

City of Evansville
Park & Recreation Board Regular Meeting
Tuesday, February 15th 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

Park board will be held in person at City Hall located at 31 S Madison St on the third floor. To attend the meeting virtually please go to: meet.google.com/cke-iazy-twx or call: +1 567-236-0714 and enter pin: 228 747 609#

If you are attending virtually and not speaking, please mute your microphone or telephone to reduce background noise.

Copies of the packet and/or agenda are available at
http://www.ci.evansville.wi.gov/city_government/public_agendas_minutes/park_board.php

AGENDA

1. Call to order
2. Roll call
3. Motion to approve the agenda
4. Motion to waive the reading of the January 18th, 2022 minutes and approve them as printed.
5. Citizen appearances other than agenda items listed
 - Simone Jeans
6. New business
7. Park's report
 - A. Lake Leota Dam Repair – (place holder)
 - B. 2021 creek walls & 2nd duck house (place holder)
8. Pool report
9. Old business
 - A. Park & pool design update
 - B. Adopt-A-Park Program (place holder)
10. Other
 - A. Meeting reminder:
 - B. Regular meeting on March 15th, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.
11. Motion to adjourn

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MINUTES

1. Call to order made by Chairperson Morrison at 6:02 pm
2. Roll call: Espinosa, Fuson, Morrison, Poock, Prudhon. Absent: Pfeil, Merritt
Also in attendance Chad Renly, Jason Sergeant, Leah Hurtley, Bill Lathrop, members of the public.
3. Motion to approve the agenda made by Espinosa, Poock
4. Motion to waive the reading of the December 21st, 2021 minutes and approve them as printed made by Fuson and seconded by Prudhon.
5. Citizen appearances other than agenda items listed Frank Wyrostek 44 South Windmill Ridge. Mr. Wyrostek is concerned about the proposed parking in the West Side Park plan and asked about the progress for that part of the park plan. Sergeant replied that the plan is in the concept design. There has been extensive discussion about the neighborhood and the park meshing. There will be more discussions about the details such as landscaping and there is room in the current design for landscaping. Lighting is also being discussed. All planning is being finalized and more detail will be available. The number of parking spaces placed at the northwest corner of the park will be determined by the final plan depending and on the placement of sports fields and the aquatic center.
6. New business: None
7. Park's report
 - A. Lake Leota Dam Repair – Working on the final plans so it can be bid in February. Project to be completed by July 4, 2022
 - B. 2021 creek walls & second duck house: nothing new to report
 - C. Shelter Vandalism: Chad reported on January 8th, the lower shelter was vandalized with graffiti. There are cameras there but that corner is at the edge of the camera's range so it may not have picked up the motion. Also, the cameras are set to record during certain times of the day and that had been shortened. The camera's time has been altered and the plan to add an infrared light which

can be detected by the camera. EPD is investigating. Renly will check into companies that can clean the graffiti.

- D. Library – Poet Tree Event: Chad received an e-mail from the Eager Free Public Library that there is a plan to do a Poet-Tree event where they would create a trail of trees and attached poems to each tree.

8. Pool report: No report

9. Old business

- A. Park & pool design update: Council had no issues with the plan forwarded by the PRB. Baker Street is in the process of starting the capital campaign, but a new committee is needed, no one from the discovery group volunteered. There are openings for up to 20 people. Website is updated with MSA's plans.
- B. Adopt-A-Park Program: The current list will be reviewed and then there will be outreach to those who have shown interest. Jon Frey of the Evansville Jays has asked about taking over the upper diamond area where the Jays play. St. John's Church has adopted entire Lake Leota Park but doesn't object to dividing it into more manageable sections. Leah Hurtley will review the list and get it updated for the next meeting. Chad will be meeting with the High School about signage.

10. Other

- A. Prudhon has asked about reforestation since many trees have been taken down. One of the staff has a degree as an arborist and his skills are used when there are questions. New trees will be planted in the spring. Leah is working on a universal application for facilities within the parks using Google forms which can be uploaded into a spreadsheet and calendar which will avoid costs of new software. The Google application doesn't allow for online payments but will do everything else needed. Can also be used for the Adopt a Park program.
- B. Boy Scouts will be having their winter event February 12th at the Lake.
- C. Meeting reminder: Regular meeting on February 15th, 2022, at 6:00 p.m.

- 11. Motion to adjourn made by Espinosa and seconded by Pooch at 6:41 pm, approved on a voice vote.

1/31/2022.

**West Side Park and the Pool Project:
To the Park and Recreation Board**

Let me start by stressing my intension is not to undermine or disparage the good works of the board. However, I do have some questions and observations that I hope will be received in good faith.

