**Minutes**

The monthly meeting of the Kewanee Park District Board of Commissioners was held at the Kewanee Park District Office Board Room, 1095 Cambridge Road Kewanee IL 61443 Thursday July 16, 2020 at 5:30 PM.

Present: President Andrew Verstraete, Commissioners Jim Powell, Jim Heberer, Jacque Verscha, Steve Brackett, Director Brian Johnson, Secretary Christy Jackson-Ehnle, Justin Raver (Barash & Everett, LLC)

Absent: None

President Andrew Verstraete called the meeting to order. The minutes of the June 18, 2020 meeting were reviewed and discussed. Jim Powell motioned to accept the June 2020 minutes as written. Jim Heberer seconded the motion. All in Favor. Motion Passed.

The June 2020 Financial Statements was presented. The Board reviewed and discussed the Financial Statements. Jim Heberer motioned to accept the June 2020 Financial Statements. Jim Powell seconded the motion. All in Favor. Motion Passed.

The July 2020 Bills for Approval were reviewed and discussed. Jim Powell asked about the bill for John’s Glass and found out it was for the plexus glass for the tree memorial at Windmont Park he was thinking it might have been for a vehicle window that was damaged. Steve Brackett motioned to approve the bills for July 2020. Jacque Verscha seconded the motion. All in Favor. Motion Passed.

**Open Business:** With no open business to discuss, President Verstraete turned the meeting over to Director Johnson for his report.

**Director’s Report and Meeting Minutes**

The monthly meeting of the Board of Commissioners will be held on Thursday July 16, 2020 at 5:30 pm. As far as I know everyone will be there. We will have a visitor, Bob McKee, who lives behind (and to the north) of #2 green. He was out in his yard (6/20/20) with his granddaughter when a golf ball flew into his trees and then almost hit his granddaughter. He addressed the golfers who he said one was nice the and one was belligerent. I am not sure what he will be asking for, but we will see when he gets here. I think he just wants to bring it to our attention.

Director Johnson said that Bob had called and that he had family in town and could not make the meeting tonight.

There are several things that I would like to bring up…

1. KHS Football/Basketball Golf Playday and Labor Day Tournament 2020. Just want permission to move forward with these golf outings. KHS should have around 100 and we will work hard to keep them separated into two groups of less than 50. Labor Day tourney I see as they will play, eat, and leave, so gatherings of more than 50 is unlikely. Should I move forward?

Brian asked Justin Raver about our Labor Day Tournament since hog days has been cancelled, question is do we go ahead or cancel a lot of people come from out of town. Justin said the problem is we do not know what the governor’s rules are going to be then, now no groups larger than fifty. If rules are same as now you cannot have a dinner or awards ceremony after it would be to many people together. If its time play and you are not shot gunning it, you will not have that many on the course. Brian is worried about people coming from infected areas and the risk, also it is a good money maker which has been taken from us. Justin said there is a good chance of different rules at the end of the month. With the rules the same you not going to be able to have it to many people. Andrew Verstraete said that this tournament is over a week, so we do not have like 200 people at once. Jim Powell said that Friday and Saturday are our huge days. Justin said if you spread it out and control the numbers, Brian does not know how we are going to control the numbers inside because we are open to the public as well. Justin said do what the other place are doing only x amount of people in at a time, and there’s a line and people get upset because they have to wait, if you could control the numbers. Brian said right now you can choose to ride together or take separate carts. Justin thought unless something changes too many people, question is do you want to take the risk, just limit the number of people on the course. Jim Heberer mentioned trying to keep people out of the restaurant, we can set up picnic tables. Brian mentioned that the KHS playday was split into two groups 40 in am & 40 in pm. Justin said that is good if you separate them into groups, he wished he could have better answers for this covid-19. Brian asked the board what they thought of the KHS playday and can we keep them separated. Jim Heberer suggested that they drop off equipment at car and only one person bring back cart to get sanitized. Brian was concerned about the regulars that come also. Andrew Verstraete and Jim Powell said just do the best we can, the course will be closed that day. Brian asked the board if we should have a Labor Day tournament and they all agreed. Jim Powell said with the cancellations there might not be as many people coming and we can separate them. Brian suggested that we always had tee times and no more than six at a hole.

1. Bakersville 2020 – I have a Bakersville meeting in Wednesday to discuss if the volunteers want to move forward but we will be looking for Board approval to do so.

