

**Minutes of the OD Park Board Meeting
November13, 2013**

In attendance: Judith Stiles, Eric Jensen, Emilie Seerup, Brad Wood, Allen Johnson, Charlie Costanza, Ed Rooks

The meeting was called to order at 7:03pm.

The September minutes were read and approved as corrected.

The financial report was reviewed. It was clarified that \$1,056.32 was the amount of money given to the ODPB by the State of Indiana for general expenses. A \$2,500 Friends of the Park donation was received but was specifically requested to be used for capital improvements by the donor. The OD Community Fund donation of \$1,750 was specifically given with the understanding that it would be spent on playground equipment only. The ODPB will identify specific playground equipment for Spring of 2014.

Old Business

Tennis Courts: Ed Rooks coordinated volunteers to do a temporary seal for end-of-season maintenance at Long Lake Park. Mr. Rooks is asking the ODPB to commit to a professional seal, in writing, by September 2014. Mr. Rooks anticipates he could secure donations in the amount of \$400 for local tennis players.

Eric Jensen commented that he wished we had the money to just get them done but we don't currently have the funds.

Charlie Costanza referenced the ODPB financial report for October and asked for clarification on funds available.

Ed Rooks stated that tennis courts are considered a major town asset and need to be maintained. He identified that weeds needed to be pulled and asked if the ODPB was monitoring the work being done and the hours being submitted by the town maintenance crew.

Eric Jensen estimated that basic maintenance costs for the ODPB were \$3500-\$5000 annually and he would like to see basic maintenance money come from the Town of Ogden Dunes and would like to see State money used as capital improvement money.

None of the ODPB members were willing to sign a written declaration of intent to match funds and hire a professional contractor by September 2014. Ed Rooks stated "I guess I have your answer". Emilie Seerup commented that the ODPB does believe the work needs to be done and a priority but does not know if the money will be there.

Ed Rooks left the meeting for another engagement at this time.

Judith Stiles asked if the tennis courts need to be locked for the season? It was agreed by the ODPB members that the courts should be locked. Judith will contact Jim Mathys to secure locks.

Buoys: The lost buoy has been located and is currently stored at the town maintenance building. The remaining 11 are in for the season and stored with Zak. Need an anchor and chain for a single buoy. Eric Jensen will get pricing.

Town Council update on cull plan:

Allen Johnson identified schedule for Town of Ogden Dunes deer cull runs from November 15 thru March 31st. There will be no cull on weekends or specific dates which are listed in the letter sent to residents. Allen mentioned that the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore Park has a cull permit, it is unknown if they will proceed with a cull on bordering properties.

Charlie Costanza inquired about any liens or title ownership by bank that will determine how we use Hillcrest park site. Judith Stiles did not believe that specific land use is determined by bank. Horizon Bank holds the title as the land is collateral for a Town of Ogden Dunes loan.

Brad Wood asked for clarification on whether or not an additional motion was needed to allow cull or suspend firearms ordinance at Hillcrest Park. He asked if the Town Marshal could authorize the use of firearms.

Charlie Costanza stated "it's unfair to put Marshal Reeder in that position".

Eric Jensen state that the town council should approach Marshal Reeder about authorizing firearms for Hillcrest Park and questioned whether we, as a park board, had the authority to suspend or change a law regarding firearms at Hillcrest Park.

Judith Stiles said she saw the issue as Park Board land ownership and believed it to be the ODPB who can give authority to changing how it's used.

Eric Jensen asked who wrote the law and who has the authority to change it.

Allen Johnson commented that it may not even be within the authority of the ODPB to set-aside a regulation.

Eric Jensen stated that he was not comfortable suspending any rule that could result in allowing firearms, fireworks or explosives in our park.

Charlie Costanza commented that hunting has never been allowed in the parks, he then read from the following letter which was submitted to the ODPB via email on 11/6/2013:

Dear Judith, and ALL,

I will be out of Town until Sunday so can not attend the meeting. Please include my comments for the record in the meeting.

