



**Regular Meeting with Work Session  
August 22, 2022**

**Call to Order:** The Board met in person in The Lodge at Richfield Heritage Preserve. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Anita Gantner, Board Chairperson. No flag was present, so the board could not say the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call**

Present: Sandy Apidone, Jeff DeLuca, Anita Gantner, Mark Robeson, Mike Selig, Dave Wehner  
Excused: Maureen McGinty

**Also in Attendance:** Township Trustee Don Laubacher, Administrative Coordinator Polly Wheeler, Volunteer Coordinator Susan Czaplicki, Lodge Event Consultant Shari Green, Friends of RHP president Corey Ringle, maintenance volunteer Dave Kalal, and approximately 8 attendees. Village Council representative Sue Ann Philippbar and Village Council president Bobbie Beshara arrived late following a special Council meeting.

**Work Session**

**Introduction to Friends document:**

Corey Ringle presented the proposed document, "Introduction to Friends", which was in the board packet for review. Mr. Wehner mentioned that he would like the document to have a more positive tone and be more forward-looking rather than dwelling on past issues. Mr. Robeson agreed, stating that it should focus on positive aspects and plans. He stated that the utility of the document is good for an incoming person to the group.

**Governance Committee items:**

Mr. Wehner presented several items that were discussed at the Governance Committee meeting, including changes to the records retention policy and schedule. He stated that the board is not required to do an audit as is listed in the current policy. Ms. Gantner questioned this, but Mr. Wehner confirmed. The proposed changes were discussed as written in the revised document in the board packet.

Mr. Wehner mentioned the need to insure the restored water wheel at the Mill, which can be accomplished by increasing the personal property coverage. He also briefly reviewed several ways to get a grant for Oviatt House but stated that the awardee of funds is required to be the owner of the property. The board and OHI are still working out the details.

**Richfield Brewing Company:**

Mr. DeLuca presented the request from Richfield Brewing Company to rent part of the Winter Barn for storage at a rate of \$400/month for up to a year. The space would be used for storage of the beer vats while the brewery is being built. The company might name a beer after Richfield Heritage Preserve or give the board naming rights to one variety.

Ms. Gantner compared the 1,000 sq ft space at a rate of \$400/month to another location charging \$275/month for 400 sq ft. Mr. DeLuca said that the rate and space are still being discussed.



Mr. Robeson asked if the company would have 24/7 access to the space and if they would be required to keep current insurance coverage. He also mentioned that the beer-naming rights would be good for marketing later. The board discussed the need to provide a key to the Winter Barn to the company but that access would be restricted to normal public hours. Mrs. Wheeler has developed a Release of Liability form that can be modified to be specific to this use.

**Public Comment from the Floor:**

Ms. Smik asked if the vats would be empty, for safety reasons; she was told they would be. Ms. Richardson asked if this would eliminate space for Ben Hassett, millwright, to store his crane if necessary next week while installing the mill wheel. Ms. Ringle asked if the Friends would have access to the wood stored in the barn during the year that the storage space is rented, which they would.

**Regular Meeting****Approval of Minutes:**

Ms. Gantner asked if all board members had reviewed the minutes from the July 25 regular meeting and special meeting. All board members had reviewed; a correction was requested, changing to Mr. Wehner's name from Mr. Selig's under the Fundraising report in the regular meeting minutes. Regular meeting minutes as corrected were approved by consensus. Special meeting minutes as written were approved by consensus.

**Standing and Special Committee Reports:**

**Governance:** Mr. Wehner stated that there was no further report besides what was reviewed in the work session.

**Operations and Capital Improvements:** Mr. DeLuca reported the following:

**Capital Improvements**

The lower lake level is dropped to allow repair of the dam by Northstar Construction. Mr. DeLuca met with Gannett Fleming engineers to discuss the problem. Their assessment was that the original concrete repairs did not cure correctly. Gannett Fleming oversaw the additional repairs and advised 10-12 days of curing time. The dam is open at present, so the recent rain did not affect it. Mr. DeLuca is waiting to fill the lake again until the concrete is ready and properly cured.

