



## **Regular Meeting with Work Session June 26, 2023**

**Call to Order:** The Board met in person in Council chambers at Richfield Village Hall. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Anita Gantner, Board Chair.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

### **Roll Call**

Present: Anita Gantner, Mike Lyons, Holly Price, Mike Selig, Dave Wehner

Excused: Mark Robeson

Absent: Steve McPeake

**Also in Attendance:** Park Director John Piepsny, Township Trustee Don Laubacher, Village Council representative Sue Ann Philippbar, Administrative Coordinator Polly Wheeler, Volunteer Coordinator Susan Czaplicki, and approximately 12-15 other attendees.

## **Work Session**

### **1) Friends MOU**

Mr. Selig presented a few of the changes that will be made to the MOU. The revised document will be sent to the board for review and then to the Friends for their approval.

- a) Project management and volunteers – Strike non-pertinent wording. Coordination of projects will be by the park director. Registration of volunteers and implementation of plans will be through the volunteer coordinator, with direction by the park director as needed.
- b) Fundraising – Goals are to be reviewed annually by the park director and RJRD Board with input from the Friends. Champion funds will be restricted to that Champion project. All other funds that are to be given to the park will be directed into a new fund, yet to be named, for this specific purpose. A better defined agreement between the Board and Friends on fundraising will be created.

Ms. Price suggested that the Board make sure that amendments are written so that it is clear that the Board is not in control of the Friends because they are separate entities. She also asked about the mention at February's meeting that the Friends should have a specific amount of funds to be directed toward the general fund. Mr. Selig said this would be reviewed for appropriate language.

Ms. Price asked if the agreement is between the Friends and the RJRD Board or the Friends and the park as a whole. Mr. Lyons confirmed that it is the Board that has the authority to make the agreement with the Friends.

Mr. Wehner asked about where funds, intellectual property, and other assets would be directed if the agreement is terminated. He stated that these should revert to the park under these circumstances, rather than to the Richfield Historical Society.



- 2) Letter of support for Friends of Richfield Heritage Preserve Kirby's Mill Restoration project
- a. Ms. Gantner presented the request by the Friends to have a letter of support from the RJRD Board. She asked if the Board would like to do this and if a resolution was necessary or if a paragraph would suffice for Friends to use in their promotional materials. Ms. Gantner read a paragraph written for this purpose as an option.

Mr. Selig stated that the paragraph is preferable, since the resolution is very formal. Mr. Lyons said that the paragraph should be in the form of a letter, which Ms. Gantner would sign on behalf of the entire RJRD Board.

MOTION by: Mr. Lyons and seconded by Mr. Selig to accept the paragraph and approve it for use by the Friends.

DISCUSSION: None further

MOTION PASSED: Vote taken by voice vote Yea, which was unanimous.

3) Letter of Intent for Kirby House

Ms. Lynn Richardson presented two Letters of Intent that were submitted to the Board.

- a. Kirby House and Gardens – Ms. Richardson stated that one letter is for the Kirby House and Gardens specifically. Kirby's Mill has roots in engineering. The Friends want to run STEM programming in Kirby House to support Mill programming. Facilities in Kirby House would make this possible. Accessibility to at least one level would be included.
- b. A second letter of intent was submitted for many projects, including all the lower lake historic structures and the three Neal houses. Ms. Richardson said that the Friends promised Richfield residents in 2014 that the structures would be restored. Neal houses would be turned over to RJRD once restored. Southern park structures would be part of the historic area that would encompass Oviatt House history and later Kirby history.

Mr. Lyons clarified that Friends are suggesting a lease of Kirby House. Ms. Richardson agreed but added that the Friends need the commitment that they will have a place to hold the programming that they would like to develop.

Ms. Gantner asked if the LOI is contingent on having a lease. Ms. Richardson said that this is the basis of a discussion and that they might be open to another avenue. Ms. Gantner said that Oviatt's lease was a special case and that the Board is not in favor of additional leases, as a rule, but that there might be another way of making a long-term commitment.

Mr. Selig reminded the group that this is the first run-through with the LOI for the Champion program. He stated that it seems complete as an introductory document and that it needs to be reviewed by the Board to provide feedback to the Friends early on in this process.

4) Oviatt House Nondisturbance and Estoppel Agreement

OHI is in a Cultural Cooperative Use Agreement with the State of Ohio to receive the \$50,000 grant money. A contract exists between the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC), RJRD, and Oviatt House Inc. (OHI), which is the Nondisturbance and Estoppel Agreement. This



contract requires RJRD to report to OFCC if OHI does not comply with the terms of its lease. The work agreement is incorporated in the lease, which is in turn incorporated into the Nondisturbance and Estoppel Agreement.

Ms. Gantner asked if the termination date is 2038. Mr. Lyons confirmed that the lease is a 15 year lease. Mr. Selig asked what the OFCC is; this commission administers the grant and the grant funds.

