

Parks Committee Minutes for

21 January 2025

Attending:

Dennis Galicki (DG)
Chris Berger (CB) - Chair
Tim Young (TY)
Mayor Koons (WK)
Chief Rizzo (MR)
Fiscal Officer Romanowski (FO)

A short meeting was held concurrent to the Properties Meeting of the same date. The meeting was held in person at The Village Hall.

CB asked for an understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the Park Committee and presented the following list of issues for the Park. It was unclear what duties the Park Committee traditional undertakes.

1. Annual Plan for Fall Festival – contracts due date
2. Plan for the Mason Flagpole light for E. Washington Street Park
3. Restroom at the Park – timeframe?
4. Burn Proposal
5. Chamber of Commerce Concerts
6. Pavilion Roof repair
7. Park Master Plan implementation
8. Scout projects plaque
9. Other

At future Properties Meetings, the council members will work to create a mission statement for the Park Committee and propose to the Park Committee at their next meeting.

Next meeting is unscheduled at this time.

Submitted by

Christopher J. Berger, Council Representative to the Parks Committee

SOUTH RUSSELL VILLAGE PARK MINUTES APRIL 22, 2025 6:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Martha Bistritz, Jerry Canton, Ruth Cavanagh, Greg Gamm, Ted Kruse, Libby Sharkey, Greg Studen. **GUESTS:** Chris Berger, Dennis Galicky, Bill Koons, Mark Porter, Tim Young. **RESIDENTS:** Allyson Dean, Sarah Kaseler, Muffi Sherwin-Bocce Ball committee.

Ruth called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. The minutes from the previous meeting were not available for review so their approval was deferred by a motion and seconded.

BOCCE BALL COURT: Ms. Dean, Kessler and Sherwin approached the committee to discuss the possibility of installing a Bocce ball court near the pavilion. They shared the benefits of having a court in the park including the opportunity for all ages to participate, community building and providing an activity for adults besides walking through the park. They explained that there is a league of Bocce ball players in Chagrin that use the courts at River Run Park and Bentleyville Park. There are about 16 teams in the league. The village of Chagrin Falls maintains the River Run Park court.

This is a fair weather activity with minimal impact on the land. It was explained that courts can be made of different materials and vary in cost to install.

A few questions about how scheduling the use of the court would work, and how costly the maintenance would be. It was clarified that alcohol is not permitted anywhere at any time in the park.

Possible location of the court was discussed. The next step in the process is to check with Pete MacDonald of the Western Reserve Land Conservancy to see if a Bocce Ball court is compliant with the easement restrictions on the park property. Bill Koons has emailed Peter with questions about the installation of the Bocce Ball court. There is a prohibition for sports that would qualify as “active use”.

BATHROOM INSTALLATION: The ADA prefabricated restroom was installed last week. Tim explained that it will be locked at night but will be set to open and lock daily by a timer. There is some grading that needs to be finished.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECTS: Bill shared that there are three Eagle Scout projects that are proposed??-/scheduled???

1. Bat Houses
2. A platform- at the top of the hill on the Bell Street side of the park. It will be a 6 x 6 foot platform for stargazing, birdwatching, etc. It will have a bench.
3. Bocce Ball court

Martha reminded the committee that the Jake Evans Eagle Scout project which included installing two free standing signs with a map of the trails was made with several errors which were pointed out when the signs were first installed last October and have yet to be corrected. Bill offered that an intern of some sort may be found at some time to correct the signs.

FALL FESTIVAL: Ted will let the committee know when the Browns schedule is posted so that a date for the festival may be decided.

MISC.: Prompted by Chris Berger, Bill shared that the rain garden, near the pavilion, installed by the Chagrin River Watershed partners which was to help alleviate runoff has been overwhelmed by heavy rain. Some modifications should be made to help the rain garden live up to its purpose.

