



## Newton Park Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 20, 2021 – 6:15 pm

Electronic Meeting was held via Zoom at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86255869103?pwd=MWoxaHVSy0t3VnBjQTZrK2ZkRHNEZz09>

and was also available by website streaming at <https://www.newtongov.org/CivicMedia>

(Pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8) This electronic meeting was held because a meeting in person is impossible or impractical due to concerns for the health and safety of board members, staff, and the public due to COVID-19. The public was able to participate in this meeting and comment on an agenda item by submitting via email to [brianl@newtongov.org](mailto:brianl@newtongov.org) before 5:00 PM the day of the meeting or, during the meeting, by calling 641-521-7137. Providing comment in person was not an option.

### MINUTES

#### Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance:

*Is there anyone present that may require special assistance in being able to participate in this public meeting?*

- 1) Call to order by acting Chair Melanie Humphrey
- 2) Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance statement read by Humphrey.
- 3) Introduction of New Park Board Members – Before introducing the two newly appointed board members, Community Services Director Brian Laube shared a couple paragraphs from the City Code that spells out the rolls and responsibilities of the Park Board. These sections shared were:
  - a. The Park Board was established to advise City Council on the planning and coordination of the city-owned parks, trails, greenspaces and recreation facilities and advise on recreational activities that are offered by the City of Newton. The Park Board will also advocate the use of the city-owned parks, trails, greenspaces and recreation facilities and promote volunteerism at events at City parks and recreation facilities and for projects within City parks and recreation facilities.
  - b. Members shall demonstrate a positive interest in the parks system and recreation activities, and shall have a positive outlook and vision for the future of the Newton parks system and related activities.
  - c. The Board shall serve as an advisory only board to the City Council and shall

Park Board Chair – Melanie Humphrey

Park Board Members – Bryce Heitman, Jeff Osby, Rachele Tipton, and Adam Vandall

have no authority or power to set parks policy, rules, or user fees, to direct or have any oversight of City employees engaged in parks-related job duties or activities, or to direct any maintenance expenditures, operations, or activities.

With that being shared, Laube then introduced the two new Park Board members, Rachelle Tipton and Jeff Osby. The two new members introduced themselves to all, and existing board members did the same due to the meeting not being held in person.

- 4) Roll Call – all five board members present
- 5) Certification of Iowa Open Meetings Law – confirmed by Brian Laube
- 6) Appoint New Park Board Chair
  - a. A motion was made by Bryce Heitman to nominate Melanie Humphrey as board chair, seconded by Adam Vandall – motion carried 5-0.
  - b. A motion was made by Adam Vandall to nominate Bryce Heitman as vice-chair of the board, seconded by Melanie Humphrey – motion carried 5-0.
- 7) Review and approve minutes from December 16, 2020 board meeting – motioned by Vandall to approve said minutes, seconded by Heitman – motion carried 5-0.
- 8) Maytag Pool Update – Brian Laube shared the following information on the 2021 pool season:
  - a. Staff will begin advertising for approximately 32 seasonal employees (lifeguards and concessions workers) on or about February 1<sup>st</sup>. Most of these positions will be filled by mid-April, but the job postings normally stay open since some employees need to leave earlier in the season due to other commitments such as band, sports, etc.
  - b. The 2021 season is being planned as a normal year, but we will fall back to our phased Covid restrictions if needed.
  - c. Opening day is scheduled for Friday, June 4<sup>th</sup>.
  - d. The Newton Fest Free Pool Party will be held on Friday, June 11<sup>th</sup> as long as Covid restrictions allow.
  - e. The closing day and Dog Swim are scheduled for Saturday, August 21<sup>st</sup>.
  - f. Three large lifeguard in-service trainings will be held, with other smaller trainings held throughout the season to supplement these.
  - g. Pre-season orientations will be held for all staff in the Community Services offices in mid-May.
  - h. Repairs have been completed on the drain structure in the diving well, which was the source of the major water leakage last season. Staff will also be completing some joint repairs and painting ahead of filling the pool.
  - i. The results of the technical evaluation of the pool, which was completed this fall, will be known soon. This evaluation will include information on the recommended repairs to systems to continue to operate the pool as-is for the next 5-10 years.
- 9) Newton Cares Classic Golf Tournament – Brian Laube shared the following information on this upcoming event:
  - a. The inaugural Newton Cares Classic (NCC) Golf Tournament was held in 2019, but did not return in 2020 due to Covid. This initial charity event was a three-way effort by the United Way of Jasper County, Iowa Speedway Cares Foundation, and the Friends of Newton Parks.
  - b. This year's event is scheduled for Thursday, July 15<sup>th</sup> at Westwood Golf Course. Due to the changes and uncertainty of the 2021 season at the Iowa Speedway, this year's event will be a partnership between the United Way of Jasper County and the Friends of Newton Parks.
  - c. The event will be hosted entirely at Westwood this year, instead of beginning and ending