**Brian ask Justin Raver about Bakersville, since they cannot have that many people, they have an idea to do a virtual Bakersville. Justin said that Jacque Komnick wants to do radio plays like Orson Welles War of Worlds, one night a week for a month not sure if there is going to be a pirated radio station or if it’s going to be on the radio or just Facebook. He is involved in pirate narrative and writing one of the stories, there are three other writers writing three other stories to. There is going to be actors and directors that are going to read their stuff. Tom Campbell, Pat Kelly, Jesse Wagner is writing stories. Jacque Komnick is producer.**

1. Justin Raver – I ask Justin, if I hit a golf ball and broke a windshield or struck a person and caused injury, who is liable? He said the golfer is responsible for their own golf ball. Then I asked if a child fouls off a baseball a baseball and breaks a windshield, who is liable. He said, more of an act of God and a lot of the times there is no one liable. I asked Justin to come to the meeting to discuss our liability and the golfer’s liability.

**Director Johnson asked attorney Justin Raver to come to the meeting and discuss the liability if something is struck by a golf ball. Justin said that #17 and suicide hill are the two holes that make him nervous when he is golfing, they have blind corners that proceed them. If people are following the signs and speed limit it should not be an issue. The golfer is going to liable for the ball, when you look at the park district’s liability, the district is only responsible for their own actions so if you design the course in a way that created an unreasonable risk of damage then you would be liable for that. Like if you designed a course that the golf balls are going to remain on the course. If you hit a ball and it hits a car you are liable for that car the park district is not. The drivers when they come around the corner, they cannot see the tee box until it is almost too late. Brian even mentioned with the sign being there, golfers in the area use extreme caution, Justin said that sign takes away our negligence we are not neglect for the design of the course because we have a sign there. Steve Brackett mentioned that back in the day cars used to park by the side of the road to get water from the spring well, who would be responsible if their car got hit by a golf ball. Justin said the park would not be responsible because they did not design a faulty course and we cannot control the balls. If a car is speeding and gets hit it is neglect on the golfer or the car not the park district. The park is only responsible for failure to do something that we should have done or doing something we should not have done. Al long as you do not change anything to make a hazardous course and have signs to warn them. Golfers are liable for their golf balls unless they are walking on the golf course and get hit by a ball. If you get hit while walking on the playing field that is on you. If you get hit while walking on the sidewalk, let us say by #9 and someone hits the ball and hits someone on the sidewalk, that is going to be the golfer’s responsibility. The yardage marker isn’t just to decide what club to use that’s the way a golf course insulates liability the marker tells the yards, so the golfer knows the distance and to knows not to use a driver on par 3 under normal circumstances. It to show that the reasonable golfer what is appropriate for the hole. The point is every hole and every injury has a different set of facts. It going to be the golfer’s fault or the person that got hit but almost never would it be the golf courses fault. Andrew Verstraete asked if you are at northeast a kid fouls out and busts my windshield whose fault. Justin said same rules apply, let say the baseball diamond didn’t have a back stop just a flat dirt baseball diamond like old school diamond, the district would have a cold bolt for not having a back stop because that is reasonable for a baseball diamond, there probably a rule for having one and size and fence. If a batter intentionally throws a bat and hits someone he is responsible, but if he’s fouls and hits a windshield that’s an act of god because it’s not unreasonable conduct, it’s a little different from golf the average golfer is going to have enough control to avoid that because the course is so big and so expansive you can wait for that car to move, but in baseball that was a pure accident and the batter isn’t going to be responsible for that. Jim Heberer ask about a designated parking lot and if someone fouls and hits a car. Justin said that it is purely an act of god, there is an assumption of risk when you pull into a park at a baseball game. The park is not responsible for that. Jim Heberer asked Justin what if golfers are drinking while driving the cart and someone falls out, the question is were they drunk before they started. If someone shows up impaired the starter must refuse them a cart, because the park district is going to be liable for them. If you give a sober person a cart and he goes to the bar and get drunk then drives the cart the bar would be responsible for over serving him, the starter isn’t going to be responsible there are different circumstances. Most of the time the park is not going to be responsible because there is an assumption of risk associated and personal responsibility to. Jim Powell ask about the blind spot on the golf course off #16 on #17 tee you must look way over to see if there is a car coming, should we trim the tree and bushes to see better. Justin said if you create an unreasonable risk, but you have a sign and do not have a negligent course design.**

1. Henry County Board of Review has granted the requested extension to submit evidence for the Walgreens appeal. Walgreens is asking for a reduction is assessed value from $438,268.00 to $349,965.00. This could cost taxing bodies thousands of dollars. Kewanee High School is leading refusal with lawyers to stop the reduction.

