

## Highland Silver Lake Advisory Commission meeting

Thursday, October 15, 2020

Members present: Randy Ammann, Gary Pugh, Ron Wagner, Don Rommerskirchen, Bill Blechinger, Craig Korte, Dave Frey, Scott Geest

Ex-officio members: Mark Rosen; Director of Parks

Guests present: Josh Kirchoff

Motion was made to approve the January 16, 2020 meeting minutes by Ron W., seconded by Dave F.

Staff Report: Director Rosen stated that the city council will be voting on whether or not to partner with SIUE to have their students look at specific, recommended projects in the Silver Lake Watershed Plan, that could be implemented. Gary P. asked to be kept in the loop. Craig K. asked if we could find out if the new pond in Silver Lake Park could have Black Crappie raised instead of White Crappie. There was also an update that the Fish Biologist; Fred Cronin was impressed with the pond that will be used to brood fish and that he will be submitting a plan. Mr. Cronin visited the lakes (Old City Lake & Silver Lake) to perform a fish study and will submit that report in the coming months. He also mentioned that over 500 boat stickers were sold this year.

Public Forum: Guest, Josh Kirchoff said that he joined Mr. Cronin when he performed the fish study and also suggested taking some of the aquatic plants from Old City Lake and introduce them to Silver Lake. He believes that it would help with water clarity and the fish habitat but understands that it could be difficult to get the vegetation to grow since Silver Lake's water is quite turbid.

Unfinished Business: Director Rosen updated the members on the 319 Grant and that there are some additional, similar projects that include waterways, ponds rip-rap projects in the plans. There has been a lot completed to-date. We were very pleased with the rip-rap project Endrizzi completed in the Spring as well as with Hunsche, who just finished the pond/wetland project.

Public Waterfowl Blind(s) - Director Rosen explained his reasoning for opening up a public waterfowl blind or blinds. He stated that the Parks and Rec. Dept. needs to be creative in generating revenue now more than ever because of the mandated minimum wage increase, not to mention COVID. In addition, and although he understands the benefits of having waterfowl blind owners renew their blinds annually, the department does receive criticism for not allowing more opportunities for hunters or having public blinds. Therefore, his thoughts are to have city owned blinds that can be issued via a lottery system for the public to use. This would not only generate income for the blind, but fees for boat stickers; which would require a fee structure change. Bill B. provided some information regarding options for such fees and guidelines. There was also many that agreed that we should consider making an ADA accessible blind. Director Rosen stated that he and Ryan Hummert discussed the possibility of installing one at the bottom of the north end of the dam on Old City Lake that overlooks Silver Lake. The overwhelming consensus was to pursue both of the ideas.

New Business – Dave Frey made a motion to add discussion on installing “No Wake” signage at the Interstate 70 Bridge. Gary P. seconded it. Director Rosen stated that the department does get calls expressing concerns with the speed at which boaters pass under this bridge and that although he seems to believe that there was a sign in the past, it is no longer there. It was suggested to install signs on the posts that were installed for the oil booms on both the north and south side of the bridge. There was also a motion by Scott G. to schedule meeting dates for 2021. Therefore, meeting dates will continue to meet on the third Thursday, quarterly: January 21, April 15, July 15, October 21.

Requests of the Commission Members: Ron W. suggested replacing the concrete under Pavilion #5; L.G. Beard Pavilion. Director Rosen agreed and stated that he and Ryan H. have discussed this. Randy A. had a request to beef up the road leading to Pavilion #5 (Don Schmitt Lane) because the west side could be an issue for vehicles. Don R. mentioned that there it is worthwhile to look at requesting DNR permits to shoot Cormorants. These birds are destructive to vegetation and fish population. Ron W. asked if there is a plan if/when predators wreak havoc on the fish-rearing pond and eat most of the new fish. There was discussion on options; i.e. bang-booms (canons), etc. Director Rosen said that as of now, he can only hope that people and pets will discourage birds of prey from getting comfortable by the new pond.

Dave F. made a motion to adjourn the meeting @ 7:35PM and Ron W. seconded it.

Next meeting will be January 21, 2021.