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at the Iowa Club at the Speedway.

- d. The sponsorship info was screen shared, and the three levels of main sponsorship were touched on. Brian Laube shared that he'd be emailing the board members this sponsorship material for them to share.
- e. Brian Laube also shared that this event was open to anyone willing to buy a sponsorship or pay for a base foursome when these are available later.
- f. The website for this event is: [newtoncaresclassic.org](http://newtoncaresclassic.org)
- g. Park Board members who would like to volunteer to work at the 2021 event should contact Brian Laube.

#### 10) Old Business

- a. Bryce Heitman inquired about the status of the plan to update Sunset Park. Brian Laube shared the following information:
  - i. There are two things in play there: a larger several hundred thousand dollar project to construct numerous improvements, and a smaller \$15K project to build a dog park.
  - ii. The larger project is being proposed to be done in phases, with an initial \$200K project proposed for FY-22 of the Capital Improvement Plan being considered by City Council currently.
  - iii. The dog park project would include both small and large dog areas, and is being proposed due to the number of recent requests for it combined with the larger number of people now living in the downtown area.
  - iv. Brian Laube said he would share more information on these two projects next month.
- b. Bryce Heitman asked what other parks projects were being planned for 2021. Brian Laube mentioned a few possible ones including hike/bike trail repairs at Agnes Patterson Park, soccer field fence improvements, and ball field improvements at Agnes Patterson Park. Brian Laube also mentioned that staff would be pursuing a grant opportunity through the Minnesota Twins Community Foundation to try to stretch the ball field improvements project dollars farther. Brian Laube also said he would email the current draft of the Community Services' Department CIP plan currently under consideration.
- c. Melanie Humphrey asked whether the 5-year CIP included a project to improve the parking lot at Agnes Patterson Park. Brian Laube stated that it did not, and this would be a maintenance item for staff to work on.
- d. Adam Vandall asked how the Holiday Light Display at Agnes Patterson Park was received this past December since it was not held at Maytag Park due to the ongoing tree removal contract. Brian Laube shared that he had heard many positive comments about it, but had also received some recent citizen input requesting that the event return to Maytag Park in 2021. Brian continued that this would be an agenda item for the Park Board to discuss and make a recommendation later this year. Brian also thanked Nick Cummins, Jamie Murphy, and the parks groundskeepers for pulling off this change of location in a great way. Melanie Humphrey inquired about any vandalism to the displays at this location, to which Nick Cummins said nothing but a couple displays were unplugged.
- e. Nick Cummins gave a brief update on the status of the tree cleanup work in the parks following the August derecho. All parks are now done and open except for Woodland Park, where a few logs must be removed before the barricades are pulled. Also, the playground at Maytag Park remains closed due to storm-damaged playground equipment.

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- f. Brian Laube gave a brief update on Cardinal Pond. The Iowa DNR is scheduled to stock the pond with fish this spring, so parks staff will be placing some fish habitat on the ice soon. This habitat will sink as the ice goes out, thereby providing habitat to support the establishment of the fish population. Brian Laube reminded all that this park and pond are still closed to the public, including signs posted to stay off the ice.

11) New Business - none

12) Meeting Adjourned at 6:59 pm.

BJL  
1-20-2021