



CITY OF NORTON

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Mayor Mike Zita

PARKS and CEMETERY BOARD

March 15, 2023

Minutes

The Parks and Cemetery Board meeting was called to order by Ms. Gibson, Chair, at 6:02 p.m. on Wednesday, March 15, 2023.

Roll Call: Neva Gibson
Ruth Stimac (excused)
Robert Fritz
Kaitlin Witzberger
Richard Witwer

Also Present:
Mayor Mike Zita
Phil Turske, Administrative Officer
Kerry Macomber, Acting Secretary

Minutes

Ms. Witzberger moved to approve the Minutes of February 15, 2023 as submitted; seconded by Mr. Fritz.

Roll Call: Yes: Witzberger, Fritz, Gibson, Witwer
No: None

Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Update on Norton Center Cemetery: Mr. Turske noted that the fencing has been ordered and is expected to arrive around the end of the month. Once it is received, Norton will be placed on Precision Fencing schedule for installation. Mr. Turske explained that he has had conversations with both the City Law Director and the City Insurance Company Representative and there is a concern that any damage that may occur while working with the grave stones, which are private property, would become a liability for the City. Ms. Gibson said that the Boy Scouts of America will assume all responsibility and they will be supervised by the memorial company.

Green Up Day – Ms. Gibson said that she has passed out the flyers and registration forms at the schools. Mayor Zita said that he has also passed out flyers and he has spoken with Home Depot, Lowes and Target. These stores have agreed to post the flyers and try to assemble staff participation at the event. ACME has agreed to donate breakfast items, including donuts, juice and water. Mayor Zita has contacted GoJo regarding donations of materials and supplies, such as hand sanitizer. Mr. Hess will provide an inventory of what

they need. Mayor Zita noted the event is scheduled for Saturday, April 22, 2023 from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon.

Adopt-A-Spot – Mayor Zita thanked Kerry Macomber and Vivian Durbin for assisting with getting the letters for donations out and remarked they have received quite a few sponsors. He noted that there will be two additional spots this year: New Haven and Barberton Reservoir. The beds still need to be prepared, but the Service Department is working on that. A light layer of mulch will be spread over the spots during Green-Up Day and then once the planting is completed, they will add more. Mr. Witwer asked if Mr. Hess has determined if water is available in the center of town. Ms. Gibson remarked that Ms. Whipkey informed her that Mr. Hess has reported that there is no longer any water system there. Mayor Zita said he will provide a barrel that caregivers can fill with water from the City Administration building. Mr. Witwer commented that other cities have their Service Departments provide watering for the sites. Mayor Zita remarked that the focus of the program is on volunteerism. He indicated that the seasonal staff may be able to assist with some watering, but not the weeding and caregiving of the sites. Mr. Witwer commented it was brought to his attention by a friend who has indicated she may not be able to volunteer again. Ms. Gibson remarked that she has spoken with that individual and will be helping her with the watering. She also commented that some sights have groups that volunteer so their members can take turns caring for the Adopt-A-Spot.

New Business

Codified Ordinances Chapter 1066 – Ms. Gibson explained that these are the Rules for the Parks and Grounds and wanted each member to have a copy for reference.

Veterans' Memorial Update

Mr. Lukens shared a PowerPoint presentation featuring the idea for a Norton Veterans' Memorial (copy attached herewith). He said that last year he received feedback from the Parks and Cemetery Board, as well as constituents that encouraged him to look at other options. This version will also feature the five military logos, which are the hallmark of this monument with a center pedestal with five panels that could be engraved. They envision benches being added later from sponsorships. Flags could include the American, Gold Star, POW/MIA, as well as the military flags.

Charlotte Whipkey, 624 Parkway, Norton – Ms. Whipkey inquired about the location of the memorial. Mr. Lukens said that discussion is ongoing. They are in the design phase of the memorial right now and are here seeking input from the Parks and Cemetery Board. Mr. Turske said that the decision of location will happen after the design has been approved and quotes have been received. Ms. Whipkey asked if the location would impact the cost of the project. Mr. Turske indicated not likely because the cost of the footers, bricks, etc. will remain constant regardless of site.

Denise Mullins, 2886 Wilbanks, Norton – Ms. Mullins noted that at the previous presentation, that memorial would have been funded by voluntary contributions. She questioned if they receive quotes for the project, does that mean it will be paid by the City and if so, will that be voted on by the residents or will that be an administrative decision.

Mr. Lukens noted that there would be some sponsors and volunteer contributions, but it is too early to say how much. Mr. Turske noted that regardless of how it is funded, they need to have the costs figured out. Ms. Whipkey said that the Woody Williams Foundation had added the City of Norton to their website and was accepting donations. She said that should be reviewed and if it is still active, it should be removed. Mr. Lukens agreed to look into it.

Ms. Gibson remarked that she and Mr. Lukens have met several times with the gentleman that has provided this design and they are pleased with it. She asked for feedback from the other Board members and if they agreed conceptually with the design. All members expressed support for the design. Ms. Mullins asked if this would be completed as one project or will it be completed in phases over time. Mr. Lukens said most likely as one project, except for the benches. Mr. Turske added that if a 501(c)3 organization were to adopt this project, the development would depend upon their available funding. If the City sponsors it, it will be voted on by Council and open to public input.

Western Star Cemetery – Ms. Gibson said that she has been contacted by a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). They would like to assist with providing new flags at Western Star and also cleaning up the area. Once a date has been determined, Ms. Gibson will let the Board members know. Mayor Zita said the Service Department would pick up the trash and debris and requested it be piled off to the side.

Historical Society – Ms. Gibson noted that the minutes from the Norton Historical Society meeting indicated that they are considering a cemetery tour this year and suggested that with the fencing project, the Center Cemetery may not be available. Ms. Gibson shared some of the upcoming events for the Norton Historical Society and encouraged Board members to consider becoming a member of the Historical Society.

Williams Peace Park – Mr. Turske informed that Mr. Hess has suggested installing a black, chain-link fence between the Car Wash and the Park to stop trash and debris from blowing over into the park. All board members agreed that was a good idea and thanked him for letting them know.

Summer Events at Columbia Woods – Mayor Zita announced there will be a Summer Concert Series and Family Movie nights hosted at the park. Information will be posted on the website and there are flyers being distributed to local businesses. Mr. Turske announced that once the weather clears, they will add dirt to the low area in front of the pavilion and seed it for grass.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business coming before the Parks and Cemetery Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Kerry Macomber, Acting Secretary

Date

Approved:

Parks and Cemetery Board Chairperson
or Vice-Chairperson

Date

DRAFT