**Director Johnson mentioned this assessment. Andrew Verstraete asked if this goes through will we lose money in tax revenue for the park district. Brian said that he thought the school would lose a lot more than what we would lose. Steve Brackett asked Brian if he knew what we might lose, and Brian did not know but look at what the taxpayer pays for the schools and the parks.**

**e.)** Abilities Plus Endowment did approve $800.00 for the gift packs for the former day cameras at the Kewanee Park District. Sharon DeSmit is putting them together and will be delivering them shortly.

**f.)** We received our first installment of taxes from Henry County. We appreciate that and will continue to move forward with daily business.

1. We received a letter from Kevin Skoglund to us how to take over the Windmont Park Lighting for 2020. We appreciate his comments, but I will listen to my board and follow what they want me to do.
2. I was asked to rename the Windmont Park Shelter House to the Robert “Bobby” Neirnck Memorial Shelter House. Just throwing that out there.

**Jim Powell suggested instead to put up a plaque in recognition for what he had done for the park, but not to change the Windmont Shelter to anyone’s name. Brian said he thinks there is going to be a tree and a bench for Bob at the park.**

With nothing further to say Director Johnson turned the meeting back over to President Andrew Verstraete.

**Steve Brackett mentioned that he has been getting a lot of feedback about our people playing for free and it costs them more money for a season ticket and why are these people playing for free, when we made the raises we said that we were going to keep this free golf down. Andrew Verstraete asked who the people are playing for free, Steve are they talking about board members or who is playing for free. Brian mentioned are activity passes given for that, you are not saying the starters are missing them or that activity passes are given out and they are playing for free. Steve Brackett said he was also approached why are we not getting a reduced rate because its already so late and I said because we said we were not going to do that; we had that discussion. Jim Powell asked how they know they are getting a pass, Steve said they believe, and Jim said that is it they believe it they do not know it. Brian controls the passes and are less than ever before. Andrew Verstraete asked Brian about how he is tracking the activity passes and does he know about how many passes he has given out in the last 5 or 6 months. Brian said he could go get his sheet, Andrew asked Steve if he would like to know that so he could go back and tell who is asking about them. Brian mentioned that the passes he gave out are for this year and that someone could have still had one from last year. Friends of the Animals 2 passes, Stark County 2, Hog Capital of Wild Life Rescue 2 , Quarter Madness 2, Jim Powell 5, Jim Heberer 4, Brian Johnson 2, Jim Powell 5, Jim Heberer 5, Brian Johnson 4, Jim Heberer 5, Jacque Verscha 5, KHS Playday 2, & Brian Johnson 2. Jim Heberer mentioned that 3 of his he gave to the Shaun Lewis family. Steve was satisfied with that and said that he had told the guy that mentioned it the increase has not been raised in over ten years to. Jim Heberer had mentioned that these have been hard times and he would have voted for Walgreens with businesses in this area right now. Jim Heberer wanted to thank the season ticket holders that got tickets this year and it is still a good value even if you play a few times a week. Jim Heberer asked Brian about the donation accounts, Brian mentioned the amounts that are in these accounts, and asks what to do with them and we have a lot of memorials already. The memorial tree with 80 leaf’s has helped with placing memorials and was good for Windmont and filled up fast now we got a second tree going. The parks have a lot of memorials in the parks now what are we going to do? Jim Heberer suggested to lump them together and maybe get a new fountain at Windmont. Brian said he will get the information, names and numbers for next month’s packet and we need to do something with that money. Jim Heberer talked to Dan Erickson about his help and does he have enough and how are they doing, Dan was saying that there are some better than others and mentioned that Jonathan Frantzen is a good employee and would like to give him a raise. Andrew Verstraete said that Dan has given some projects to Jonathan to work on and he has done good and taken on more responsibility. Andrew asked Jim if Dan mentioned an amount that he would like to give him, Dan said anything, Andrew said if anyone would like to make a motion on a dollar amount, he’d be happy to hear it. Jim Powell motioned to give Jonathan Frantzen a $1.00 an hour raise. Jim Heberer seconded the motion. All in Favor. Motion Passed.**

