



**CITY OF GARY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS**



Board of Commissioners

Rev. Dwight Gardner, President

Willie Bill Cook, Vice-President

Renee Patterson-Member

Alan Harrell-Member

Jerome Prince
Mayor, City of Gary

Jazmyn Thomas
Parks & Recreation Director

**Board of Park Commission
Regular Park Board Meeting
Tuesday January 24, 2023
455 Massachusetts Street
10:00 A.M.
Minutes**

Call to Order

Certification: Let the record reflect there was an executive session held and no items were voted on.

President Gardner called the Board meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Roll Call: The following were present: Commissioner Dwight Gardner, Commissioner Willie Cook, Commissioner Alan Harrell, and Commissioner Renee Patterson.

A quorum was established.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Pledge of Allegiance Recited

Board Re-organization

Attorney Monroe conducted the Board re-organization for the period of January 2023 through December 21, 2023.

Attorney Monroe asked if there was anyone that wanted to make a nomination for a candidate for the office of president.

Willie Cook nominated Rev. Dwight Gardner, current president. Renee Patterson seconded the nomination.

Attorney Monroe then asked if there were any other nominations. There were none.

Attorney Monroe asked Rev. Dwight Gardner if he accepts the nomination for president. He stated that he accepts the nomination.

Roll call vote: Commissioner Gardner, Yes, Commissioner Willie Cook, Yes, Commissioner Harrell, Yes, Commissioner Patterson, Yes.

Vote carried 4-0.

Attorney Monroe opened the floor for vice-president, to serve the term of January 2023 through December 31, 2023.

Rev. Dwight Gardner nominated Willie Bill Cook to be vice-president of the Board for the date of January 2023 through December 2023. Renee Patterson seconded the nomination.

Attorney Monroe asked Mr. Cook if he accepts the nomination. Mr. Cook stated "I do."

Attorney Monroe asked for roll-call being and seeing that there were no other nominations.

Roll call vote: Commissioner Gardner, Yes, Commissioner Willie Cook, Yes, Commissioner Harrell, Yes, Commissioner Patterson, Yes.

Vote carried 4-0.

Attorney Monroe announced Rev. Dwight Gardner as Board president and Willie Bill Cook as vice-president.

Approval of Parks Board Minutes

President Gardner entertained a motion to accept the minutes for Tuesday December 20, 2022 as presented. Commissioner Patterson so moved the motion. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Commissioner Gardner, Yes, Commissioner Willie Cook, Yes, Commissioner Harrell, Yes, Commissioner Patterson, Yes.

Motion carried 4-0.

Approval of Parks Claims Listing

President, Dwight Gardner questioned the training course for the Association for Aquatics.

Tawanna Lyons, Aquatics Manager, said that the conference was for aquatics professionals to gain more knowledge about aquatics. The conference is scheduled in Colorado for February 11th -February 17th.

Commissioner Patterson asked about the janitorial supplies from “Fast Coffee, Natural Water.” It was explained that “Fast Coffee, Natural Water,” was another business name for Able Janitorial.

President Gardner entertained a motion to approve the claims listing as presented for January 2,2023 thru December 24,2023. Commissioner Cook so moved the motion. Commissioner Patterson seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Commissioner Gardner, Yes, Commissioner Willie Cook, Yes, Commissioner Harrell, Yes, Commissioner Patterson, Yes.

Motion carried 4-0.

Approval of Payroll

Commissioner Cook asked how the overtime is determined. Don Plohg, Parks Manager, said the overtime goes by seniority. The calls are made in order of seniority through the union.

Mr. Cook asked if the people with less seniority ever get a chance to partake in the overtime. Mr. Plohg said yes, because it goes in rotation down the list.

Commissioner Gardner requested an explanation accompanying the overtime.

President Gardner entertained a motion to approve the payroll expenditures for December 16,2022, December 30,2022 and January 13,2023 with the necessary explanations to follow. Commissioner Cook so moved the motion. Commissioner Patterson seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Commissioner Gardner, Yes, Commissioner Willie Cook, Yes, Commissioner Harrell, Yes, Commissioner Patterson, Yes.

Motion carried 4-0.

Marquette Park Bid Opening:

A bid packet was opened from “Dapper Eats.” This company was the only company to submit a bid package.

Attorney Monroe asked if Marquette Park Pavilion Manager, Kamisha Jackson, could give an overview of the bid packets.

Mrs. Jackson said that the packages included the history, financials, what the company has done in the past, as well as what Marquette is looking for.

Mrs. Jackson said that she would like to move forward with the company after they have been reviewed. Marquette received a notice from the last vendor and needs a caterer for the upcoming months, as they are booked.

