

**CITY OF HANOVER
PARK BOARD MEETING
JULY 26, 2016 – OFFICIAL MINUTES**

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Mat Boie called the Park Board meeting of July 26, 2016 to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Chair Mat Boie, Tom Gleason, Abby Peterson, Abby Strehlow, Council Liaison Jim Zajicek, and City Accountant/Deputy Clerk Elizabeth Lindrud. Guests present were Council Member John Vajda, Stephanie Gleason, and Michael Kehn.

Approval of Agenda:

MOTION by Peterson to approve the Agenda, seconded by Gleason. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Approval of Minutes from June 28th, 2016 Meeting

Boie received a request from Joe Kaul to correct his statement that he got Hanover Youth Ball their non-profit status to he helped to get Hanover Youth Ball their non-profit status.

MOTION by Gleason to approve the minutes as amended from June 28th, 2016, seconded by Strehlow. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Open Forum:

Michael Kehn

Michael Kehn stated he is the President of the Historical Society and would like to speak about the oak trees. Kehn referenced the timeline of the ballfield discussion that has been laid out in the minutes. He stated that concerns were brought up in January when the ballfield redesign was first brought to the Park Board and questioned why no one contacted the Hanover Historical Society for their input. He also stated he could not find any discussion around the ballfield design in minutes from the past three years. He further recounted that in March the Board went out to look at the trees and were worried about the opportunity cost to not approve the ballfield, not the loss of the trees. He stated that Council felt a public hearing was not needed, but now there are petitions with over 1,000 signatures. He further stated that Dee Zajicek said that people are more important than trees and that he agrees. If the area was going to be used for a community garden to grow food for the local food shelf or the trees were being used to build homes it would be different, however they are being removed to provide space for recreational use. He stated that the Hanover Historical Society vehemently opposes this project and would recommend that the Park Board rescind their approval of the ballfield redesign.

Stephanie Gleason

Stephanie Gleason stated that she came to speak about the oak trees. She explained that there was another survey done in the past that went out to Hanover residents and there was no overwhelming support for a ball park. She does not understand how the Park Board and Council can justify approving the ballfield and ignoring the other groups that use the park who do not want to see the trees removed. She stated that 650 plus Hanover residents have signed the petition and that there are other options for the ballfield. She requested that Park Board ask Council to rescind their approval vote and that there has never been more input on one issue in the 20 years that she has lived in Hanover. She further stated there is a safety issue, balls will fly up over the fence towards the playground. What is the plan for safety other than a large net or fence?

Peterson inquired to Gleason what the other options are. Gleason stated that other small cities contract with the school district or Hanover Youth Ball could use the Hanover Athletic Associations field.

Jim Zajicek arrived at 7:15 p.m.

Liaison Zajicek stated that there is no other location, and the statement that there is another location is incorrect and false. Boie inquired if Gleason had any new information. Gleason stated that the Hanover Athletic Association has an alternative plan that would add an additional field. Zajicek stated that it does not add a field, but extend the outfield of their existing field. Gleason requested that the Park Board make a motion to rescind their approval vote due to the input from Hanover residents.

Jim Zajicek

Liaison Zajicek stated there has been a lot of blame, accusations of secret meetings and ugly words surrounding the ballfield discussions. He stated that the comment made about the power on Prairie Lane upset him, he stated that there are many residents on Prairie Lane that are or have been involved with the community. He further stated that is the perfect example of community involvement and they are being slammed for it. He explained that he stood up for the trees and all he is receiving now is

accusations. There are not funds in the Park Board budget, there is a new public works building that is needed and being built on the 10 acres, water lines have already been installed. The State has new MS4 regulations that the City has to meet and the City does not have control over what the costs will be, so funds have to be set aside to plan for those regulations. He further stated that the City has a five to six-year plan for City streets in place that is keeping assessments away from residents. He explained that when he ran for Council the two things he heard over and over again were that Hanover needed senior housing and residents did not want assessments. He stated that the Greenhouse senior living facility is being constructed in the Bridges of Hanover and street projects have been planned without any assessments.

