

TIPP CITY PARKS ADVISORY BOARD
TIPP CITY, MIAMI COUNTY, OHIO September 12, 2016

Roll Call

Chairman Chitwood called the meeting of the Tipp City Parks Advisory Board to order at 7:00 p.m. Members in attendance included: Doug Chitwood, Doug Slagel, Patrick Hodges, Ben Woodruff, and Kevin Cox. Kathy Taylor (Tipp Monroe Community Services), Mackenzie English (Monroe Township), Jim Asher (City of Tipp City), and Board Secretary Laura Tobias were also present. No press was in attendance, and no guests were in attendance.

**Approval of Minutes –
May 9, 2016**

Mr. Cox moved to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2016 meeting as written. Mr. Woodruff seconded the motion. **Motion passed 4-0,** with Mr. Slagel abstaining due to absence.

**New Business
City Park and
Kyle Park 2016
Projects**

Mr. Asher announced that the **stone** fireplace in City Park has been rebuilt, and the other one has been patched up. He thinks they look great! He reported that the exercise equipment for Kyle Park was delivered on the previous Friday (September 9, 2016) and will be installed this fall. This will add three more exercise stations in Kyle Park. Two stations are together on one piece of equipment, and then there is another separate station.

Mr. Hodges pointed out a concern that some of the exercise equipment has bird poop all over it, and inquired if anyone monitors that. Mr. Asher responded that he will add that to the list, and have the Parks Department take a look. He added that the exercise equipment areas are in need of more mulch as well.

**2016
Neighborhood
Park Projects**

Mr. Asher announced the Neighborhood Park Project currently in progress is a new front door and new siding for the Nature Center White Barn. The project was delayed by a week due to an employee resigning, but it is expected to start this week, on Wednesday (September 14, 2016).

Mr. Hodges inquired where the Nature Center is located. Ms. Taylor answered that it is off of Third Street across from DAP Products, and that a lot of students have their Senior Pictures taken there because it is so gorgeous with the trail in the background. Mr. Asher added that the bike trail goes right by the Red Barn and the White Barn, and there are two ponds full of frogs.

Kyle Park Softball Tournament

Ms. Taylor started by pointing out that there was no representative present from Junior Baseball. On July 7, Dave Zeh from Valley Storm sent an email to Matt Spring, the City Planner/Zoning Administrator for Tipp City. Mr. Zeh requested a temporary permit. Mr. Spring requested further information because Mr. Zeh was very vague about what the permit was for. Meanwhile, Mr. Spring called Tipp Monroe Community Services to inquire if they had been contacted by Valley Storm. They had not. Mr. Spring replied to Mr. Zeh, and recommended he contact TMCS to fill out the proper paperwork and pay the fee. In the meantime, Ms. Taylor did some research on Valley Storm. She reported they are a 501(c)(3) organization, and they do define themselves as an organization, not separate teams. Ms. Taylor reported, next thing they know, they are receiving a form from Junior Baseball, requesting the use of the fields on the same day that Valley Storm was interested in. They were confused why Junior Baseball wasn't previously mentioned, but now they were receiving this request. When they inquired with Junior Baseball, they were told that Valley Storm falls underneath Junior Baseball. Ms. Taylor pointed out that they can't fall underneath Junior Baseball if they are a 501(c)(3). She added that, according to the field usage policy, they fall under "F" and would be required to fill out the proper paperwork and pay the fee. They were also informed they were required to come to the September 12, 2016 Parks Advisory Board Meeting in order to request permission for the October 1 and 2 game dates.

Mr. Hodges questioned if they were definitely informed they needed to be present at the meeting. Ms. Taylor confirmed they were indeed told to be at the meeting to get permission from the Parks Board, which is why it was on the agenda.

Mr. Asher asked Ms. Taylor to read the email from Alex. Ms. Taylor read aloud the email that TMCS had received: "Tipp City Junior Baseball is running a tournament in conjunction with Valley Storm. All income and expenses are being paid by Tipp City Junior Baseball. Know that we have DBA Miami Valley Tournament Association that we run our tournaments under. Teams will pay Tipp City Junior Baseball, so this is a Tipp City Junior Baseball sponsored tournament." Ms. Taylor said she responded to the email, pointing out that the Strawberry Festival and the Warrior teams were both 501(c)(3) organizations, so why, all of a sudden, is Valley Storm allowed to go under Junior Baseball, and the others weren't allowed to go under Select.