In addition, the partial field burn that was planned on several acres on the E. Washington Street side of the park will not happen this Spring. The Geauga Parks District was going to facilitate the burn. Frohring Meadows had a partial burn in March. Paul Piro (sp?) would be the person to contact about rescheduling.

The Committee for Safe Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation which helped South Russell obtain an \$800,000 grant to add trails in the village is having Verdantas consultants draft a master plan for \$15k.

Greg Gamm offered that the rain garden is working but there is just too much water.

Chris explained that the flag on the flagpole on the E. Washington Street side of the park is supposed to be illuminated by a solar powered light which is not currently working so the flag has been taken down until the light is fixed.

Once the Browns schedule is posted the parks committee will meet to decide a date and begin planning the fall festival.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Bistritz

SOUTH RUSSELL VILLAGE PARK COMMITTEE MINUTES JUNE 10, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: Martha Bistritz, Ruth Cavanagh, Greg Gamm, Ted Kruse, Libby Sharkey, Greg Studen. Guests: Jerry Canton, Ruth Cavanagh, Dennis Galicky, Bill Koons.

Dennis Galicky, filling in for Chris Berger, brought the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

FALL FESTIVAL: The committee agreed not to schedule a rain date for the fall festival. The date of Sunday, October 5 was agreed to be the best date for the event.

Jerry Canton will look into the bounce house vendor that supplied entertainment at Field Day. Libby will check the availability of the bubble lady, face painters, petting zoo, and bounce house vendor.

Hayride safety was discussed. Bill Koons said the Geauga County Fair organizers have trailers with seats and railings that we may be able to borrow. South Russell employees may be asked to be the hay wagon drivers and council members will face the riders on the wagons and narrate the ride route.

It was suggested that maybe corn hole be added as a game for festival participants. Tim Young may be able to secure the equipment necessary for this.

Ted agreed to bring the apple cider press and apples. South Russell will pay Ted \$350 for the cider, apples etc.

Greg Studen will ask Linda Gilbert of the Geauga Parks District to participate again this year.

Jerry will see if the Chagrin Falls High School marching band will be able to perform at the festival.

Bill K has found a musician, "Hank Be Free" and another possible musical group, "Hip to That". He will check with them on availability and cost. Bill will also check with Gurney Elementary school for parking availability on October 5.

This year instead of providing free hot dogs, etc. The committee agreed to invite food trucks including Hawaiian Guy Barbeque, Tavern Six?, the ice cream truck and coffee truck. People attending the festival will purchase their refreshments. Bottled water will be provided by the village. Martha will contact Hawaiian Guy Barbeque. Bill will contact the ice cream vendor.

Bill will check with Life Flight.

250th ANNIVERSARY OF USA: Bill reported that the plan at this time is to have s'mores and cider on January 1, 2026 at the park to kick off the 250th anniversary of our country. Ruth suggested at a celebration sometime in the summer some events could be: a tug of war, axe throwing, two man saw competition. She also will contact the city of Burton for reenactments.

BOCCE BALL: the people who would like to see a bocce ball court installed at the park have been asked to explore funding for the project. Chagrin Falls and Bentleyville villages have bocce ball courts.

LIGHTING: The American flag on the E. Washington street side of the park should be lit by a solar panel, with battery back up. It currently is not working so the flag has been temporarily removed.

RESTROOM: After some discussion the committee recommended that the bathroom be kept unlocked. It is cleaned every three days. Also, it was agreed that the gender marker signage (male/female) be removed.

PARTIAL FIELD BURN: This is on hold until the Fall.