**Operations**

- 1) The dilapidated back half of Garfield Hall, which was an addition, was removed by a corporate group. The regular Saturday volunteers are cleaning up the debris. So far three dumpsters have been filled, but a lot of material was salvaged for future use.
- 2) Three trees fell and damaged the perimeter fence, which will need to be repaired.
- 3) Mr. DeLuca commended maintenance technician Chris Moore for his hard work to make the park look good. He also thanked volunteer Dave Kalal for his help on the dam and on many other projects.
- 4) A temporary light pole has been installed outside The Lodge for security and safety because there are several events coming up that will continue after dark.
- 5) Baypointe Technologies presented two options for surveillance cameras in the large parking lot. Park Director John Piepsny wants to look at other companies' offerings before a decision is made.
- 6) AquaDoc, the company that treats three of the seven acres of the upper lake, looked at the lower lake and made a treatment proposal. A decision on this will be postponed until next



year because it is nearing the end of the season, and the treatment would have to be started over next year. In the meantime they will address the cattails in the upper and lower lakes.

**Grants and Fundraising:** Mr. Selig reported that there has been no meeting in the past month. RJRD applied to be sponsors for a group of Baldwin-Wallace College students for grant writing. The board was not selected for this opportunity but did get information.

The next meeting will be on Friday, August 26.

**Marketing/Communications:** The last committee meeting was in May. A lot of things are on hold, waiting for the Strategic Plan. The board needs a clearly defined message before doing a lot of marketing of the park.

The park's social media outlets have been very active. The structure for current communications is in place. A smaller group will be looking at the plan after the end of the year.

The newsletter may be due for a possible redesign to be more activity oriented. A more efficient method of sending the newsletter and of getting feedback is needed.

#### **Administration Report:**

Park Director John Piepsny could not attend the meeting, so there is no director's report.

Mrs. Wheeler read her report as submitted.

**Lodge Event Coordinator's Report:** Ms. Green submitted her report. 16 Lodge tours were given in the past month. Four weddings and one shower were booked during that time. Eight Akron Municipal Court weddings were performed on the Amity House lawn as part of the court's off-site summer wedding program.

A Lodge open house and vendor show will take place on Tuesday, August 23, 6-8 p.m.

The Lodge feature wall, replacing the former storage cabinets facing the main room, has been installed. A huge thanks to Dave Kalal for its installation

#### **Volunteer Coordinator's Report:**

Ms. Czaplicki submitted her report. Thanks to Miss Diane for continuing the library Story Hour program in the park. Approximately 60 people attended the most recent event. There will be a book club, Suspense & S'mores, at Mable Smith shelter on Sept. 28 and Oct. 26. Contact the Richfield branch library for more information on these programs.

Two Eagle Scout projects have been completed recently: a chimney swift tower, and wood duck boxes.

Benches in Spif's Garden were repaired by the Pruett family following a damaging storm.

Pat Hayes weed whacked the Upper Lake section of the Buckeye Trail.

#### **Partner group reports:**

##### **Friends of Richfield Heritage Preserve Report:**

Corey Ringle reported the following:

- 1) The water wheel at the Mill is scheduled to return on August 29 and through the week. It's not certain yet whether any audience or media would be welcome.
- 2) Progress was made on the invasive species removal.
- 3) No update on the Historic Structure Task Force



- 4) At Richfield Community Day the Friends had a table next to the RJRD table, as well as a water wheel activity safely away from the tent. They counted at least 137 walk-in participants.
- 5) Kirby Day was quite successful. This is the first time the event has been held entirely at the south end of the park.
- 6) Architecture Hike was successful as well. More than half of the attendees were from Richfield. Quite a few people reported that they want another opportunity to see inside the historic houses.
- 7) Ticket sales for the One in a MILLion fundraiser event go on sale on Sept. 6. The committee is currently collecting sponsors.
- 8) Friends volunteer hours will be reported very soon.

Mr. DeLuca stated that he would like to know the process for installing the Mill wheel, including whether a crane will be needed, and what protective measures will be used in the recently seeded lawn area by the Mill. Ms. Richardson sent photos of the contractor's process and offered to discuss logistics to make accommodations for protecting the area as much as possible.

#### **Treasurer Report:**

Mr. Wehner reported that in the past month there has been a \$4,000 inflow and an \$80,000 outflow of money. The deadline for the remaining grant money for the dam, which would bring in more income, is the end of this year. Mr. Wehner stated that there is a deficit in the general fund at this time. As of July 31, there was \$652,000 in the bank.

