

## ROME CITY PARK BOARD

Regular Meeting  
January 20, 2025

The Rome City Park Board held their regular meeting on Monday, January 20, 2025 at 5:30 p.m., in the Rome City Town Hall. Called to order by President Wilkinson.

Members Present:

Leigh A. Pranger-Secretary  
John Martin

Tina Wilkinson  
Bridgett Coe

Roll call a quorum was present.

Interested parties in attendance: No one was in attendance.

Member Martin made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Second by Member Coe. All in favor-aye. Motion Carried.

- a) New Member recruitment-The board was encouraged to come up with two names for a new park board member in 2025. President Wilkinson informed the board she approached Nicole Ritchie, and she is not interest. Pranger stated Alex Dager's name was submitted by Cheryl Clifton. The board stated we have some time to look into some additional candidates.
- b) Secretary Pranger passed out copies of the proposed contract for Joel Wilkinson marketing services. She asked that he review it and get back to her with any changes or sign the contract if he is agreeable.
- c) 5- year park plan-Secretary Pranger informed the board she received an email from IDNR recreation, and they thought the submitted draft plan needs more work to make it usable for the board. Pranger told the board she will forward copies for their review of the two plans the IDNR stated were good plans. She noted the IDNR stated we can also do our own plan. The board stated that might be something we look into for the next plan but we have already expended money on this plan so we need to get it in line with what IDNR is looking for. Pranger stated the February meeting should be a public hearing for input on the plan, she has had no contact from Region 3A on setting up the meeting and getting the notification out to the public.

### Kelly Park

- a) Secretary Pranger informed the board she ordered the picnic tables for the pavilion and the benches to be installed on the new tennis courts. The board stated we need to make sure the two pickleball courts are not facing east and west otherwise the sun will be in the server's eyes depending on the time of day. Pranger stated both pickleball courts will fit running north to south on the one tennis court, and she will draw up a diagram for the board. President Wilkinson stated she will reach out to Darryl DeMuyt and Mike Antal to see if they are interested in running pickleball tournaments throughout the summer months.
- b) Suggestions for Chautauqua-3 on 3 Basketball and softball tournaments. Keep Corn hole with better definition of what is considered a Novice entre and Pickleball.

### Grant Park

- a) Paul Hoffman suggested the board look into adding a pavilion over the existing concrete pad in Grant Park and then the board might be able to rent out the park.

### Dog Park -Opening of Park-September 7th:

- a) Installation of paved pathway to the dog park for ADA compliance. President Wilkinson discussed installing a drive entrance off Canal Road with a small parking lot for the dog park. This would provide closer parking and cost less to install a paved pathway for

ADA. The other alternative is to run a path from the existing parking lot to the pavilion and then from the pavilion to the dog park. Pranger will draw up some diagrams for the next meeting. The board suggested we might be able to use gravel paths for a couple of years until we have enough funds to pave them.

- b) Pranger purchased the bench with a cover. Installation in the spring.
- c) The board approved the purchase of an additional dog station to be placed at the edge of the parking lot to decrease the number of droppings from the parking lot to the dog park. Pranger will order. Pranger informed the board she received a complaint about the amount of dog dropping in the dog park. They stated we should put a notice on Facebook, town website and town sign to pick up waste or they will close the dog park for the winter months.
- d) Discussion about installation of a fence for the smaller dogs to be contained from the large dogs.
- e) The board reviewed dog park items, a tunnel, walking plank and other toys. They requested Pranger get a quote and forward by email for the board to decide which items to purchase.

#### **Sycamore Park**

- a) Pranger informed the board that the large Sycamore Tree along the upper east side of the park has been removed for the upcoming SR9 bridge repair project. The town banner sign will be moved to the area where the tree was located in the spring so it will be out of the way of the guard rails which will be installed for the upgraded bridge. Work projected for 2026.
- b) Pranger brought up the idea from last year about installing a sled box at the top of the hill for people to use and put back when done sledding. The board stated they need to discuss this more to see how to keep them from being stolen.