MISC.:

- The Chagrin Falls Chamber of Commerce would like to have concerts in the park next summer.
- Steel plates need to be installed on some of the beams on the roof of the pavilion. This should be done this summer.
- Bill will talk with Jake Evans about correcting the Eagle Scout signs he installed in the park.
- Bill discussed putting up a display in the village hall that would include the names of all scouts who have contributed their Eagle scout project to the village.
- Master Plan for trails in the village was discussed
- Pete Macdonald will meet whoever is available and interested to take the annual walk through the park on Friday, June 13 at 10:30 a.m.
- Ted suggested asking a Lobster roll food truck to sell their food at the festival

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Martha Bistritz

SOUTH RUSSELL VILLAGE PARKS COMMITTEE MINUTES JULY 21, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Berger, Martha Bistritz, Greg Gamm, Ted Kruse, Libby Sharkey, Greg Studen.

GUESTS: Ruth Cavanagh, Bill Koons, Tim Young

Chris Berger called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

FALL FESTIVAL: The Fall Festival is scheduled for Sunday, October 5. No rain date is set. The committee discussed the possibility of getting refunds on equipment/vendor's deposits if the festival is canceled due to weather. The mayor would need to cancel the festival 24 hours before the event or by noon on Saturday, October 4.

Regarding hay wagons, Tim contacted Craig Sirna who will provide at least one, possibly two wagons that are steel enclosed and have a canvas top. About 30 people may ride the wagon at one time. Jim McClosky, who is associated with the Burton Fair will be able to contribute a trailer bed. Ted is able to provide a tractor so that there will be at least two, possibly three hay wagons.

Music will be provided by "Hank be Free". In addition, a singer/guitar player named Ed will play music while Hank is taking breaks.

Libby has contacted the Bubble Lady, Face Painters and Petting Zoo vendor. Tim is able to get/bring three corn hole game sets. Tim will mow an area for this event. Ted will bring apples and his cider press and a large tent. The village will pay Ted \$350 for his supplies, etc.

Food trucks will participate this year including: Hawaiian Guy Barbeque, Augie's Pizza, the ice cream truck, a coffee truck and Ted will contact the lobster truck vendor to see if they would be available. The village will provide bottled water, chips and packaged cookies.

Bill Koons will check with the Chagrin Falls fire department to see if they will participate. South Russell will provide a plow truck, loader and police car (?). Bill will check on Life Flight. Libby explained that there are some options for transportation. Little Miss Trolley, with a capacity of 20 people is \$580 and Mrs Trolley, which can hold 32 people is \$928. Bill will contact Chagrin Falls schools to see if we may rent a school bus for the afternoon.

PLAYGROUND: The committee approved the recommendation by Tim, to blow in adequate mulch to bring the playground floor up to compliance level with the 12 inches required to meet the insurance regulations, approximately 100 yards of mulch, the cost not to exceed \$5k. The quote is from Elite Materials Blowing. Ted will look into another vendor for a better price.

250th CELEBRATION: Plans for the country's 250th anniversary include providing s'mores and cider at the pavilion on January 1, 2026 and a summer event to be determined (possibly in place of the Fall Festival) Ruth suggested that the village participate in "Hometown Heroes" displays. On November 10, there will be a veterans breakfast where Bill suggested this idea be discussed with veterans.

BOCCE BALL: No new information. Interested village members need to find funding for about \$13k in order for bocce courts to be installed.

RESTROOMS: Council reversed the committee's recommendation to have the restrooms open 24 hours a day citing security reasons. The service department is addressing odor issues using REDX and washing every other day. The tanks will be pumped twice a year.

FIELD BURN: Bill said that Pete Macdonald of the Geauga Parks District said not to count on the GPD to do a free field burn anytime soon. Davy Tree will do a partial field burn for 10k.

FLAG: A flag to replace the tattered flag in front of the pavilion is on order. The solar panel which is intended to light the flag on the E. Washington Street side of the park does not have sufficient power to do this. Ruth will contact Bill Miller of the Masons to see if they would contribute \$350 for a device that has a rechargeable battery that would fix this issue.

