

**Vernon Hills Park District
Park District Advisory Committee
June 26, 2025 – Minutes**

I. Welcome: 5:00pm

Present: Tom, Diane, Lisa, Ronnie

Absent: Andrew

Guest: Matt Laporte, Executive Director

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from September 26, 2024 were approved as written.

III. New Business

- A. Member Vacancy – This is just a reminder that we still have one opening for our committee. One person is interested and will be applying soon.
- B. Reorganization of Recreation Staff – Tom explained the purpose of the reorganization and the benefits of such change. This will allow more opportunity for staff to learn and grow within the organization. The changes result in a recreation supervisor position created specifically to help grow our adult, teen, and youth general interest program areas. Tom also discussed an upcoming meeting with all of the youth sports affiliates and the athletic director at VHHS. It's a chance for everyone to meet him and to put names to faces. Future planning will also be discussed as a group.
- C. Grosse Pointe Park Grant Update – We had discussed this grant request at a previous meeting. The grant was approved and work begins in the fall. As part of the meeting mentioned above, we will discuss with the affiliates ways to have the least impact on their seasons. We plan to play some of the 2026 season and lose the 2027 season at that location. As a reminder, this was a \$600,000 matching grant that includes ballfield drainage, new dugouts and player seating, protective netting around ballfields, new path and parking lots repaved, outdoor fitness stations, and a Ninja play area. There will also be a new gazebo, renovated restrooms to include year round heated facility, and a new basketball court.
- D. Ribfest Changes – We are excited to be offering a new country music night on Friday to try and increase turnout as well as to diversify the music. Saturday will continue to be blues night.
- E. Pollinator Garden: Peterson Park – A grant was received to build a pollinator garden at Peterson Park with support from students. However, weather prevented that from happening so staff built it after the school year ended. Growth should become visible in about one year.

IV. Unfinished Business

- A. Program Updates – This past spring, we had egg hunts and turned the flashlight hunt into a mermaid hunt in the Lakeview Fitness Pool and had a strong turnout. We held Loop the Lakes 5k run/walk on Sunday per the request of Andrew and we had a solid turnout of 150+ and the Craft Beer Tasting added line dancing and a DJ and we had

more than 200 people attend. Kids Fishing Day also had a bout 65 kids with the help of the Libertyville Fishing Club.

Upcoming events include flick 'n floats and park parties, which are new for us. There will be a band, food trucks (pizza and ice cream), and games. The event is June 27 at Deerpath Park from 6-8pm along with our first movie in the park. Wine tasting will take place again during VH Days on Saturday, July 19. Adult Night Out will be on July 26 at TCW with beer and seltzers, a hole in one contest, music, games, and two food trucks. Fall Fest and TTT will combine into one event in October since they were too similar. Frights and Delights takes place on October 18 from 11:00 AM -- 2:00 PM.

- B. Turtle Creek Waterpark Sprayground – The water park is open and the sprayground is included as part of the facility. In late summer when we close the facility, we will leave the sprayground open for about a month for people to enjoy. It can be added to a TCW pass for an additional \$20 as opposed to paying \$6/visit.
- C. British Swim School Update – The partnership for swim lessons is going well. The owner sold the business, but the new owner is excellent and strives heavily on customer service. Looking forward to working with her during her 3-year agreement.

V. Comments, Questions, and Feedback

The Loop the Lakes run was held on Sunday per a request from Andrew Herrmann and it was a success with 150+ participants.

There was a recommendation to use a balloon vendor that was successful at the library.

It was mentioned that Firethorn Lake wasn't looking too good so staff will discuss.

Lisa again mentioned the idea of adding a bench by the sand area at Deerpath Park. Tom will discuss with Parks staff.

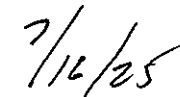
Lisa mentioned the issue of eBikes and Executive Director Laporte gave some history and future plans with regard to this issue. It is a significant issue in communities throughout Lake County.

VI. Next Meeting – Adjourn

The next meeting will be scheduled in January. Meeting adjourned at 6:00pm.



Tom Ritter, Superintendent of Recreation



Date