1. Hunting has never been allowed in the ODPRB lands in the history of OD. ever.
2. Laws currently in effect forbid firearms in the ODPRB Parks (except if the marshall writes a letter permitting this otherwise illegal activity). To call in the marshall to make this important decision, is a direct conflict of interest. Appears of self dealing, and police taking sides.

3. Many people are opposed to allowing killing of wild life in Town Parks. Allen Johnson has, apparently to most people, tied to stack the Park Board with pro-cull members, in order to impose his will and desires on the majority of residents who are against any deer culls. The Public would rather have Hillcrest Park become a Dog Park, rather than an extermination/killing field.
4. Opening one park to hunting, opens all parks to hunting. Will hunting soon be allowed on the beach? You could come out of OD Church worship and look directly out into the killing fields, which every resident will be forced to pass daily.
5. Tell Allen Johnson to have his deer kill on his personal property. To use claims of "damage" to his own personal "private property" ornamental shrubbery to justify a mass killing of wildlife on "Public Property" is an abuse of his privilege and unacceptable to many of the residents. This type of behavior and abuse leads to a complete break down in Public trust, which has clearly happened here.
6. There is no overpopulation of deer. Deer Mismanagement programs of the past 2 years have not been properly analysed to determine the ineffectiveness of their application. No deer count has been done to determine if we may be at 10-15 deer per square mile. Will President Johnson double the death count again next year and demand 160 deer be slaughtered? Will the herd become extinct?
7. The Town can not afford a deer cull. 120k deficit plus most cost of deer cull to be taken from the Rainy day fund in 5 weeks. Town raiding public funds to endow a private dried up "deer management fund" to finance cull. Town does not have an extra \$6500 to "process" 80 deer.
8. In my 11 years of service on the Park Board, taking liberties of this nature against the Parks would never have been imagined. Our fore fathers, Park Board members and pillars of our community, had the fore sight and wisdom to write ordinances disallowing these unsavory and barbaric activities, to keep the Parks and wildlife safe and beautiful. Don't allow a bunch of blood thirsty bullies to come around and boss you into changing the rules to benefit their own self interest group.
9. The deed for Hillcrest Park is being held as collateral to secure a large loan the Town has taken out. Is the Bank aware that the land they hold interest in is being raped in this controversial manner. In effect, the Town or Park do not have clear title to this land killers will bait to lure NPS deer to kill to spend Town money to "process" to offer untested meat to poor folks in lieu of safe inspected meat. If a resident baits the deer, they get fined or arrested. But it is okay for the Park and the Town to bait deer and not follow long established rules! ?
10. Do the right thing and vote against allowing hunting and firearms and baiting in our Parks.

Respectfully submitted,

Councilman Costanza
Former ODPRB President 8 years.

Brad Wood asked if we needed to make a motion.

Emilie Seerup made a motion stating:

The Ogden Dunes Park Board gives permission to the Town of Ogden Dunes to use Hillcrest Park should they decide to proceed with a deer cull for the time period of November 15, 2013 to March 31, 2014 or until the cull as designated by the Town of Ogden Dunes is completed, whichever comes first. This is not an annual permission.

Brad Wood seconded the motion. All in favor: Eric Jensen, Brad Wood, Emilie Seerup. Against: Judith Stiles. Motion passed 3-1.

New Business

Town Bench project: Emilie Seerup suggested a town “design a bench” or “build a bench” idea. The goal would be to have neighbors work together to design and build a bench for community use while creating a little friendly competition amongst neighbors. Eric Jensen mentioned that a specific structural standard would have to exist to ensure safety. Emilie to research the idea and determine some parameters for future review.

There will be a vacancy on the ODPB starting January 1, 2014. Judith Stiles has served her 4 year term and will not be staying. Town Council will need to fill spot.

Public Comment

Allen Johnson reminded us that any paint, stain, or other coating on benches requires a lot of maintenance.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:23pm.

Next Meeting scheduled for December 18th, 7pm.