MISC.: Tim explained that black steel reinforcement plates will be installed on the ceiling beams in the pavilion. Ruth asked Tim to convey many thanks to Rick Pausch for painting the playground equipment and staining the pavilion. Bill would like a plaque with the names of the scouts who have contributed their eagle scout projects to the park, be installed at village hall. No Chamber of Commerce concerts are planned for this summer or next. The mayor summarized the plan for a five foot asphalt path to be installed along the north side of Bell Road to enable people to travel safely on Bell Road without having to share the road. Bill suggested that South Russell may want to do something similar to what Moreland Hills does, which is give away seedlings/saplings (at the Fall Festival?). Apparently, cities who are known as "Tree city USA" offer this.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Bistritz

Parks Committee Meeting Minutes

25 August 2025

Attending

Mayor Koons

Chris Berger

Ruth Cavanagh

Ted Kruse

Libby Sharky

Greg Gamm

Greg Studen

Tim Young

1. Fall Festival –

- a. October 5th. No backup date.
- b. Updates
 - i. Bouncy House
 - ii. Hay rides
 - iii. Hank Be Free
 - iv. Bubble Lady
 - v. Face Painting
 - vi. Petting zoo
 - vii. Corn Hole
 - viii. Apples and Cider Press
 - ix. Life Flight
 - x. Chagrin Valley Fire Dept.
 - xi. Other festivities
 - xii. Food Trucks

A general discussion was had with agreement that we were prepared for the FF. Mayor and Jerry Canton to contact CVFD to coordinate.

2. Playground –

- a. Annual mulching issue – TY reported complete.

3. Proposals for 250th Celebration

- a. January 1, 2026 S'mores and cider celebration
- b. Summer event 2026

RC and WK to create a plan.

4. Bocce Ball Court Proposal –

- a. Location
- b. Costs – looking for funding

No further report

5. Plan for the Mason Flagpole light for E. Washington Street Park

RC was unable to contact Masons. TY has a plan for a bigger solar unit to hopefully resolve the issue.

6. Restroom at the Park – Comments, concerns, or questions?

TY update on smells. Discussed replacing solar fans with hard wired. Will discuss at next meeting.

7. Burn Proposal – on hold until the Fall. Mayor to update

8. Ohio Flag in front of Pavilion – TY reported replaced

9. Plan for Pavilion Roof repair – TY explained repairs. All appreciated the good efforts of the Streets Department.

10. Scout projects – discussed proposal for plantings around flagpole at South Park. Mayor suggested Scout to present at October Parks Meeting.

11. Park Master Plan implementation

- a. Gravel trail between north and south parks
- b. Additional trail plans

No discussion

12. Annual Budget for the Parks

No discussion

Next meeting scheduled for September 29th at 6:30PM at the Pavilion.

Submitted by Chris Berger

SOUTH RUSSELL VILLAGE PARKS COMMITTEE MINUTES SEPT. 29, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Berger, council committee chair, Martha Bistritz, Ruth Cavanagh, Greg Gamm, Ted Kruse, Libby Sharkey, Greg Studen

GUESTS: Tim Young, streets commissioner

FALL FESTIVAL: Chris summarized the details of the fall festival entertainment. Items to be included are similar to years past. Libby has confirmed two bounce houses and a football throwing bounce house, the bubble lady, face painters and petting zoo. Hank Be Free will provide music. Hay rides will take place on Greg Sirna's hay wagons, council members will drive the wagons and provide an oral history of the park. Ted will bring apples and his cider press. The Kruse family will make apple cider. Life Flight will land its helicopter at some point. The Chagrin Valley Fire Department will probably be there. Jerry Canton is checking on that. Food trucks including That Hawaiian Guy Barbeque, a sandwich food truck, coffee and drinks food truck, ice cream truck and Augie's will have pizza for sale. The village will provide bottled water, chips and cookies.

Tim ordered tables and chairs. Ted will set up the tent on Saturday.

