

PARK COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, June 10, 2021 6:00 p.m.
Village Hall

Members Present: Chairman Dennis Galicki, Councilwoman Nairn, Mayor Koons, Ted Kruse, Martha Bistriz, Greg Pike

Members Absent: Bill Howell

Visitors: Mr. Shinkawa, Avery Shinkawa, Eagle Scout Candidate; Greg Studen

Galicki called the meeting to order and read the roll. Galicki introduced Greg Studen, whom the Mayor planned to appoint to the committee to replace Bill Howell.

Avery Shinkawa presented his Eagle Scout project proposal to construct bat houses in the South Russell Village Park.

Bistriz asked Shinkawa why he proposed six bat houses, and he explained that six houses would provide more chances for success with having bats settle in at least several of them. The Mayor asked Shinkawa how he learned about the subject matter, and Shinkawa explained he conducted a lot of online research which included material provided by the University of Florida. Bistriz addressed the perception of bats carrying COVID, and Shinkawa advised that the bat houses would be 20 feet in the air and a safe distance from the community. Galicki asked if Shinkawa had sponsors to help pay for the project, and Shinkawa explained that fund raising was part of the process. Galicki urged Shinkawa to reach out to some of the local community organizations.

Kruse asked Shinkawa what type of wood he planned to use, and Shinkawa stated cedar. He added that the wood dimensions he needed were hard to find.

Pike asked if there would be any public information displayed to engage the park visitors with the project. Shinkawa explained that information would be placed on a bulletin board next to the pavilion. Pike noted the correlation between bats and COVID and considered it important to provide the public with facts of the positive role of bats in the ecosystem.

Kruse made a motion to forward the Park Committee's approval of Shinkawa's project to Council, seconded by Bistriz. Voice vote – ayes, all. Motion carried.

Galicki addressed setting the date for the Fall Festival with the committee. Kruse noted that there would be no Browns game on October 24th, but this would make it later than usual. He expressed concern about attendance by the public on many of the other Sundays due to midday games. Galicki advised that most of the Fall Festivals had occurred towards the end of September. He added that September 12th might be a possibility with the Browns game starting later in the afternoon. Bistriz suggested that with weather as a concern, earlier would be better than later in the season. Porter suggested that Sunday, October 10th would be an away game in Los Angeles and would have a later start time. Kruse added that October may have milder weather than September with hurricanes, rains, and heat. Studen suggested that holding the Fall Festival towards the end of October would be appropriate. Pike favored the end of September or

beginning of October. Bistriz thought any of the suggested October dates would be fine. She recommended checking the school calendar to make sure the weekend the committee chose was not a three-day weekend or Homecoming weekend. The Mayor stated that on October 24th there could be snow. Nairn cautioned against doing it too close to Halloween. Nairn asked if the committee would consider limiting the festival to three hours to accommodate the football schedule. Kruse felt it was a lot of work for three hours. Galicki concluded that there seemed to be a consensus for October 10th, and no committee members objected. Galicki advised this date would be provided to Council.

Galicki addressed activities and vendors for the Fall Festival. Bistriz explained that in the past, the committee made the arrangements with the vendors. Porter stated that Lolly the Trolley went out of business and other shuttle arrangements would need to be made. Galicki asked if there were a need to form an agreement to use the Gurney School parking lot, and the committee responded no. Regarding activities, Bistriz suggested having the bounce houses and rock-climbing wall. Pike stated that the booking agent for the face painting attraction had changed. Pike suggested Wanda the Bubble Lady as the preferred vendor rather than Mr. Awesome who was expensive and did not interact well with the children. Pike also suggested having the Pony Rides and added that he had been contacted by the vendor. He also suggested having the Rocket Car. Galicki added that in the past, the Village had requested a Life Flight presentation for the festival as well. Studen stated he had not attended a Fall Festival and was unfamiliar with what had been done in the past. However, he suggested having an educational component with a representative from the Geauga Park District. Galicki recalled there being a small band at a Fall Festival. The Mayor thought the band was called the Stompers and cost about \$500. Bistriz thought this would be a nice addition.

Galicki determined that Bistriz would handle arrangements for the bounce houses and Pike would arrange for the face painting, Wanda the Bubble Lady, and Pony Rides. The Mayor would take the Life Flight arrangements for action. Kruse addressed the need for a shuttle. The Mayor stated that the school had smaller vans and should help the Village out considering what the Village does for them. The Village could pay for a driver. The Mayor would check with the School District. Galicki asked Studen to reach out to the Park District to have an informational booth at the festival, and Studen agreed. Pike offered to check with the Rocket Car. Galicki offered to explore the band possibility, to include the Geauga County Fair band. The committee liked the idea of live music.