President Gardner requested an executive session prior to the next meeting to discuss and review the bid in preparation for awarding the contract.

Commissioner Harrell asked how much public notification was sent out during the RFP process.

Mrs. Jackson stated that the ad was sent out to the local newspapers (Post-Tribune, Gary Crusaders, and Hammond Times, and 411) at the end of November.

Commissioner Cook asked if Mrs. Jackson had ever sampled food from Dapper Eats, and under what circumstances.

Mrs. Jackson said throughout the year, several customers had used the catering company for there events. During that time, she was able to taste the food.

President Gardner asked if it were possible to set up a taste test for the board members.

Mrs. Jackson said it was possible.

President Gardner requested a food tasting prior to the next meeting.

Legal: There were two contracts presented.

Eco Realm: A professional services contract for EcoRealm to provide necessary planting services to Marquette Park. The term of the contract begins January 1,2023 thru December 31,2023 for an amount not to exceed \$15,000.00.

Commissioner Gardner entertained a motion to approve the professional service contract with Eco Realm for Marquette Park in 2023, not to exceed \$15,000. Commissioner Cook moved to approve the contract. Commissioners Patterson seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Commissioner Gardner, Yes, Commissioner Willie Cook, Yes, Commissioner Harrell, Yes, Commissioner Patterson, Yes.

Motion carried 4-0.

Mark International: A professional services contract to Mark International to provide security services in the evening for the Hudson-Campbell. The term of the contract begins January 1,2023- December 31,2023 for an amount not to exceed \$20,500.

Commissioner Cook asked what time the security company is on site in the evenings.

Christine Williams, Hudson-Campbell Director, stated that the security services were provided from 5:00pm until 9:00pm, Monday thru Friday, and 9:00am-1:00pm on weekends. This time was chosen because they are peak hours for the facility.

Commissioner Gardner entertained a motion to approve the security contract with the Hudson-Campbell with Mark International, not to exceed \$20,500.00 for the year 2023. Commissioner Cook moved to approve the contract. Commissioner Patterson seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Commissioner Gardner, Yes, Commissioner Willie Cook, Yes, Commissioner Harrell, Yes, Commissioner Patterson, Yes.

Motion carried 4-0.

South Gleason Concession: A verbal renewal based on a request made to Attorney Monroe via email. The request was for a 1-year extension of the current lease contract.

Commissioner Gardner entertained a motion to approve the catering contract for South Gleason Golf-Course for the year 2023. Commissioner Cook moved to approve the contract. Commissioner Harrell seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Commissioner Gardner, Yes, Commissioner Willie Cook, Yes, Commissioner Harrell, Yes, Commissioner Patterson, Yes.

Motion carried 4-0.

Decay Devils MOU: An MOU was received from Decay Devils, after presenting at the last meeting. The MOU described the partnership and what the director of Decay Devils wanted to see. Although there was no signature line for the Park Board Commissioners, the Board still had to approve the MOU.

Attorney Monroe said she had reviewed the MOU and that it was her recommendation that the Board approve the MOU as stated.

Commissioner Gardner entertained a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding and release of liability between the Gary Parks Department and Decay Devils as presented in the document. Commissioner Cook moved to approve the contract. Commissioner Harrell seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Commissioner Gardner, Yes, Commissioner Willie Cook, Yes, Commissioner Harrell, Yes, Commissioner Patterson, Yes.

Motion carried 4-0.

Administrative Reports:

Kamisha Jackson: Marquette Park Director- A total revenue comparison was presented for years 2020,2021, and 2022. Ms. Jackson said there was a decrease in revenue due to the late opening of the boat launch. The boat launch was not opened between May 31st and July 15th. Therefore, no revenue was collected from the boat launch. The beach closed on September 5th, which was much earlier than the normal October close time. Mrs. Jackson is expecting the revenue to be much higher for 2023.

Over the past weekend, there was damage to the Lagoon area. A drunk driver hit one of the benches, coming around the corner.

Commissioner Cook asked if it were possible to put a boulder up.

Mrs. Jackson said that has been in discussion. She agreed with putting up boulders to protect the property, since this is a recurring issue.

Commissioner Patterson asked about consideration for speed bumps to deter speeding.

Mrs. Jackson said there had been previous discussions with Ms. Barber. She is going to follow up and see where they are with that.

Commissioner Gardner commented on a disc golf station that was placed in the purview of the sled hill. Commissioner Gardner requested that the disc golf station be removed.

MaryAnn Best spoke to the issue stating that the station at the bottom of the hill was removed. They thought the station at the top of the hill could remain.

To be sure that everyone was on the same page, Commissioner Gardner agreed to take a walk with MaryAnn Best to show her which station to move.