Mr. Asher mentioned that none of the Valley Storm teams meet the criteria for Junior Baseball. Ms. Taylor read from Valley Storm's insurance policy. Valley Storm has two Troy Christian School's baseball teams listed as well as two Bethel teams.

However, the policy states you must have an 80% Tipp City residency. These teams would not have 80% Tipp City residents.

Mr. Slagel reminded the Board members of the controversy with Junior Baseball that occurred eight years ago. He said Mr. Hodges was also present at that meeting. There was a tournament, and never told anyone. It was not under Tipp City Junior Baseball. They made \$8000-\$9000. There was a controversy that was published in the Dayton Daily News. The Parks Advisor, Jim Asher, was not involved, but the City Manager and City Engineer, as well as Mr. Hodges and Mr. Slagel met with the gentleman responsible. Mr. Slagel stated that he was assured at the end of the meeting that it would never happen again, yet felt we are back to the same place we were eight years ago. He said he would vote no, because they weren't present to discuss the problem. They were told to be present. Ms. Taylor agreed they were told to be at the meeting.

Mr. Hodges inquired why Junior Baseball agreed to let them circumnavigate the rules. Ms. Taylor responded that Rob England, the president of Valley Storm, is also on their board. He's tried to do this in the past, but Ms. Taylor pointed out that we simply wouldn't know about the games, and the only reason we currently are aware is because they contacted Mr. Spring.

Mr. Asher mentioned that Valley Storm's website had been advertising for tryouts at Kyle Park for three different age groups. They did not have a schedule posted. Mr. Woodruff used his laptop to take a look at the website during the meeting. Ms. Taylor reported that their tryouts are private, and athletes are not allowed and try out unless they contact you to be a part of their team.

Mr. Chitwood asked for clarification on who some people are. Ms. Taylor explained to the board that Matt Spring is the City Planner, who was contacted by Mr. Zeh for a temporary permit. Mr. Spring immediately contacted Mr. Asher, because Mr. Zeh wrote in the email that he had six food vendors. Ms. Taylor believes he has only one food vendor, which is Hickory River Smokehouse. She added that those situations have to be approved through Mr. Asher because she doesn't feel she can give permission to food trucks, portable bathrooms, or tents. Ms. Taylor and Mr. Asher also answered that Alex Gaunter Dray lives in Troy and he was the originally the commissioner of Junior Baseball, but he is now a Treasurer.

Mr. Chitwood asked if Mr. Spring instructed Mr. Dray on how to handle the situation. Ms. Taylor responded that he never spoke to Mr. Dray, but rather the representative from Valley Storm. Mr. Hodges pointed out that they all knew the proper way to handle

the situation. Mr. Slagel added that a few weeks prior, he was told both the City Manager and Mr. John Donnelly (the City Engineer) are aware.

Mr. Chitwood pointed out that there is a benefit to Tipp Monroe Community Services to raise revenue, but there also is a liability because people can get hurt. Mr. Asher and Ms. Taylor agreed that is why it is necessary to fill out the proper registration and release forms. Mr. Cox pointed out that the insurance they have on file with Tipp Monroe Community Services is expired.

Mr. Slagel added that, eight years ago, no one was aware of the tournament until Mr. Asher went to the park on a Friday afternoon and discovered food trailers, portable toilets, and tents being set up. He contacted Ms. Taylor to find out what was going on, and she said there was nothing on the schedule.

Mr. Asher said that some of the Parks employees contacted him that morning with a concern that games had been played over the weekend because three baseball diamonds had lines on them and the bases were installed, there were three trashcans full, indicating there was some sort of food vendor present, and there was a Valley Storm lineup card stuck in the backstop. (Mr. Asher showed everyone the lineup card.) Ms. Taylor said there was no one on TMCS's schedule for games this past weekend.

Mr. Slagel reiterated this was the same situation that occurred eight years ago, and everyone thought we had the problem solved. Tipp Junior Baseball has had a couple of different representatives, but the last time this happened, it got very ugly. He said nasty things were said in the Dayton newspaper, but Jim was kept out of the meetings to protect him. He added that the only way to get through to them is to demand they follow the rules.

Mr. Asher mentioned that he was speaking to a co-worker earlier in the day about Valley Storm coming to the meeting that evening. The co-worker commented that he thought Valley Storm would just go ahead and do whatever they want. Several members of the board agreed that, yes, Valley Storm will do whatever they want.

