



VALPARAISO/CENTER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF PARKS & RECREATION

Regular Meeting Minutes

June 24, 2025

The regular meeting of the Valparaiso Park/Center Township Board was called to order at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 24, 2025, at the Forest Park Golf Course Welter Room. President Tim Warner presided.

Members present: Tim Warner, Kevin Cornett, Mark Hardwick, Martin Sonnenberg, Don Clark and Kay Magnetti. Also present were Park Director Kevin Nuppnau, Assistant Director Tristan Leonhard, Recreation Superintendent Madison Bell, Administrative Assistant Tracy Betustak, Councilwoman Diana Reed, Paul Reed, John Kish, and Guest Presenter Matt Zurbriggen, Deputy Director of City Services.

MINUTES:

Motion: Mark Hardwick made a motion to approve May 27, 2025, regular meeting minutes as presented. Don Clark seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and unanimously carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Center Township Check Presentation – Jesse Harper, from the Center Township Trustee’s Office, presented a bi-annual check to the Valpo Parks Department for \$42,500 as part of the Interlocal Park Agreement. He thanked the board for all their hard work and acknowledged Martin Sonnenberg and Kevin Cornett as appointees to the Park Board by the Center Township Trustee.

Kirchhoff Park Improvement Bid Opening – Kevin stated we received four bids. The bid award will be Friday at the Board of Works meeting. Don Clark opened each envelope. John Kish of Berglund Construction announced each bid proposal. They were as follows:

Gough	Base bid	\$2,198,765.00
	Alternate	Add/\$8,750.00
Gariup	Base bid	\$2,487,500.00
	Alternate	Add/\$25,000.00
Hasse	Base bid	\$2,425,000.00
	Alternate	Add/\$11,000.00
New Tech	Base bid	\$2,249,000.00
	Alternate	Add/\$6,000.00

OpenGov Work Order System – Matt Zurbriggen gave a presentation on the new OpenGov work management system.

Valpo Parks Update - Kevin Nuppnau noted the extreme heat and that we are taking steps to take care of our staff and patrons. He thanked the staff that works outdoors for all the hard work they do, especially in times like this.

Kevin congratulated Madison Bell. She is the first Valpo Park employee to complete the Certified Park & Recreational Professional certification. It entailed extensive studying and a test to pass.

Kevin and Madison shared details of a 21-team 10u girls softball tournament we held this weekend at Fairgrounds Park. It was very successful and the first one we have done.

Kevin further shared news about the Porter County Career Center. They want to help with some building projects in the future but they were able to do one project before the school year ended. They built a trailhead kiosk at Westside Park, where we added two and a half miles of soft surface trails. So we thank them for that and for their partnership.

Lastly, our leadership team is reading a book by John Maxwell called the 5 Levels of Leadership. We meet twice a month and discuss the book. We want to be sure we are providing resources and support for them. We collectively are receiving feedback from the employees so our leadership can continue to learn and grow. Martin Sonnenberg asked for a presentation/summary after the book is done.

Kevin Cornett asked if the cornhole game has been set in Will Park yet. Kevin Nuppnau stated we have the games but we are waiting for the concrete pad to be poured so they can be set.

Valpo Parks Foundation Update - Kevin Cornett – The Creekside Classic is July 17th. Be sure to register before it's too late.

Party in the Park was a big success. Attendance was better than last year. The net profit last year was \$5,988. This year the net profit was \$16,528. Thank you to those that attended.

FINANCIALS:

Tristan Leonhard reported that the General Fund Balance as of May 31, 2025, is \$313,994. The NRO Balance is \$351,966. The total balance of the two funds is \$665,960. Last month we discussed asking for a potential loan from the NRO to the General Fund for the month of June, and we did not need it. Looking at the appropriations for the department General Fund everything seemed to go to par for May. As a department we have begun budget planning for 2026. The big change is in our Personnel Services, with bringing on Memorial Opera House. Also, a lot of our part-time wages increased. It's part of a 2-3 year program as we try to bring our wages up to par with the community. On the Fund Report, it was a normal month of disbursements in the month of May. The only one of note is the Creekside Bond payment from the Reserve to the Service, then we paid out of the Service. Then we also had a \$100 disbursement out of the Park Tree Fund.

NRO spending was mostly up to par. CPP had a large expenditure in May. That was the new flooring. Tim Warner asked about the life of the flooring. Tristan explained that this flooring is specifically for ice skate flooring as opposed to the previous fitness flooring, so we may get 15 years as opposed to 10 years out of this flooring.