BELL ROAD TRAIL PROPOSAL: Ongoing discussions are taking place with ideas about having the trail on the north side of Bell Road and crossing Bell a minimum number of times for safety. The village has \$800k in funds from NOACA. The village would need to supply 20% of the total including paying for any planning costs incurred by third parties. No snow clearing of the path is being planned. The target date for installing the path would be sometime in 2027.

250th CELEBRATION: An idea to have s'mores and cider on January 1 has been proposed. Chris offered that it would be a very expensive event since village employees who would have to work that day to facilitate, would be paid triple time. That along with the questionable weather led the consensus of the committee to not be in favor of the event.

BOCCE BALL: no new information or interest from residents.

MASON FLAG POLE: The lighting upgrade has been completed per Tim Young.

RESTROOMS: An idea was discussed about converting from electric to solar power. It was decided to table this discussion until the Spring. The restrooms are open dawn to dusk and will remain open as much as possible through the winter.

FIELD BURN PROPOSAL: On hold. The mayor will update when there is new information or a date is set.

SCOUT PROJECTS: It was proposed that eagle scout project proposals incorporate some guidelines and perhaps a council member mentor to be available to the scout and review the project before it is actually installed in the park. Some guidelines including a time frame for approval of projects, etc should be drafted.

PARK MASTER PLAN: There was a brief discussion of trail path maintenance. Greg Studen advocated for establishing a plan for the park and the various scout projects that have been installed and will be proposed.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Bistritz

Parks Committee Meeting Minutes

17 November 2025

Attending

Chris Berger

Ruth Cavanagh

Ted Kruse

Libby Sharky

Greg Gamm

Greg Studen

Sarah Kaseler

Muffi Sherwin

Allyson Dean

Mary Rensel

Called to order at 6:30PM at the Village Hall

1. Bocce Ball Court Proposal – Kaseler, Sherwin, and Dean presented proposal for court including location at the Park. Presentation is attached. The exact size is not finalized. A single court is approximately 13' X 60-90'. Applicants are looking to the Village for funding - \$15-20K for installation and approximately \$1.5k annual for upkeep. After discussion, the committee agreed to recommend to Council. CB agreed to ask at Council and through the Village newsletter for donations/funding from the public.
2. Fall Festival Review– discussed that a more perfect weather day could not be had. Suggestions for 2026 include
 - i. Hay rides – add a second tractor for better flow of ride. Eliminate the program speech. Perhaps replace with a card highlighting features of the Park.
 - ii. Music was appreciated and not overwhelming
 - iii. Face Painting – great as always
 - iv. Petting zoo – glad no protestors
 - v. Apples and Cider Press – Ted did an amazing job
 - vi. Restrooms – no known issues
 - vii. Food Trucks – pizza was popular. Not so much the others. Suggestion that the Village pay for pizzas for next year and bring back hot dogs or other sandwich items. Coffee and Ice Cream trucks were a success.
3. Trail Proposal – no update from the Engineer
4. Proposals for 250th Celebration

- a. January 1, 2026 S'mores and cider celebration. CB again mentioned the added cost of Village personnel on a Holiday. Some thought attendance would be minimal.
- b. Summer event 2026 – suggest NOT to combine with Fall Festival. Should be a separate event with an independent theme. Suggest July 4th weekend with music/readings or perhaps even, fireworks or a drone show.

5. Burn Proposal – on hold until the Spring. Mayor to update
6. Scout projects
 - a. CB noted the Chagrin bridge project and asked if anyone knew what Chagrin's process was? Committee will investigate. Committee wants a defined process for all proposals.
 - b. No discussion for a plaque to be placed at Village Hall
7. Park Master Plan implementation
 - a. Gravel trail between north and south parks. CB reported that the Street Commissioner did not feel additional gravel was needed at this time.
8. Annual Budget for the Park. CB reported that the budget had been increased by \$12,000 per year for maintenance issues.

Next meeting not yet scheduled.

Meeting adjourned at 7:24PM.

Submitted by Chris Berger