Mr. Woodruff questioned whether or not it would be wise to have a police presence at the park the on the weekend Valley Storm is supposed to have the tournament, in order to impress the message upon them that they are not, in fact, allowed to be there.

Ms. Taylor recommended that, first, we should send a letter from the Parks Board, stating that they are required to stay off the fields until they speak to the Board.

Mr. Chitwood commented that he isn't necessarily concerned about them using the fields, but rather that they are used in the proper way. They can use the fields if they submit the right paperwork, pay the fees, and get approval. Until they do, they are not permitted to use the fields. Several members of the Board agreed and pointed out that they don't want the kids to be hurt by the situation.

Mr. Asher reminded the Board that, several years ago, the Board came up with a good plan with regard to guidelines. Other community guidelines were researched. After using Vandalia, Troy, and Kettering as examples, the Board created a set of guidelines and rules. Valley Storm is simply being asked to follow the rules just like everyone else. If they cannot follow the rules, then they should not be allowed to play.

Mr. Hodges recommended that Valley Storm Softball Organization not be allowed to use Tipp Fields until proper procedures are followed and fees paid in coordination with Tipp Monroe Community Services.

Mr. Chitwood agreed to write the letter.

Mr. Asher questioned why Junior Baseball isn't following the rules. Mr. Hodges responded that Junior Baseball needs to be present at the next Board meeting to answer that question. He continued that the letter Mr. Chitwood writes should also be sent to Junior Baseball, and to the Board members.

Mr. Chitwood inquired who exactly to address the letter to. Ms. Taylor said it needs to be sent to Dave Zeh. Mr. Woodruff found his email address online and read it aloud: dzeh31@gmail.com

Mr. Slagel wanted to review, to get everything straight. He asked if Valley Storm meets the 80/20 rule. Ms. Taylor answered that Valley Storm is not Junior Baseball, and no one knows the answer until they file their information.

Mr. Hodges requested a vote on a proposal that Valley Storm Baseball Organization is not allowed to use Tipp City's fields until proper procedures have been followed. Mr. Cox inquired if soccer is required to follow the same rules, and Ms. Taylor assured him that they are required.

Mr. Slagel clarified that the representative for Valley Storm is Dave Zeh, while Rob England is in charge of the tournament, and is listed as President of Valley Storm. He pointed out that Rob England was the same person that caused the problems years ago.

Mr. Hodges inquired how the letter would be sent: email or hard copy. Several members agreed to send it both ways. By sending via email, they would have time to respond quicker. Everyone agreed that the City Manager should also be copied on the letter.

Mr. Woodruff read aloud the physical address that the letter should be sent to: Dave Zeh at 1245 Everest Court in Troy, Ohio. The zip code is listed as 45373.

The board members decided to check outside in the lobby a second time to be sure there was no one waiting in the lobby that had arrived late. There was not.

Ms. Taylor suggested that a group get together to review the policies and procedures in order to determine if there are things that need to be added or changed. One recommendation would be to add a requirement for a \$500 deposit on the fields. Mr. Hodges agreed and added that the entire Board should get together for the review.

Mr. Slagel and Mr. Hodges proposed that Valley Storm Softball Organization not be allowed to use Tipp City's fields and facilities until they go through the proper channels and the proper review by both Tipp Monroe Community Services and the Park Board.

Mr. Chitwood announced he would copy all of the board members on the letter.

Mr. Woodruff made a motion to deny facility access to Valley Storm until they've gone through the proper channels. Mr. Slagel seconded the motion. **Motion passed 5-0.**

Mr. Hodges inquired about how to handle Junior Baseball. Mr. Chitwood replied that Junior Baseball would be copied on the letter. Mr. Asher added that the letter needs to highlight Tipp Monroe Community Service's Guidelines, especially the paragraph stating they are not allowed to sublet fields. They are clearly collecting money in order to let another organization use Tipp City taxpayer's fields.

Mr. Slagel pointed to the lineup card that Mr. Asher found at the fields that morning. He said someone used the fields over the weekend without any authorization, and that falls to Tipp Junior Baseball. Ms. Taylor pointed out that Valley Storm is using the fields through Junior Baseball, which they are not allowed to do, because they are separate organizations. Mr. Asher pointed out that Junior Baseball is dictating who is using the fields.

Mr. Cox asked what would happen if an organization who had reserved the fields was using them, and Valley Storm just decided to show up. It would have caused a big issue. He believes it eventually will happen.

