

Allegheny County Council

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Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 25, 2017

4:30 PM

Conference Room I

Committee on Parks

John Palmiere, Chair;

*Patrick Catena, James Ellenbogen, Nick Futules, Cindy Kirk, Ed Kress, Bob Macey and
Sue Means, Members.*

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:35.

Invited Guests:

William D. McKain, CPA, Allegheny County Manager or designee(s)
Andy Baechle, Director, Allegheny County Parks Department

Mr. McKain was present from the Office of the County Manager.

Mr. Hopson and Ms. Swedish were present from the Parks Department.

Mr. Evanto was present from the Department of Administrative Services.

Mr. Barker and Mr. Pittman were present from the Office of County Council.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: 2 - Sue Means and John Palmiere

Members Absent: 6 - Patrick Catena, Jim Ellenbogen, Nick Futules, Cindy Kirk, Ed Kress and Bob Macey

III. Approval of Minutes

[10348-17](#)

Motion to approve the minutes of the September 6, 2017 meeting of the Committee on Parks.

A motion was made by Means, seconded by Palmiere, that this matter be Passed. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

IV. Agenda Items

Ordinances

[10300-17](#)

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing Allegheny County Budo-Kai to use a structure on Brownsville Road in the County's South Park.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

At the request of the Chair, the clerk read the title of the bill and Mr. McKain summarized its provisions, noting that the anticipated rental rate is \$200 per year for three years, for South Park's Exhibit Building #5. Mr. McKain noted that the organization has leased property from the County since 1986, and Mr. Hopson noted that they have been good tenants and partners.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. Hopson noted that the rental arrangement has been in place since before he came to the Parks Department.

In response to a question from Ms. Means, Mr. McKain noted that Allegheny Budo-Kai will have sole usage of the building and that the rental rate is the same as last year, but also indicated that the rate had just been increased a few years back.

In response to a question from Ms. Means, Mr. McKain noted that all insurance provisions are in order, but that the County will be handling facility maintenance.

In response to questions from Ms. Means, Mr. McKain discussed the importance of security and background checks for employees who work with children.

A motion was made by Means, seconded by Palmiere, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

[10301-17](#)

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing Mon Valley Express Drum & Bugle Corps, also known as Mon Valley Express, Inc., to use a structure on Brownsville Road in the County's South Park.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

At the request of the Chair, the clerk read the title of the bill. Mr. McKain noted that this lease is also for three years at a rate of \$200 per month, and that this lease applies to Exhibit Building #7. Mr. McKain also summarized the activities of Mon Valley Express, and Ms. Swedish and Mr. Hopson both noted that the organization was a good partner and tenant since they began leasing County property in 2008.

Ms. Means confirmed with Mr. McKain that Mon Valley Express would have sole use of the building, that the lease rate had also been increased just a few years before, and that adequate insurance is in place.

A motion was made by Means that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

[10338-17](#)

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing OTB Bikeworks to use a structure on Pearce Mill Road in the County's North Park known as the North Park Boathouse.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

At the request of the Chair, the clerk read the title of the bill and Mr. McKain summarized its provisions, noting that OTB has been an exceptional partner with the County in the five years that they have leased the property and indicating that the boathouse had been used principally as a storage facility and was in a state of less than ideal repair, but that OTB has renovated the entire building and aided in making North Park into a destination. Mr. McKain indicated that the new lease term is for 11 years rather than the five years for the old lease. Mr. McKain noted that the lease rate ended up being about \$240,000 in the first five years, and that the new 11 year term would yield a total lease rate of about \$1.4 million. Mr. McKain noted that OTB would also make a \$6,000 contribution to the Parks Foundation in each of the 11 years, and that they also contribute to Trail Pittsburgh. Lastly, Mr. McKain noted that OTB would be making capital improvements valued at just under \$40,000, and Ms. Swedish summarized the nature of the improvements.

The Chair and Mr. McKain discussed how the restaurant drives attendance at the park.

Mr. Evanto noted that OTB also supports special events in the park and undertakes advertising for those events inside the restaurant.

The Chair and Mr. McKain discussed how unique the arrangement is and how well it has worked out over the original five year least term. Mr. Hopson noted that OTB installed air

conditioning in the Boathouse, and that it remains the only building in North Park that is air conditioned.

The Chair suggested that having a Council meeting at the Boathouse might be a good way of illustrating just how successful the arrangement has been.

Ms. Means and Mr. McKain discussed the rental rates over the first five years and the next 11 years, and Mr. McKain noted that the \$1.4 million rental for the 11 year term is established by contract, and that he has no reason to think that OTB would do anything other than meet their contractual obligations.

In response to a question from Ms. Means, Ms. Swedish noted that OTB pays their utilities and maintains most of the interior of the building, while the County maintains the exterior of the building and its restrooms.

A motion was made by Means, seconded by Palmiere, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

**Discussion Topic:
2017 Parks Highlights**

Mr. McKain, Ms. Swedish, Mr. Hopson and Mr. Evanto gave a brief presentation regarding 2017 parks highlights, in which they noted:

- (1) The regional impact of the nine County parks (including various activities and free amenities such as the BMX track, trails, sports courts, spray parks, and the like);
- (2) Recreational programming (including yoga, mountain biking, deck hockey and ice skating classes) at least some of which takes place in every park;
- (3) Special event attendance for things like concerts, Shakespeare in the parks, car cruises, etc.;
- (4) The park ranger program both in the parks and in local schools;
- (5) The continuing South Park ice rink reduction in size to NHL standards, which allowed for the creation of a non-competitive supplemental rink, and the accompanying improvements to the ice-making equipment, capability of converting the ice rink to deck hockey in the warmer months, and projected completion timeframe (most likely in January of 2018);
- (6) The Deer Lakes portal area project, which was completed with revenue derived from natural gas extraction royalty revenues;
- (7) The North Park tennis and pickleball court renovations;
- (8) The Harwood Acres Grand Pavilion completion and Formal Garden restoration;
- (9) The Round Hill duck pond restoration;
- (10) The White Oak Chestnut Area playground improvements;
- (11) The installation of a second South Park off-leash area for dogs;
- (12) Improvements to the aging 1970's era South Park Wave Pool equipment;

- (13) Forestry activities undertaken by the newly re-created Forestry Division;*
- (14) Complete replacement of the North Park Pearce Mill Road water line due to frequent recent breaks in the old line;*
- (15) Phase 2 of the Deer Lakes Portal improvements;*
- (16) Installation of a Natural Engineered Wastewater Treatment system at Round Hill;*
- (17) The White Oak Wedding Pavilion re-design and ribbon cutting;*
- (18) Deer Lakes vegetation removal;*
- (19) Installation of North Park pool amenities (primarily shade structures and seating);*
- (20) Improvements to the South Park buffalo corral to improve the ability to provide veterinary care to the animals;*
- (21) Updating maintenance equipment;*
- (22) Addition and renovation of restrooms;*
- (23) New Boyce Park meadow plantings and Deer Lakes shore plantings;*
- (24) New Round Hill park shelter;*
- (25) Donated Hartwood Acres sculpture;*
- (26) Installation of electricity in Deer Lakes shelters; and*
- (27) Demolition of unsafe structures;*

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. Hopson and Ms. Swedish discussed the current contract for management of the Boyce Park ski slopes.

The Chair suggested repeating the presentation at an upcoming regular meeting so all of the members can see it and Mr. Baechle can be present.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:32.