#### **Old Business:**

- 1) Ms. Gantner reintroduced the topic of the Friends donor plaque, which was discussed at the last meeting. An appropriate place should be found to have recognition of donors, but the location is in question. There was a discussion in 2018, but no documentation can be found to verify the approval by the board of a specific location. Ms. Gantner opened the discussion to the board.

A discussion followed between board members and attendees, with Friends members maintaining that the plaque must be in The Lodge as they believe was promised to existing donors, and board members stating that a location at the Mill would be more appropriate for recognizing Mill donors.

Ms. Gantner called for a motion to honor the existing group of qualifying Mill donors with a plaque at The Lodge, not to exceed 60 names.

**MOTION by:** Mr. Robeson; no second.

MOTION FAILED

Ms. Gantner stated that a resolution would not be necessary to resolve the issue; a motion would suffice.

**MOTION by:** Mr. Selig, seconded by Mr. Wehner, to allow a plaque to be installed somewhere within Richfield Heritage Preserve, with the location and design to be determined later.

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

- 2) RJRD Paid Holidays

Ms. Gantner reintroduced the list of paid holidays applying to full-time staff positions for the remainder of calendar year 2022 and for calendar year 2023.

**MOTION by:** Mr. Wehner, seconded by Mr. Selig, to adopt the list of paid holidays for full-time staff for the remainder of 2022 and for 2023.

Discussion: Mr. Selig suggestion the Juneteenth, on June 19<sup>th</sup> of each year, should be included in the list going forward, beginning with 2023.

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

**New Business:**

- 1) Mr. Wehner introduced the changes to the Records Retention Policy that were discussed during the work session.

**MOTION by:** Mr. DeLuca, seconded by Ms. Apidone, to accept the changes proposed by the Governance Committee.

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

- 2) Ms. Gantner introduced the topic of the sidewalk on Broadview Road that will be installed by Richfield Village. The sidewalk will go up the east side of Broadview Road from West Richfield Cemetery to near highest point in Summit County, where it will cross Broadview Road and continue on the west side to Giant Eagle. There will be a crosswalk near the entrance to RHP, with flashing light arrows activated by a switch.

Mr. Wehner asked if the Village needs an easement to do this. Ms. Gantner mentioned that there will be a stop sign at the end of the RHP driveway, which has been needed for some time.

Ms. Gantner called on Council President Bobbie Beshara for comment. Ms. Beshara stated that the Village does need an easement, and that a safe spot is needed to cross at the crest of the hill. Pedestrians already use the road; this will just make it easier. Mr. Wehner asked who is responsible for the maintenance of the sidewalk. Ms. Beshara responded that it is generally the property owner.

**MOTION by:** Mr. Selig, seconded by Mr. DeLuca, to grant the Village of Richfield an easement across Richfield Heritage Preserve property for the installation of the sidewalk.

Brief discussion followed.

**MOTION PASSED:** Vote taken by voice, which was unanimous with the exception of Ms. Apidone, who abstained.



- 3) Mr. DeLuca introduce the topic of renting storage space in the Winter Barn to Richfield Brewing Company. They would like to store their beer vats for up to a year while the brewery is being built.

**MOTION by:** Mr. Wehner, seconded by Mr. DeLuca, to rent storage space in the Winter Barn to Richfield Brewing Company.

Discussion: Ms. Apidone reminded the board that requests to rent storage space in the park have been turned down in the past. After brief discussion the board agreed that the circumstances were different.

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

**Announcements:**

A Strategic Planning stakeholders' meeting will be held Tuesday, September 13, from 6-8 p.m. in The Lodge. It is a community forum to which attendance is encouraged.

**Questions / Comments from the Floor:**

Ms. Smik asked how the community forum is being publicized. A discussion followed of multiple ways of publicizing the event.

Ms. Beshara asked what the brewery would be paying for the storage space. Mr. DeLuca responded that the suggested amount was \$400 per month.

Ms. Beshara also asked that improved signage be included as part of the Strategic Plan. Ms. Apidone mentioned that Mr. DeLuca had previously offered a very nice sign design for the park.

Ms. Beshara asked if the pool is part of the Strategic Plan. It is, and possible plans have been brought forward for it.


**Adjournment:**

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

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

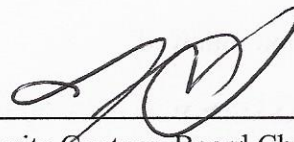
Meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Submitted by:



Polly Wheeler,  
Administrative Coordinator

Accepted by:



Anita Gantner, Board Chairperson