

# PARKS & CEMETERY BOARD CITY OF NORTON

Wednesday, May 20, 2015

The Park and Cemetery Board of the City of Norton, Ohio convened for a public meeting in Council Chambers of the Safety Administration Building. Chairperson Gibson called the meeting to order at 5:32p.m.

## ATTENDANCE:

**PRESENT:** Ada Waltz, Tracy Ranier, Neva Gibson, Jesse Prather, Ruth Stimac

**ABSENT:**

**ALSO PRESENT:** Valerie Wax-Carr, Dan Newman

## NEW BUSINESS:

Chairperson Gibson stated that we would be talking about usage fees for the parks. She asked Ms. Wax-Carr to speak concerning the fees. Ms. Wax-Carr stated that when she came to the Parks & Cemetery Board meeting after she arrived, she had spoken about the organizations that use the parks and the fields for baseball and softball, and stated that she would like to get a committee together concerning the use of the parks and to go over the rules and regulations. Ms. Wax-Carr said that she would like to update the rules and regulations and the usage fee charges that the city currently has in place. Chairperson Gibson asked Mr. Prather if he would like to be in charge of that committee and he said that he would. Mr. Prather stated that he thinks that is a good idea to look at all the usage fees for the parks, and wanted to also look into giving the Norton residents a discounted fee. Chairperson Gibson stated that when the new recommendations are finalized and approved, that there should be signage displaying the rules and regulations at each park and facility. Ms. Wax-Carr stated that we have the boards in the park that we can place the information in, and that the information would be given to people who sign up to use park facilities. Ms. Wax-Carr stated that she met with and talked to the head of the Baseball Association as well as another coach from another team, and that they were working on getting the use of the fields worked out. She stated that the meeting went very well, and both people are working to find a more equitable solution. She stated that she explained to the gentlemen that if they are using the facility for a sporting event, the rule is that the roster needs to be made up of fifty-one percent (51%) of Norton residents. She stated that at one point there was a problem with the Soccer Association, but it was resolved. Mr. Dan Newman of 3172 S. Cleveland-Massillon Road talked about the soccer fields and stated that his wife was treasurer of that association. People would contact her and would ask for different playing times, and if it was open they could use them. He stated that the Baseball Association does not do that the same way. He brought in a schedule that indicated all dates are booked, and he stated that his son's baseball, team who has sixty two percent (62%) of Norton youth, was told that they could not use the fields at all. Mr. Newman stated that they want to have their kids play, and the coach is sitting back and letting the association dictate the schedule, and he did not think that was fair. Chairperson Gibson stated that this was the first time that she and the rest of the Parks & Cemetery Board had heard about this situation. She said that to the best of her memory, the Baseball Association had been scheduling the fields because they had worked out an agreement with the City that they would provide all of the maintenance and upkeep at no cost to the City and that they have maintained the fields quite well. Mrs. Gibson told Mr. Newman that it would appear that Ms. Wax-Carr is already on top of the situation and that working out change is a process and he needed to give it a little time. Ms. Wax-Carr told Mr. Newman that while working on a solution to his situation, the Baseball Association had offered him multiple Sundays, but Mr. Newman stated that some of his players would not practice on Sundays due to religious reasons so that was not an option. It was also noted that in order to account for cancelled games due to rainouts, the Baseball Association had to use additional dates on their calendar in order to make up those games. Ms. Wax-Carr stated that this is one of the reasons why she is bringing up the decision to have clear rules, regulations and fees for the parks in order to avoid situations such as this one. She stated that the City has the same issues with the Soccer Association and other groups who want to use the fields. Ms. Wax-Carr said that she after speaking to the Baseball Association and with the coach from the outside group she felt that they were willing to work out a schedule in order to work things out. Ms. Wax Carr stated that the City will not dictate the schedule, it will be the Baseball Association that will dictate the schedule. There was more discussion concerning the schedule of the baseball fields. The board stated to Mr. Newman that Ms. Wax-Carr needed some time to work with the coaches to find a reasonable solution to this problem.

## OLD BUSINESS:

Ms. Stimac stated that John Conklin and her son walked the park to see if it would be feasible to have disc-golf set up in Columbia Woods Park. She stated that it would start by the pavilion and go around the back area. She said they were going to measure it and see how many holes they would be able to do. Ms. Wax Carr stated that if she could get

a map of the layout, she could talk to Ernie Reynolds and Vern Tenney to see if it would be feasible. Ms. Stimac said that she has talked to Mr. Conklin who informed her that there may be some Boy Scouts looking for a service project. Ms. Gibson then told Ms. Stimac that she may be able to utilize the masonry group from the high school to set the concrete and poles in place. Ms. Wax Carr stated that if it becomes an Eagle Scout project being it is city property that the Administration would need to sign off on the project.

Chairperson Gibson asked Ms. Ranier to speak on the Summer Recreation program. Ms. Ranier stated that she would like to bring back the summer recreation program for the children, and she would like to use her summer break to research some grants and to get information to run the program. She stated that the helpers would be BCI checked and there would be a small charge for the families, and that she would really like to see the parks program come back for the children. Mr. Prather asked what the children do at the program, and Ms. Ranier stated that in the former programs, the children made crafts, participated in bike rodeos, and the zoo would come to the park and work with the children. Ms. Waltz stated that the Kiwanis would probably be interested in helping.

Chairperson Gibson stated that the Green-Up Norton Day was phenomenal and wanted to thank Ms. Wax Carr for bringing this program to Norton and for being so involved from beginning to end. The turnout was spectacular!

Ms. Wax Carr stated that Ada Waltz is beginning her senior year with Tree City, and that she and Ada went to the Tree City celebration in Sandusky.

Ms. Wax Carr stated that currently, the Adopt-A-Spot program is set for twenty three areas throughout Norton. She stated that she still needs some caretakers to help take care of some of the spots. Ms. Wax Carr said that they sent out a letter to the caretakers that will need to be presented at Dayton Nursery in order to pick up the flowers. Tom Dayton has chosen the flowers for this year, and they will be needed to be picked up June 1, 2015 to June 15, 2015.

Ms. Ranier stated a couple months ago she was looking into the Little Libraries and she went to the library and found that they had written a grant for \$10,000.00 to start the Little Library program themselves. She said that the Norton Library will be coming to the City to get approval soon to place a Little Library area in Williams Park and Columbia Woods Park.

Mr. Prather asked to have discussion on benches in the park on the next Parks & Cemetery Agenda.

Ms. Ranier stated that she would like to ask the Board to have a place in the agenda for public speaking, and to follow Robert's Rules of Order and keep comments to five minutes. The Board agreed to the five minutes.

Chairperson Gibson stated that she would like to have the meetings moved to 5:00 p.m. The board agreed to have the meetings start at 5:00 p.m.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:**

The board reviewed the minutes of Wednesday, May 20, 2015. Chairperson Gibson called for a motion to approve the minutes from May 20, 2015. Ms. Stimac made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted and Mr. Prather seconded the motion. **Roll Call: Ms. Stimac – Yes, Mr. Prather - Yes, Ms. Gibson – Yes and Ms. Waltz – Yes and Ms. Ranier – Yes. The minutes were approved 5 - 0.**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Chairperson Gibson stated the next meeting would be Wednesday, June 17, 2015. With no further business coming before the Board, Chairperson Gibson adjourned the meeting at 7:00p.m.

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Parks and Cemetery Board Chairperson/or Vice-Chair

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Parks & Cemetery Board Vice-Chair/or Member

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Date:

Final minutes approved and signed at the meeting on June 17, 2015 and signed original is on file with the Clerk of Council.