, HPRD was contacted by Woodlands-McCormick PTO and unfortunately they are having to cancel the June Market Day, therefore no donation will be made.

Mr. Steinwart discussed that Mike Foster donated an 8 horsepower Johnson engine to the Boat Basin today. Our part-time mechanic has been working on our 25 year old engine every year to get it ready for season. Having this engine donated is much appreciated. HPRD would like to recognize Mike Foster for all his time donated to HPRD.

C. Mower Acquisition-Chris Basting

A John Deere 72” cut mower has been purchased for the Parks Dept. Mr. White explained that this was part of a capitol projects request. The mower costs approximately \$9000.00 This mower will certainly decrease time and labor for the Parks department. One mower will be traded in. A capitol line item has now been established to replace a mower every two years. Mower has a 2 year warranty and a trade in program will be considered.

Other programs that the City will be doing are: Street improvement program, water distribution lines and a couple major truck acquisitions for the water department.

CHAIRMAN’S COMMENTS- Tim Golling

Mr. Golling commented that he was pleased all members were present. Mr. White formally welcomed Brian Croucher to HPRD. Mr. White reminded everyone that as a department we have been challenged the last couple of years with the budget being reduced. It is a blessing that Mr. Croucher has joined HPRD; his experience level will be an asset to us.

Mr. White also thanked Joe Dike for being present and welcomed him as a new business owner in Huron and looked forward to joint efforts with HPRD in the future.

The ConAgra project is moving right along. Another visit will be made from the administration of the Governor’s office in the near future to officially deed over the property. Mr. White met with the facilitator, John Girard, from March Fourth, and they have negotiated a draft to have three formal meetings involving different groups in the area:

1) Professional/Business Work Table (community would be invited) 2) Community Input Perspective 3) Governor's Visit 4) Community meeting again to wrap it all up. The community input is very important to the City.

Some ideas on meeting places being considered: Firelands BGSU, Schools, Amphitheater.

Currently, three developers are interested in the project and one of them has mentioned that a couple major developers will be contacting the City.

Mr. White has been approached by the City of Sandusky and Erie Metroparks about a new entity that is being explored—a regional Parks System. The City of Sandusky and Erie Metroparks are very excited about this possibility. Gary Packan from the City of Sandusky has had to cut personnel recently and may also have to close the greenhouse in the city. Erie Metroparks has not been able to operate the pool at Osborne Park due to budget reasons. This idea is exploratory at this point, but Mr. White wanted the members of HJRD to be aware that discussion is going on regarding a regionalization.

Mr. White stressed that this is only exploratory at this time. Many angles will have to be investigated.

HPRD budget is at a fraction of what it was 4 years ago. The City of Sandusky has 1.6 million dollar budget for Parks and Recreation and Erie Metroparks has 1.7 million. The City of Huron yields \$75,000 into Parks and Recreation and the department produces \$450,000. With that in mind, the thought is what could HPRD do if we had \$300,000 or more staff?

The fact is that the City has all these economic development analysis studies that are saying that we don't promote our quality of life nearly as well as we should. Capitol needs to be put into the Parks system. If by way of contract or agreement if we came together and redefined a new district that secures funding to the district and then took a board like HJRD and gave them fiscal oversight and through a contract with City Council yielded x amount of dollars to this type of board, then meetings could take place on moving on legislation and appropriating funds. Then when the budget issues come up with the City of Sandusky, City of Huron or Erie Metroparks then HPRD would not be a part of that solution anymore. Discussion continued with many scenarios speculated.

Mr. White was asked how HPRD was being funded now. Mr. White explained that currently take the \$75,000 and with the addition of the bed tax money, lets use the figure of \$90,000.00 Of that \$90,000, the schools and township contribute a percentage. So let's say \$100,000 was the budgeted amount, HPRD brought in \$350,000 on top of that.

Mr. Golling mentioned that just two years ago, HPRD future seemed bleak. Since then HPRD has been building back up and is for the most part self sustaining. In Mr. Golling's opinion in what we have the potential of developing, we should hold off on this idea as long as possible.

Mr. White stated he does have a responsibility to try and discover if this is something that would be beneficial or not to the City. Regionalization in general around the area is something that is being discussed for Water, Centralized Dispatching and Safety.

The intention was to just make HJRD members aware of these discussions.

MANAGERS' REPORT

A. PARKS-Chris Basting

B. RECREATION- Brian Croucher

Currently Spring Soccer is going on with over 50 kids. This month: Hershey Track & Field, and Bargains for Baby Sale will be on May 19. The Baby Sale currently has about 17 spaces sold.

The City Wide Garage Sale will be June 2, from 9am-2pm. 104 spaces have been sold at present and we'll most likely have to add spaces in the grass areas.

Farmers Market will return as - First Federal Farmers Market. First Federal of Lorain is sponsoring this event. They made a \$400 donation to the program. Permanent signs will be made. Letters have been mailed to past vendors and Brian will be following up with them.

C. BOAT BASIN- Doug Steinwart

Huron Water Safety Day will be Thursday, May 17 at the Boat Basin. Paul Berlin, Fire Dept has been working with The Chapman Group to bring this event which is for 3-4 graders in Huron. HPRD will be working with the Fire, Police, Coast Guard, ODNR, Red Cross and local marinas. This event will take place from 9am-2:30pm at the Boat Basin.

Riverfest: Sue Fawcett, chairperson for the Riverfest Committee is looking for sponsorship from local businesses for Riverfest. They would like to bring some family type events to the festival and are in need of more sponsors. The Lions Club will again be running the parade and operating the beer sales.

OTHER MATTERS-

Next meeting is Monday, June 4, 2007. The meeting was adjourned by an approved board vote at 9:00pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Christine M. Gibboney
Administrative Assistant, HPRD