The City of Evansville is on the cusp of moving forward with an outdoor pool and the Baker Street capital funding campaigns are underway. I hope the Park Board does not consider my request for a more conservative planning approach to be an exercise in futility. I know I am not alone in trying to understand why the process utilized to tally the results of the referendum was omitted from the ballot.

I am not the only community member confused by the outcome of the pool referendum based on the wording of the ballot initiative on November 3rd. 2020. A feasibility study conducted by the Baker Street Consulting Group identified *“lingering feelings of confusion and resentment as to how the referendum was worded”*. This is relevant as this study focused of the raising of \$1.5M in private funding from the citizens of Evansville and it is also relevant because the citizens of Evansville will see their taxes raised substantially to pay for something that was not clearly defined on the ballot.

In reviewing documents provided to the community leading up to the vote I discovered inconsistency in messaging to the voters:

1. *City Government 2020 Referendum web page*
https://www.ci.evansville.wi.gov/city_government/park_improvements/2020_referendum.php




‘The first two options vote tally will be perceived as the approval of bonding for the project. The difference between the two options will help guide the Council on final location and available budget. A majority vote in favor of the last option will be perceived as the public rejecting the concept of bonding and adjusting taxes to pay for either project.’

2. *City of Evansville Citizen Mailer (November 2020 Referendum Information) Distributed in September 2020.-No mention of Options 1 and 2 being combined*
3. *Aquatic Center and Referendum. Evansville Review on September 9th, 2020.- Mention was made of combining options 1 and 2.*
4. *The November 3rd. 2020 official ballot-No mention of options 1 and 2 being combined.*

Of the four examples listed above, the only place the majority of voters would have seen the referendum would have been on the ballot. The ballot did not explain the ramifications of voting for options 1 and 2. I am hopeful that the City of Evansville will make the time to explain to the residents why such a crucial omission occurred. As a taxpayer I was not provided an

opportunity to make a truly informed choice. For that matter all citizens of Evansville were done a disservice on November 3rd.

The results of the November 2020 referendum will always be overshadowed with doubts about its legitimacy and the voters left with feelings of distrust. We know that 42.34% did not want either version on this referendum. The question is how many of those voting for either option 1 or 2 would have voted for option 1 if there was no other option ie. Option 2 and vice versa. Dislike of either location and cost of option 1 or 2 could have potentially pushed the voter to option 3.

City of Evansville Referendum	Vote For 1	Votes
Option 1 (NONPARTISAN)		33.04% 1,054
Option 2 (NONPARTISAN)		24.58% 784
Option 3 (NONPARTISAN)		42.38% 1,352

Precincts Reporting: 1 of 1 for 100%

Expand/Collapse Totals by Precinct

Source: <https://www.co.rock.wi.us/results11032020>

I am certainly not against an outdoor pool. I acknowledge the need for a family focused summer option given the alternative of continuing to use 60-year-old facilities with all its reported challenges. The Polco survey conducted in the spring 2020 served only to identify community interest in the features of an outdoor aquatic center. Why was an indoor pool option never considered?

In going over the FAQ submitted by City Administrator Ian Rigg on October 8, 2020 He states –*“There have been previous discussions and referendums on building an indoor pool attached to the High School. This was rejected by the public. There are significantly greater construction costs for indoor facilities which are rarely paid for by passes and entry fees. The tax impact would increase significantly more if the City constructed an indoor pool.”* - This refers to the referendum for the building of the high school. Is this information readily accessible for those of us trying to understand why discussion of an indoor pool is such a non-starter? It is important to at least acknowledge that the city is now about to spend more than \$10 M on the West Side Park and Lake Leota improvements. That too is a lot of money for an operational window of between 75- 90 days per year for the Aquatic Center. So, if this was a 10 year bond it would cost \$1M/ year. With a 90 day window, the cost would be \$11K/day and that would not include maintenance and labor. If an indoor pool were to cost \$20M with 300 days of use per year, the cost to would be \$6600/day. Granted these are simplistic numbers but I believe it demonstrates room for public discussion.

I ask the Park Board to take under consideration the following questions and statements:

- What happens if you don't raise the \$1.5M in private donations? Is the project scrapped?
- Consider the idea of two pools. One indoor open year-round and one outdoor for the summer months.
- Consider a more conservative roll out? Would it be possible to move forward with the outdoor pool and splash pad but hold on the lazy river and the zero-depth entry features? How much would these omissions save? Can these omissions be added in the future with minimal rework?
- Given the scope of this project, what are the labor requirements and how does Evansville plan to staff it?
- Allow time for an independent citizen committee to investigate whether it is feasible to also add an indoor pool.
- A revote on the ballot with full transparency would be the right thing to do. Evansville will then know the will of the people.

Feedback from the Park Board would be appreciated. I hope that by providing this in advance of the February meeting, the Board will take the time to address the concerns of this taxpayer.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Simone Jeans
692 Hillside Ct.
Evansville, WI 53536