After reviewing the requirements, and reiterating that the RJRD Board is not being required to fulfill the commitments of OHI for the agreement, Mr. Lyons recommended that the Board approve the agreement. Ms. Price stated that this underscores the complexity of a lease agreement.

### **Comments from the floor**

Ms. Corey Ringle thanked the Board for their paragraph of support.

## **Regular Meeting**

### **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of April 24 and May 22 regular meeting were approved as submitted.

### **Standing Committee Reports**

**Governance:** Mr. Lyons reported that a meeting of the governance committee took place on June 14. The committee worked on simplifying the bylaws and on the Oviatt House agreement. The committee concluded that the Oviatt House restoration agreement is appropriate. The verbal quarterly reports are a help and are still requested.

### **Grants & Fundraising:**

The State Capital Bill is coming up. Mr. Selig will work on a presentation to explain why the park needs funding. This should be final by August so that there can be a discussion with the state representatives.

A request was made in writing to Menard's for a donation of tools for volunteers and staff to use.

The NatureWorks grant application for the bridge across the upper lake dam was submitting. We are waiting for feedback from ODNR.

An estimate of approximately \$53,000 was received for rebuilding the boathouse foundation.

Clean Ohio trails fund grant applications are due in April 2024. Our focus will be connection trails to other nearby parks. Any potential easements across neighboring properties will need to be discussed.

### **Administration Report:**

Park Director John Piepsny announced that the new trails map is in the revised park brochure. He gave a slide presentation of the many improvements that have occurred recently in the park. These include trail enhancements, programs, Amity porch, paving in front of The Lodge, Chagrin Valley Cabin occupancy permit for summer camp, and many Lodge enhancements.

**Treasurer Report:**

Mr. Wehner reported the following numbers:

May revenue was about \$30,000. Expenses were about \$62,000, including the water line extension to Amity House.

There is about \$561,000 in the bank, with \$10,000 in outstanding invoices. Of this there is \$245,000 in the restricted bond fund and \$306,000 in the general fund.

**Old Business:**

Ms. Gantner reintroduced the levy discussion. The next step is to submit the levy to the electors.

**MOTION by:** Mr. Wehner and seconded by Mr. Selig to approve **Resolution 13-2023- A Resolution submitting to the electors a replacement .5 mil tax levy for parks and recreational purposes.**

**DISCUSSION:** The levy would generate \$30,000 more than current levy revenue. Additional paperwork needs to be submitted before August 9.

Ms. Price asked what the operating budget is right now. She questioned whether a 10 year levy is still appropriate or whether it would not be a replacement levy if the length of time was changed. Further discussion followed of the pros and cons of a 10 year levy versus a 5 year levy.

A brief discussion followed of how the levy would be promoted.

Ms. Gantner called for the vote.

**MOTION PASSED:** Vote taken by roll call: Mr. Lyons (Yea); Ms. Price (Yea); Mr. Selig (Yea); Mr. Wehner (Yea); Ms. Gantner (Yea).

**New Business:**

Ms. Gantner introduced the Oviatt House nondisturbance and estoppel agreement.

**MOTION by:** Mr. Wehner and seconded by Mr. Lyons to move forward with the Oviatt House Inc. nondisturbance and estoppel agreement.

**DISCUSSION:** None

**MOTION PASSED:** Vote taken by voice Yea, which was unanimous.

**Friends Letter of Intent for Kirby House**

Ms. Price stated that the Champion process does require Board approval of the Letter of Intent. Mr. Lyons said that the spirit of the letter is acceptable. Mr. Wehner stated that, on the LOI, a signature is needed representing the organization requesting to champion a structure. Ms. Gantner agreed that the Board needs formalized documents before approving the LOI.



**Announcements:**

Ms. Molly Eastwood announced that the Ohio Horsemen's Council hosted 25 riders at their poker ride fundraiser. The group raised more than \$5,000 toward the summer barn roof. She also requested that the "no horses" sign be moved to the other side of the creek on the Crescent Trail to allow horses to drink from the stream.

The next regular board meeting will be held on July 24, 2023.

**Comments from the Floor:**

Mr. Dave Kalal made a statement regarding his volunteer service to the park in various capacities.

Mr. Pat Norris offered that the Village Clerk of Council will teach Ms. Polly Wheeler to operate the AV equipment in Council chambers so that Board meetings can be seen via Zoom.

Ms. Judy Bowman thanked the Board for supporting Oviatt House Inc.

**Adjournment:**

**MOTION by:** Mr. Wehner, seconded by Mr. Selig, to adjourn the meeting.

**MOTION PASSED:** Vote taken by voice, which was unanimous.

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Submitted by:



Polly Wheeler, Administrative Coordinator

Accepted by:



Anita Gantner, Board Chairperson

