

Minutes of April 12, 2023, Regular Meeting of the Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners

Location: BOPARC Marilla Recreation Center, Morgantown, WV

Call to Order: President Trumble called the meeting to order at 3:02PM.

Establish Quorum: Members present included Cal Carlson, Susan Klingensmith, Amel Morris, Jenny Selin, Jenny Thoma, and Danielle Trumble.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the regular meeting on February 8, 2023 and the special meeting on February 15, 2023 were approved by consensus.

Correspondence: Director Wiles attached correspondence to the board's supplemental information.

Public Comment: None.

Presentation: Urban Deer Hunt

Rick Bebout presented about the Urban Deer Hunt and its' history in the city. He brought a fact sheet about the project and the accomplishments of the last 12 years as well as a proposal to resume hunting in four of the city parks: Krepps Park, Dorsey's Knob, White Park, and Marilla Park. The hunt begins in September and runs through December, then reopens in January. There are also hunters in the WVU Arboretum, WVU Forest, and West Run woods at the mountain bike trails. These sites are accessed through secondary access points for discretion, and signs are tacked on trailheads for transparency with the public. The city parks have been used for hunting in the past with great success. Hunters have been very discreet and had no problems, and the hunt would like to add the parks back to the program to maintain a healthy deer population. Amel Morris asked if the meat gets donated, and Mr. Bebout answered that the hunters can donate, and this past year 50% of the meat was donated with the city covering the processing fees. The biggest donors for the meat are Trinity Church, Caritas House, and Pantry Plus More. Jenny Selin shared of prior to the Urban Deer Hunt, there was a herd of about 17 deer in Krepps park that seemed to overwhelm the neighborhood, but after a few years of the hunt there were fewer deer. She is a supporter of the program. Danielle Trumble asked how the tree stand sites are determined. Mr. Bebout answered that they look where the access points on the properties are and how hunters can get in and out discreetly, how much room they have, and choose sites that are away from the main public trails. Amel Morris asked if anyone who was interested in hunting would have to go through Mr. Bebout. Mr. Bebout responded that hunters go through the City Manager, who then go through an international bow hunter training, as well as safety training. Amel Morris asked if there had been any accidents with the hunt. Mr. Bebout said with this being the thirteenth year for the hunt, there have been no accidents and they have a great working relationship with the police. Susan Klingensmith expressed appreciation for the hunt and is glad that it is very disciplined. Assistant Director Travinski brought up if BOPARC encountered issues with specific hunters, how can those issues be addressed in an appropriate manner? Mr. Bebout said to report those issues directly to him, as there is a zero tolerance in the high traffic areas. He said it is good to know where the hunters are and will give the city a map of where the hunters will be located. Mr. Bebout also said that any future questions can be sent to him via email.

Financial Report: Director Wiles reviewed the contents of the financial report. The financial report was approved by consensus.

Old Business: No items.

New Business: Soft Drink Vendor Bid Approval

Director Wiles explained that, pending board approval, the contract will be awarded to Pepsi. Pepsi was the only bid received, and highlighted in the Executive Director's Report are the various concession areas where Pepsi products would be located. This would be a three year agreement, contingent on a yearly basis. Amel Morris asked if the bid would be solely Pepsi and if there were kickbacks? Director Wiles said yes, and BOPARC would receive sponsorship money. Jenny Thoma moved to award the soft drink vendor bid to Pepsi, and Susan Klingensmith seconded. Motion was approved 6-0.

Executive Director's Report: Director Wiles shared the contents of the Executive Director's Report. She noted that Dorsey's Knob lodge renovations are coming along great and is hoping to resume rental business by the fall. She also provided a Case Statement update, and there are digital and hard copies available. Susan Klingensmith and Danielle Trumble complimented the major improvements to the BOPARC social media presence and website. Jenny Selin appreciated the work at Dorsey's Knob, saying the entrance will look different and improved, as well as having a nice place to stay at the lodge. Danielle Trumble had questions and concerns regarding the ice rink and the extent of renovations taking place. She cited the RFQ posted in March and wanted to know the process. Director Wiles explained that at this time BOPARC was only requesting qualifications to choose which firm to work with and start the process over again. She hoped to have a conversation with the board in the summer, as the RFQ was due April 20th, with interviews in May, then potentially entering contract negotiations during June or July. Danielle Trumble noted some concerns arose when forwarded correspondence from Morgantown Hockey Association President Frank Oliverio regarding the meeting with Mylan Park, and Director Wiles said BOPARC would not be participating in further ice planning meetings at Mylan Park but would concentrate on the city's ice rink. Danielle Trumble asked if BOPARC was set on some type of renovation, and Susan Klingensmith said that the levy language is tied to the current facility. Director Wiles mentioned there was a grant to replace the roof on the current facility, and that for a future discussion, whatever the ice arena building remains to be it requires a new roof. Assistant Director Travinski said BOPARC communicates with the ice rink user groups weekly to ensure the narrative is correct. The focus is on our facilities and information to help round out the community. Susan Klingensmith asked if any of the major user groups offered financial assistance, and Director Wiles said no. Jenny Selin appreciates the due diligence and work as well as the board's patience for the best route forward with the ice rink renovations. Director Wiles said she will begin sending weekly updates to the board regarding the ice rink and other pertinent matters.

Board Comments:

Jenny Thoma commented that Dorsey's Knob looks nice and cannot wait to see its' completion, as she has had questions about it. She noted how much of her social media feed is BOPARC, and apart from that she expressed her appreciation for all the work being done. Susan Klingensmith thanked Director Wiles and Assistant Director Travinski for their work and noted the BOPARC social media has been great and is reaching more people. She signed her kids up for swimming lessons at Krepps Pool. Cal Carlson participated in the March Woodburn Association of Neighbors cleanup as well as personally cleaning up 2 bags of trash along Decker's Creek trail on March 26th. Amel Morris asked for a financial report of Eureka Café each month, as he didn't realize that it was run by BOPARC. He was asked about Eureka Café and the Ice Rink and wanted additional information. As the owner of a thriving business, he expressed concerns about BOPARC only looking at things from one perspective and did not want Eureka

Café to be competing with private entities. Assistant Director Travinski explained there was no intention to do anything in malice, and the concept of Eureka Café came from the community to give pockets of the Wiles Hill building an identity and create multiple ways to use the facility. It was never the intention to compete with other businesses. Jenny Selin thanked everyone for their work and that BOPARC will figure out a good direction under a useful firm to sort the ice rink out. She noted that Eureka Café at Wiles Hill has helped make the building feel alive again, and post-Covid has become a positive place for the community to congregate and have food available, as well as an art gallery, gym to rent, and other amenities. Assistant Director Travinski reported that in the past 28 days, 1496 people have been through the doors at Wiles Hill, which is an increase from the past few years. The goal is to create programmatic elements that complement the space and allow it to grow appropriately. Danielle Trumble said there will be a Friends of Decker's Creek trail cleanup on April 1, a city cleanup at Mountaineer Heritage Park on April 13th, and a cleanup of the Wharf area and Don Knotts Boulevard on Saturday April 22nd from 9 am to noon. She has been to Eureka Café multiple times, and it has become her new lunch meeting spot.

Adjournment: Amel Morris moved to adjourn the meeting, and Susan Klingensmith seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cal Carlson

May 7, 2023

Entered Into Record:

Melissa Wiles

Melissa Wiles, Executive Director

May 10, 2023