

The ZOOM meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by President Sherri Hanson.

1. **Present:** Sherri Hanson, Julie Lammers, Maggie Putz, Carol Albright, Steph Hogan, Dean Haarstick, Paul Pinke, and Mike DuFrane.
2. **October Minutes** were approved with a motion by Hogan, second by Pinke.
3. **Additions to Agenda**
  - a. Stairs to Trail
  - b. Comments by Haarstick

4. **Pickle Ball Court/Recreation Complex:**

Albright updated the Council about feedback from the community at the November Council meeting. Hanson met with Jill Shipman from the Pickle Ball Court Committee. The group is now researching two other possible locations—the area behind the Event Center and the parking lot at the ball diamond, to preserve the Little League Field.

Funding would be routed through the Vergas Community Fund, which is part of West Central Initiative, a 501C3 organization. The Trail Project funds were handled through the Vergas Community Fund and will now be newly named Parks, Recreation, and Trail.

5. **Adding a Member to the Park Board:** Hanson explored the idea of adding more members to the Park Board, “the more, the merrier!” Lammers explained that the current and past Councils have limited membership numbers on boards to avoid having difficulty replacing members if and when there is a resignation.

Hanson suggested forming a citizens’ subcommittee to the Park Board with no limits on number of members. It would provide a group of volunteers for parks projects and a wealth of ideas. It is doubtful that the subcommittee needs Council approval but Pinke suggested it would be good to let the Council know about it. **Putz agreed to head the committee.**

6. **Budget:** Lammers provided the updated budget. It shows approximately \$4000 remaining in Improvements. The Council will decide in January how much of the remaining funds will be placed in the Parks Board’s Savings Account for capital outlay.

**Lammers will find out why the engineering costs for the drainage issue at 88 Park View were taken from the Parks Board Budget and not the Streets Budget.**

7. **Boardwalk:** Lammers reported that the Boardwalk is paid in full, as is the dirt work bill from Sonnenberg Excavating. In addition, four bricks (\$250 each) and two bricks (\$300 each) have been purchased. The form to purchase them is on Vergas’ website. Hanson will make forms available to the public, as well.

**a. Reflectors:** Lammers will find out if the warranty on the Boardwalk will be affected if we place reflectors on the Boardwalk. Hanson will contact the DNR to find out how they mark their structures. DuFrane will contact the snowmobile club about how they mark structures on their trails. Hanson will then ask for a vote by email to approve reflectors. DuFrane can purchase 3” reflectors for fifty cents each if we buy twenty five.

**b. Stairs:** Mike Goettel contacted Lammers asking for a Plan for Access to his property located along the Trail. Lammers is waiting for the City Engineer to provide a map of the right of way which the County needs before it can act on whether or not to approve steps. **She will call a special meeting of the Parks Board as soon as she gets the information.**

To clarify some of Goettel’s concerns, Hanson relayed this history:

The easement was already in place prior to Goettels purchasing their property. In fact, Lammers added she remembers that Donnie Bennett, former owner, asked that a memorial to his wife be placed on the Trail when he signed the easement. **Lammers will check the records.**

The Trail Committee did not promise steps to the Goettels but rather a member of the Committee, Pat Prunty, had a conversation with Goettels regarding steps. There is no record of the conversation.

Two contractors met with Goettels to design steps this summer. Goettels did not approve either plan.

Liability Issues: Negligence would have to be proven.

There are some steeper areas in Goettel's ditch where the retaining wall was placed. Otherwise, the slope remains unchanged.

Lammers added: The Council has approved money for the steps so we are legally bound to proceed.

**8. Capital Outlay Request:** was addressed under Budget.

**9. Long Range Plan:** Hanson wants to keep this on the Agenda but we will likely have to address it after COVID; or in the newly formed subcommittee. Lammers added that the Planning Commission is doing a Comprehensive Plan and the City Engineer will likely want to meet with the Parks Board for input. There will need to be three public hearings before the plan is approved. In addition, the EDA and Event Center are working on long range plans; a positive for the Vergas Community.

**10. Other:**

**a. Stairs** was addressed in Item 7 Boardwalk.

**b. DuFrane** asked how to keep snowmobiles off the Boardwalk. He will try placing a large rock at each end this year. We may have to install a post in the future. A gate or chain were also suggested. **Lammers will post a notice on the website warning snowmobilers to stay off the Boardwalk.**

**c. Haarstick** reminded us the spring installed at Long Lake Park in 1993 is past due to be repaired; and requested that more trees be planted at that park since several have been cut down; and the last one planted was likely in 2007.

**d. Haarstick and Pinke, as Council liaisons to the Parks Board,** will be replaced in January. They both agreed to become part of the Parks Board subcommittee.

**Hanson will present the Parks Board report to the Council on December 8, 2020.**

**Next meeting will be Thursday, December 17 at 3:30 p.m. via ZOOM.**