**Steve Brackett was asking how that would affect the minimum wage increase in January and Director Johnson said that the full timers get the 2.5 cost of living raise and at the minimum wage increases the part timers are getting 10% a year for the next five. Jim Powell had Donnie Piester call him about the benches and how bad they look. Jim said he would like to pull all the benches out; nobody uses the benches anymore. You got to mow and weed eat around them, he would like for Brian to put on the agenda for further discussion on the benches, what we should do and what to do with the plaques. Make a designated area, cement all the plaques over here or what? Jim Powell suggested by the end of the year get rid of all our number one tee signs by the vendor company, and just get a 4X4 at hole number one. Jim Heberer ask are we just going to take that off and put something over it for now. Jim Powell said he would like to have them all removed all the marble removed and get something that is simple. Jim Powell said he was thinking a fall or an early spring project for Dan to get them out. Dan Keeps the course nice and a guy told him that golfs here from Peoria, that you have a little country club here now this is a really nice field, it’s time we make a decision on the benches and we might upset some people, you can have the plaque or take them somewhere. Andrew Verstraete mentioned that Terri Warner from the Prison said that some inmates would like to make a mural on a park bench, picnic table or a wall mural in town, and the exercise would be on the social diversity, unity, community, solidarity. We have looked into having correctional industries make a bench and have it shipped to us the cost is $624 and where is the money going to come from and not sure if there are any grants available in town for something like that or we could ask for donations, right now Terri is asking if anyone would be interested in any of this. Stever Faber mentioned that it would be cost saving if they could paint on already existing benches or picnic tables and the designs would be approved by the person in charge or government entity. The offenders would have a release to come and do the work, if anybody has any ideas would love to hear them. Brian ask the board if the bench cost $700 and the park was asked to pay it would they do it. Jim Powell mentioned they could put a couple of picnic tables in the gazebo, he did not know about putting any at northeast. Jim Heberer mentioned that a picnic table would have more surface to paint than a bench. Andrew mentioned that their artistic work is quality work. Brian mentioned a wall mural would be good, Jim Heberer suggested the old bath house at Northeast facing the road and it needs an uplift. Brian mentioned the back of the big diamond concession stand that’s kind of like one of the first things you see when you come to this town, a design for our parks that is one that we would like everybody to see when they come to town. Jim Heberer thought it was a good idea but wondering about the condition of the building he has not been in it in a while. Steve Brackett mentioned the 19th hole above the window there could be one there to maybe have to clear some of the trees along the walk path. Andrew liked Brian’s idea because it is on the main drag, everybody can see it and is everyone interested, and they said yes. Steve Brackett mentioned have a mural of everyone that is on the wall of fame to be on the side of the building. Andrew mentioned that he is tired of people damaging our stuff there was a tombstone damaged at Northeast and since he been on the board we have had our #10 green tore up by a snowmobile, our soccer field tore up by a 4 wheel drive pickup truck, oasis and the snack shack broke into, our bathroom doors kicked in, our fence tore up by a kid doing donuts in the parking lot, and just had a fire at Windmont and cost thousands of dollars in damages. He would like people to understand that if you are caught, we will fully prosecute you to extent that we can. Andrew said that Dan and JR put a lot of work into the parks and time & time doing this stuff and people damage it left and right. Brian said it was a good statement for the paper. Jim Powell mentioned that he was talking to Christy and she has been trying for weeks to get comcast to get internet at Windmont and she is not getting anywhere but is working on it. Andrew Verstraete complemented Christy and told her she is an asset and a positive influence on the park district and thanked her for her work. Andrew Verstraete ask Christy if she was getting paid for our monthly meetings and she said no. He said he would like to see that she starts getting paid for our monthly meetings. Jim Powell mentioned that the employee before her got $750 a year. Andrew Verstraete motioned that Christy gets $750 a year for the board meetings and effective immediately. Jim Powell seconded the motion. All in Favor. Motion passed. Christy thanked President Andrew Verstraete and the Board of Commissioners for the complement and the wage for the board meetings.**

With nothing further to discuss Jacque Verscha motioned to adjourn the meeting. Jim Heberer seconded the motion. All in Favor. Motion Passed.