Mr. Hodges stated we need a Parks Ranger, and Ms. Taylor agreed.

Mr. Slagel added it is time for Tipp City to have a Parks and Recreation Department. He pointed out that irrigation systems were considered a high priority, yet nothing has happened. Several other board members stated that the irrigation system was too expensive and it is being considered in the budget meetings.

The Board members discussed that they could not find a schedule among any paperwork or on Valley Storm's website. In fact, in order to get a schedule or even a tryout, you must contact the coach.

Old Business
Dog Park Pavers
Update

Mr. Asher announced the Dog Park Pavers have been installed and look good, but the area is starting to gather some weeds. The people that purchased the pavers are very appreciative of them.

Mr. Chitwood mentioned he and his wife had recently driven around the area and he wondered if a sign could be posted to explain to people how they can purchase a pet paver. Mr. Asher did mention that some signage is needing replacement anyway, with regard to fines for not picking up after your pet, so perhaps the pet paver information could be added as well.

Mr. Hodges asked about the previous month's vote, when a motion was passed to put the City's dog ordinance in the Tippecanews. Mr. Asher explained that the previous board secretary abruptly resigned, and therefore it was not done. The acting secretary, Laura Tobias, agreed to look into it.

Other Business
Comments of Park
Advisory Board
Members

Ms. Taylor thanked everyone for their support and commented that it is definitely time to review the policies and procedures. Mr. Hodges reminded Ms. Taylor that, at the previous meeting, she talked about adding a field deposit to the policies and procedures and inquired if that had been accomplished. Ms. Taylor said she hasn't made those changes yet. She pointed out that there is verbage in the policy about being responsible for cleaning up the fields, but it does not say what happens if they don't. A \$500 deposit was discussed in the previous meeting.

Mr. Slagel asked Mr. Asher if there would be a fall fertilization of the fields. Mr. Asher answered that there would be fall fertilization

and broad leaf weed control. Several members agreed that the fields are starting to look a lot better because of the much needed rain that we got after the hot, dry summer.

Mr. Hodges pointed out that, during the last meeting, a motion was made to investigate a smoking ban in City parks. He asked if City Council ever saw the request. The Parks Board was going to send them a proposal, along with a letter from the Tipp City legal department. The Board reminded Mr. Hodges that our legal counsel resigned recently. Mr. Asher said he would check into whether or not the information was given to City Council.

Mr. Cox inquired asked if there are any signs in the parks regarding safety. If a person feels uncomfortable, Mr. Asher said there used to be sign telling them to dial 911. Mr. Cox continued that he has family members who walk in the parks, and they sometimes see an individual who drives very slowly, like they are following you. Mr. Slagel commented again that a Park Ranger is needed. Mr. Asher suggested to get a license plate number and give it to the police department.

Mr. Hodges stated that, over the weekend, he was unable to find a parking spot at Kyle Park and he had to park in the grass because of the soccer crowds. Mr. Asher reminded everyone that they used to try to enforce parking only on pavement, but soccer brought so many crowds, they realized that there simply is not enough room for parking. He continued that they've already added overflow parking in designated areas, but may need to consider adding more in grassy areas. About five to six years ago, the police were asked not to ticket cars parked in the grass anymore. Mr. Slagel said there is still a sign that needs to be removed, stating that you cannot park in the grass. Mr. Hodges argued that the sign should remain to prevent people from parking in the grass when there is no need to. Mr. Asher said we can research and add designated overflow parking areas if needed.

Mr. Hodges said he's been to Kyle Park on weekends where there were over a thousand people there. He commented that a concession stand would make a large amount of money. Mr. Asher responded that, at the old fields, there were three concession stands. There is a recreational clause that would allow the City to build a concession stand, but Junior Baseball would have to raise the money.

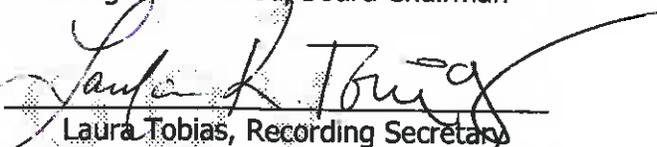
There were none.

**Citizen Comments
on Items Not on
the Agenda**

Adjournment

The next meeting will be Monday, November 14, 2016. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Hodges, seconded by Mr. Woodruff, and unanimously approved.

APPROVED: 
Douglas Chitwood, Board Chairman

ATTEST: 
Laura Tobias, Recording Secretary