Nairn asked about the presence of a fire truck display. The Mayor stated he would contact the Fire Department.

Porter asked about the budget for the festival, and Galicki questioned whether any funds carried over from the previous year's festival since it did not occur due to COVID. The Mayor addressed NOPEC funds that had been provided to the Village for the festival that would carry over.

The Mayor suggested inviting NOPEC to come and set up a tent. He would make this arrangement.

Nairn asked about the food line in relation to the pandemic, and Galicki stated that it was his understanding that the Governor lifted all COVID related restrictions. He would inquire about whether there were any restrictions on food service. Nairn was concerned about all the hands touching the condiment bottles. She added that individual packets were expensive. Galicki said this could be investigated.

Galicki concluded that the committee would meet in a couple of weeks to discuss the progress of the arrangements and potential costs.

Galicki asked Kruse to provide information about park benches. Kruse supplied the committee with catalogs to view products and explained that they were made from polymers that look like wood but hold up much longer. He added that he was a wood guy but acknowledged that it had its limitations. Galicki advised the committee could review the material and the matter would be addressed at the next Park Committee meeting.

Galicki advised that the Mayor requested to speak about the concerts scheduled for the park as well as a proposal for a wine tasting/concert in the park. The Mayor stated that the Chagrin Valley Chamber of Commerce wanted to hold two concerts on Tuesday, August 3rd and the other tentatively on Tuesday, August 10th from 7:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. The Chamber would pay for everything, and the Village would help to park cars. There was consideration to having wine tasting at the August 10th event which would feature an orchestra. However, the donors for this concert had not yet been identified and there had been no contact with the orchestra. Other concert options were being explored by the Chamber and the Chagrin Arts Council.

Galicki stated that the next agenda item was a proposal for yoga classes in the park. The Mayor stated a lady wanted to do yoga classes in the park every Saturday. This would be a business. He gave her permission to try it out on June 19th. People would pay to come to the yoga classes. He saw the woman as competition for Chagrin Yoga.

Regarding the topic of a business using the Village property, the Chagrin School District was putting on an art workshop for four mornings at the end of June. The school paid \$25 per day. The classes were designed for the kids who did not get enough art during the school year. The Mayor gave them permission, but asked how much the committee wanted to get into running commercial activities out of the park. He did not see a problem with a little art class, but then there was yoga, and it could become a slippery slope. Galicki asked Porter if he recalled the discussion in Council about the use of Village property for commercial enterprises. Porter said he recalled that Council was not overly wowed about the idea, but there was a balance with wanting to support local businesses. Nairn asked if the yoga business was a South Russell business, and the Mayor did not know there was a business as such.

Bistriz asked for the name of the band playing on August 3rd, and the Mayor explained it was Captain Fantastic, an Elton Jon cover band.

Nairn asked if there were ordinances or guidelines about utilizing public spaces for private business. Galicki explained this was the basis for his question and referenced the yoga group that wanted to use the area behind the Police Department to hold classes. Porter offered that the

City of Cleveland owns Brown's stadium, and the Browns play there as a private entity. He felt the concept was the same with a public facility that was essentially rented out to a private entity. Nairn saw this as a different scenario than the park. Kruse offered that in his mind, the park being used was a good thing. Porter stressed the importance of being fair to everyone. The Mayor added that the yoga instructor could set up on the East Washington side of the Park without a reservation and no one could kick her out.

Studen stated that the discussion led to a question of what the purposes of the park were. He thought that activities that were consistent with the purposes would be appropriate for the park. He suggested creating leases where the vendors would be asked how much they were willing to pay the Village to use the park. If they were willing to pay, then they could provide a public benefit. For vendors at the Geauga County Fair, they pay a certain percentage of what they earn. It is done on a commercial basis, and he did not have a problem with it. If the business was not consistent with the public purposes of the park, this would be the underlying question that would require clarification.

Galicki felt a legal interpretation was required for zoning, etc., when for-profit business was being conducted on Village property.

Galicki stated that the Mayor also wished to discuss wetland trees. The Mayor said that one of the 17 trees in the wetland was dead and others did not look great. Davey tree had installed the trees, and Pike thought there might be a warrantee on them. The first step would be to call Davey tree to see if they would replace the tree. Otherwise, Pike thought the wetland looked good.

Galicki asked if there was any new or old business to present.

Bistriz asked if the meetings could be held at 6:30 p.m. instead of 6:00 p.m. Galicki agreed. Kruse suggested meeting again in two weeks on June 24th at the pavilion.

Nairn made a motion to adjourn at 7:24 p.m., seconded by Bistriz. Voice vote – ayes, all. Motion carried.

Dennis Galicki, Chairman

Prepared by Leslie Galicki