Marquette Park is looking for sponsors for the Annual Superhero & Princess Brunch. All persons interested in donating should contact Marquette. The goal for this year is to have all of the children to attend for free.

Commissioner Cook mentioned that he sits on the Gary/Chicago Airport Board. He stated that there are talks about an air show this year (2023). Commissioner Cook asked to what degree Mr. Jackson would have to work with them to coordinate the airshow.

Mrs. Jackson said it was imperative that she knows the dates as soon as possible. She has already started to book weddings and the summer is already booked. Mrs. Jackson said she is not involved in the activities on the beach, but is concerned about the events happening at the venue during that time.

Ms. Thomas asked if it were possible for the Parks Department to sit in on those meetings to discuss the air show. Mr. Cook said he would contact Dan Vicari and have him reach out.

Atiya Muhammad: Youth Services Bureau-Ms. Muhammad announced that in late December, YSB partnered with Gary Community Partnerships and had a gift-wrapping party for 20 families with Child Protective Services. Ms. Muhammad gave thanks to Jeffery Edwards of Gary Community Partnerships for allowing YSB to volunteer.

Youth Service Bureau requested permission to submit a grant through Project Aware. They are looking to ask for \$20,000 to support programming as well as professional development. The grant dates are from June 1, 2023 – September 29, 2023.

Commissioner Cook entertained a motion to approve permission for the submission of the grant. Commissioner Patterson moved to approve the grant. Commissioner Harrell, seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Commissioner Willie Cook, Yes, Commissioner Harrell, Yes, Commissioner Patterson, Yes.

Motion carried 3-0.

Mrs. Muhammad asked for permission to host a Gala at Marquette to raise money and collect funds for YSB, to help support the summer camps and other events. YSB is primarily ran on donations and grant money.

Commissioner, President Gardner entertained a motion approval for YSB to work with the Controller in terms of permission to receive funds.

Commissioner Patterson moved to approve the motion. Commissioners Harrell and Cook seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Commissioner Gardner, Yes, Commissioner Willie Cook, Yes, Commissioner Harrell, Yes, Commissioner Patterson, Yes.

Motion carried 4-0.

Christine Williams: Hudson-Campbell- Mrs. Williams gave an update on the equipment that had been ordered. The treadmill, boxing bags, and all of the weights have come in. There is still some equipment that they are waiting for.

Mrs. Williams stated that she has already put in a request to remove the old equipment. There is a process to send documentation to the auditor and state.

Mrs. Williams showed the Board virtual designs for the plans she has for the rooms.

All staff will have an inventory list to keep up with the materials.

Once everything is installed, Mrs. Williams plans to take pictures and advertise.

Mr. Cook asked how much was expended for the equipment. Mrs. Williams said the total was \$86,000.00.

Commissioner Patterson asked if there was any way to have some form of entertainment near the treadmill.

Mrs. Williams said the new treadmills have TV's on them. IT will have to make the internet stronger once it is installed.

Mrs. Williams stated R&B celebrity, Donnell Jones, came to the Hudson-Campbell to use the steam room prior to his concert. Mr. Jones was unable to find any other steam room in the area.

Commissioner Cook asked if the funds spent on the new equipment was from last year's budget. Mrs. Williams said the funds came from the grant.

Mr. Cook asked what her plans for the new budget were.

Mrs. Williams said she plans to make some upgrades to the batting area.

Jazmyn Thomas, Parks Director: Ms. Thomas said she is looking to update 3 of the Park positions. She is looking to change the groundskeeper role to "Event Services." The role will be responsible for set-up, tear down, and cleaning of events in the pavilions. She plans to gear these positions toward college students.

The summer operations planning will start this week with each department head. Ms. Thomas will go over the plans for each department for the summer.

Facility Updates: Community Development had an infrastructure and renovations for Glen Ryan, Roosevelt, and Tolleston. The spaces are not currently available, because the buildings are not up to code yet. The doors were delivered last week. Ms. Thomas is waiting on an installation date. The building also needs cameras, fire-extinguishers, and additional security items.

Administrative Updates: Ms. Thomas recently met with the MLK South Construction Control Group. They discussed implementing all of the wetlands and marsh in Gary to connect all the trails. The anticipated start date is 2024 after the Parks Department finishes their Masterplan.

Bi-Weekly meetings have been held with the Eppley Institute to complete the Masterplan. The Masterplan is expected to be complete in July. There will be an upcoming survey for any partners or community members to give their input.

Jewel Parks: There is a re-bid for the Jewel Park Project. Bid Package pick-up will be January 31st in Public Works. Ms. Thomas anticipates awarding the bids in March.

Public Comment: Public comment was received by Chef Lucero Donato, Mary Ann Best, Carol Smith, and Sandy O'Brien.