Zajicek stated he researched the land Settlers Park was built on, the property was previously a farm. The shelter was built near the oak grove, which were the only trees on the property. He stated he realizes this make those trees special. The ballfields were built in the 1980's. The population of Hanover has quadrupled since 1980, but the ballfields have remained the same, other than the alterations made 2009. He stated that it has been suggested the new ballfield be built on other properties around Hanover. That would require the City to purchase the property and then develop the properties, which can cost between \$1-\$2 million. He stated that the properties also are located next to residential neighborhoods and a buffer is needed between the ballfield and they residential neighborhoods. He explained the fields are going to be used full time for two-thirds of the year. He stated if you take emotion out of the decision, the benefits of the ballfield outweigh those of the trees.

Unfinished Business:

Zoomobile Recap

Gleason stated the weather was not good, there was a thick mist in the air, but over 150 people turned out. He stated that there was one new animal, a skunk.

Hanover Bike Rodeo Recap

Boie stated the Bike Rodeo was a success, between 85-90 helmets were handed out. He thanked Peterson, Zajicek, Stephanie Gleason, and the other volunteers for their help.

Update from Hanover Athletic Association Liaison Gleason

Gleason stated he did not have an update. He was advised not to attend the meetings after the last Council meeting. He stated he was ill advised in some of the comments he made at the Council meeting, he thought he was reading comments that reflected the thoughts of the entire Hanover Athletic Association, but they were not. He also stated that the ballfield design option to extend the Hanover Athletic Association field did not pass.

New Business:

Set Dates/Events for 2017

The Board discussed the events for 2017 and agreed to tentatively plan for the Easter Egg Hunt, Concert in the Park, Zoomobile, and Bike Rodeo for the same times. Peterson stated to verify that Concert in the park does not take place the same week of the Girl Scout camp. Gleason suggested having a Taste of Hanover, Peterson suggested the possibility of incorporating that with Concert in the Park.

Reports:

Gleason

- Stated City Administrator Brian Hagen sent him drawings from 2003 of ballfield plans that have ballfields on the 10 acres and inquired what happened with that plan. Liaison Zajicek stated that Hagen had explained to him that the City went to the Hanover Athletic Association three times with lease and maintenance agreements and the Hanover Athletic Association turned them down. The City then asked the Hanover Athletic Association to create the agreements, and they never came back to the City with anything. Councilmen Vajda added that a developer also came and left because they were concerned about the unknown debris on the site and there was also a safety issue of having people cross 5th street to use the ballfields.
- Stated that he would like to see the Free Little Library discussion be brought back. He stated there is a good spot by Pheasant Run park and he will take full responsibility for the maintenance and installation.
- Inquired on the 3D rendering for the new ballfield redesign and the cost to the City. Councilman Vajda stated that at the last Council meeting a proposal was presented to spend \$3,250 for a 3D color rendering of the proposed ballfield redesign. Council asked the audience if they felt that would help and the audience agreed it would.

MOTION by Gleason to rescind their support of the Settlers Park Ballfield Redesign. **Motion failed to receive a second.**

Boie

- Stated that he will be meeting with the Wright County parks administrator to talk about Riverside Park and their vision for long term park development.
- Stated that he will also be meeting with the President of the Bridges of Hanover Association.

Liaison Zajicek

- Stated the 3D drawing was approved and will be sent out to each resident with a letter explain the facts around the ballfield redesign.

Lindrud

- Explained that there has been vandalism to the Settlers Park restrooms. This item will be on the August 2nd Council Agenda for discussion to find a solution.
- Explained that some of the oak trees in Settlers Park were damaged in the July 5th storm. Public Works has already removed the branches that were split and in danger of falling on people below. There is one tree that is split and leaning that may need to be removed. This item will also be on the August 2nd Council Agenda for discussion.

Adjournment:

MOTION to adjourn by Peterson to adjourn at 8:06 p.m., seconded by Gleason. **Motion carried unanimously.**

ATTEST:

Elizabeth Lindrud, Accountant/Deputy Clerk