Tristan noted that we did receive our tax draw early this year. It was slightly higher than we projected. It was about \$200,000 more than projected.

Motion: Mark Hardwick made a motion to approve the financials as presented. Kay Magnetti seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and unanimously carried.

CLAIMS: Tim Warner advised that claims documents were provided to members in advance of tonight's meeting. There were no questions.

Motion: Martin Sonnenberg made a motion to approve all presented monthly claims subject to appropriations balances. Mark Hardwick seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and unanimously carried.

Tristan gave one final note. Beginning with this claim batch you will start to see all the Fourth of July funds are now coming from us. So there are quite a few Fourth of July expenses, that you haven't seen in years past, with a large expense for the actual fireworks.

DIVISION REPORT:

The Division Report was provided to the Members in advance of tonight's meeting for their review. There were no questions. Tristan pointed out that the Discovery Cottage graduation was held at the Memorial Opera House and it went very well.

Madison Bell explained the process for youth girls softball and that we play through the Porter County League. We send our teams to South Central for the Fall season. We still register them and put our teams together. South Central doesn't set their fees until they know what their sponsorship levels will be. They got extra sponsors this year so they lowered their price that we pay them per team. So the price they put out to their public is about \$40 less than what we are charging for registration. In order to keep

it fair, Madison recommends lowering our price from \$80/\$96 to \$60/\$72, putting us only about \$10 more than South Central (for administrative fees). We ask for board approval to adjust those rates. Motion: Mark Hardwick made a motion to adjust the Girls Fall Softball registration rates to \$60/\$72 resident/non-resident rates. Kay Magnetti seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and unanimously carried.

BOARD ACTION:

PicklePlex Rental Fee Structure – Kevin Nuppnau – If you want to rent the courts, it will be paired with a shelter rental. If you want to just rent the shelter it is \$120/all day. The shelter + 3 courts/half day is \$250. The shelter + 3 courts/full day is \$375. For an event/tourney, the shelter + 6 courts/all day is \$600. We want to avoid having a rental on the courts and a separate rental at the shelter.

Motion: Mark Hardwick made a motion to approve the PicklePlex Rental Fee Structure as presented. Kevin Cornett seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and unanimously carried.

Golf Cart Proposal – Tristan Leonhard – The golf carts at Forest Park are at end of life. We've spent the past few months speaking to different representatives to see what it would look like for a full fleet. We got proposals from Yamaha, Easy Go and Club Car. We looked at them from a reliability standpoint, the carts themselves, and spoke with our maintenance team. We are looking at doing an operational lease so at the end of the 5 years we return the carts. We recommend moving forward with Club Car. Though they weren't the lowest proposal, but our mechanics are familiar with them, since we have them at Creekside Golf, and the whole fleet would be the same. Additionally they are out of Chesterton, so if we need parts we can get them right away and not have to keep a cart off the course for days. They will also cut us a check for the trade-in carts instead of deducting it from the operational lease. We are looking to lease 45 carts to answer Tim Warner's question. To answer Martin Sonnenberg's question they are gas powered.

Motion: Don Clark made a motion to approve the lease with Club Car. Mark Hardwick seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and unanimously carried.

OPEN TOPICS:

Golf Irrigation Project Update – Tristan Leonhard gave an update. We met with the team for a pre-construction meeting last week. They plan on beginning work end of February, early March. We will be placing an order soon and storing on site.

rePLAY Project Update – Kevin Nuppnau gave an update on current park projects.

- Foundation Meadows – We are going to add a few more walkways there from the playground to the restroom then to the community garden and then the office. These should be done next week.
- ValPlayso – Pickleball courts are progressing nicely. We are hoping to do a ribbon-cutting during the July 14th week.
- Tower Park – They are going to start mobilizing tomorrow. We sent a letter to all nearby homeowners to let them know what is coming. We also have some signage out there.
- Kirchhoff Park – The renderings will go public tomorrow. Kevin showed the features through the renderings.

Valpo REC Update – We are still aiming for July 8 for the RFP to go out for the design build firm. After receiving the proposals, a review committee would review them and then a selection would be made as to who is the right partner to move forward then design and build the facility. We are working on a \$20 million budget.

Impact Fee Study - Kevin stated that the 2nd reading of the Impact Fee Study at the City Council meeting was presented. It did not pass and was pushed to the next meeting, July 14th.

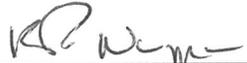
ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business the June 24, 2025, Park Board meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.



Tim Warner, President

ATTEST:



Kevin Nuppau, Director