Chef Donato: Chef Donato said she was interested in the RFP for the catering, but had a question with reference to the 20% revenue share. Chef Donato wanted to know if there has ever been any consideration for hiring an executive chef.

Commissioner, President Gardner stated to his knowledge, there has never been an executive chef.

Chef Donato said she would like to discuss consideration for an executive chef and would prepare a proposal for the board. She believed that the 20% share was a bit steep, in comparison to the many places she worked in Chicago, and the cost of food. She is going to prepare a proposal to show what an executive chef would look like for the pavilion.

Commissioner Harrell asked if the 20% includes the liquor and bar tabs.

Chef Donato said she was unsure if the 20% was included.

Commissioner Harrell asked Chef Donato if she had responded to the RFP.

Chef Donato said she did not submit to the RFP because she had not received an answering regarding the 20% share. She typically provides an itemized list of what the customer would be charged, but had not received a response regarding the 20% to include on the itemized list.

Commissioner Harrell asked if there was an option to extend the RFP to a potential client, legally.

Attorney Monroe said that the bidding process was closed as of whatever date was listed on the advertisement.

Commissioner Harrell asked Chef Donato if she had posed her question prior to the deadline.

She said she sent an email and did not receive a response. She planned to present her question at the last meeting, but was unable to do so because it was canceled.

Commissioner Cook asked if Chef Donato posing a question would stand as a response to the RFP.

Attorney Monroe said she would have to look at the rules of the RFP. If the RFP had a certain closing date, the bidding process could not be re-opened, unless voted by the Board. Re-opening the bid also poses a legal issue.

Commissioner, President Gardner, said he would like to receive information to see how an executive chef would look.

Brief Discussion.

MaryAnn Best: MaryAnn Best spoke about the buoys. Ms. Best stated that the buoys did not have to be a certain width apart, which could save money in the budget using the maximum distance.

Ms. Best said she would like to have an agenda line item at one of the meetings on behalf of the Mayor's Water Safety Advisory Board, to discuss the recommendations that were made.

The winter signs are up at the main buildings and ticket booths.

The disc golf signs are getting ready to be put up. Each hole will have a sign on the wooden posts that are there. A larger sign will be put up near the parking to match the trail sign. She is going to reach out to the Parks Department for the logo.

There was a brief discussion regarding the buoys and the responsibility for lost and damage buoys.

Attorney Monroe asked if the signage was approved by the Board.

Ms. Best said the signs were approved by the Board 4 years ago and are re-used each year.

Attorney Monroe said that if the new sign is larger, the sign would need to be re-approved by the Board.

Ms. Best agreed to bring in the graphics and have it approved by the Board.

Carol Smith: Ms. Smith spoke briefly about the buoys.

Carol Smith asked about permission for Friends of Marquette Park to see the bridge assessment.

Attorney Monroe said she would find out more information and get back to her at the next meeting.

A few years ago, there were trees cut down near Forest Ave. NIPSCO never replaced the trees. The Friends of Marquette Park inquired with NIPSCO about their responsibility to replace the trees.

The Friends of Marquette is working with NIPSCO and CommuniTree to have a tree planted for every tree that was cut down by April 28th. The stumps should be removed within the next 2 weeks.

Commissioner asked what kinds of trees they would be replacing them with.

Ms. Smith said they would replace them with the same types of trees that were already there and recommended.

Commissioner Harrell said he would like to be involved in the group to choose the types of trees. In his opinion, the trees should not be the type of tree that grows very tall and requires grooming.

The Beach Public Safety and Shoreline is set for May 4th at the Gardner Center.

On January 11th, Friends of Marquette went and assessed all of the benches. Of the 24 benches installed since 2018, 12 have areas where the coating has split. There is a 7-year warranty. The manufacturer has agreed to replace all 12 benches.

Ms. Smith mentioned multiple lights that were out at Marquette Park. She urged the importance of getting the lights replaced.

Sandy O'Brien: Ms. O'Brien said that she believes the City's burn permit should be okay.

She hopes that the native planting done by the Field Museum is able to stay there and is maintained.

Her suggestion is to plant something native in the area at Brunswick that will be landscaped.

Old Business/New Business: None

Adjournment:

Commissioner President Gardener entertained a motion to adjourn the Board of Park Commissioners Meeting of the Department of Public Parks, City of Gary, Indiana held on January 24,2023, moved by Commissioner Patterson, and seconded by Commissioner Harrell. Meeting was adjourned.

BY: 
Dwight Gardner, President

BY: 
Willie Bill Cook, Vice President

BY: 
Renee Patterson, Member

BY: 
Alan Harrell, Member