#### **Lakeside Park**

- a) Pranger purchases the bench for the basketball court. They suggested a recycled plastic bench in brown. Pickleball net and bench to be installed in the spring of 2025.
- b) Jim Wilkinson completed the masonry work and Miller Sign Company installed the sign on the west end of the park.
- c) The town guys installed the lady statue inside the triangle of the sidewalks down by the lake and native ground cover -stonecrop to be planted in the triangle spring of 2025.
- d) Secretary Pranger informed the board she heard nothing about the grant and the playground set was ordered and should be delivered next week, to be installed this spring. Pranger informed the board she received an email from Wendy Mink on the new sale playground item for this spring. Pranger will forward the email to the board for them to review. Playground design: after reviewing the design from Midstates and the sale flyer. The board said we just need to come up with a proposed playground and a cost for fundraising. The product will change as the board stated they will most likely purchase sale items for the playground. The board decided they would like to install a separate area for 2-5 year olds and 5-12 year olds. President Wilkinson stated she will contact Wendy Smith.
- e) Playground Fundraising: The board needs to work on obtaining grants to help fund the playground. Noble County Community Foundation, Dekko, and Cole Foundation regarding their grant cycles. President Wilkinson brought pictures of the new playground in Lagrange and thought we might be able to incorporate some of the items they have in our design.

- f) Discussed getting a landscaper to install native Indiana trees along lake this fall or have Hulén's plant them. The board decided they would rather plant some trees around the playground for shade.

**Gaff Park/Trail head:**

- a) **New Sign in Gaff Park:** Need to discuss date we want Miller's Sign Company to install the wood structure for the sign in the spring. The board needs to figure out where they want the sign to be installed.
- b) President Wilkinson informed the board the installation of the musical Equipment has been installed. President Wilkinson stated we should move former Town Council Gary Furlow's bench out by the bells. **Need to discuss pathway around and possible landscaping in the middle-with ARC.** The board looked for a musical piece to add to the area and agreed on the lady bug drum.
- c) **Trail project** completed except for some signage.
- d) Paul Hoffman suggested the board look into movie nights for the summer and fall nights. He stated he will be purchasing the projector for the Marshal office and the Park Board would be able to use it. The board stated that it would be a good idea.
- e) Activate Noble County-Bike Rally June 9<sup>th</sup> 5-7-Bike Safety and free helmets

**CELEBRATION IN THE PARK 2025:** The board discussed doing a first Friday Concert series with food trucks on June 6, August 1 and September 5. Secretary Pranger suggested we start planning this fall and work on sponsors for the event next winter so we can do a poster of all the concerts and perhaps include the Chamber Lyrics events to help offset the advertising costs.

- a) Concert(s) in Gaff Park: Board stated their January meeting will be a work session on concerts and food trucks for 2025. June 6<sup>th</sup>, August 1<sup>st</sup>, and September 5<sup>th</sup> dates of 2025 concerts. The board discussed the bands-ideas Whoa Man, Hubie, Todd Herendeen, y/s guys, Mason Dixon Band, Wingmen, Big Caddy Daddy, Gunslinger.
- b) Food Truck ideas-Street Tacos, Smoking J's, Twist, Black Sheep Ice Cream, Tyrod's Dogs, Ed's Fich and More, Party on the Patio, El Zorritos 2, One Love, Roamin Kitchen, Janie's Donuts, Gringo's Tacos. Secretary Pranger informed the board we might need to purchase a music subscription due to the copyrights on music for the concert series. President Wilkinson and Secretary Pranger will look into this.

**2025 Budget**

Park Donation Account	\$31,915.51
#119-Park Maintenance	\$16,000.00
#135-Contractual	\$ 4,000.00
#234-Park Supplies	\$ 3,000.00
#341-Park Insurance-Don't Spend	\$ 5,000.00
#352-Park Light-Don't spend	\$ 4,500.00
#362-Park Repairs	\$ 5,000.00
#430-Park Improvement	\$32,000.00
#442-Park Equipment	<u>\$18,000.00</u>
Total	\$85,500 + 31,912.51=\$117,415.51

Next Meeting: February 24, 2025 -due to President's Day at 5:30 p.m.

Member Coe a motion to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. Second by Member Martin. All in favor-aye. Motion Carried.

Respectfully Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Leigh A. Pranger, Secretary

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## Suggestions/Ideas for Future

### Kelly Park

- a) \*Replace baseball back stop or reinforce-on hold- fill in hole around manhole behind home plate.
- b) Look into reconstruction of tennis courts for 2025.
- c) \*Secretary Pranger informed the board the sports complex had horseshoe and shuffleboard courts, and Strawser Brothers did the work.

**Gaff Park-) Sled Box:** The board discussed the idea of a Free Sled Box in Gaff Park. President Wilkinson brought proposal from Albion Parks Department about installing a free sled box for the kids to borrow a sled and then leave it in the box when they are done. No decision was made.

### Grant Park

- a) \*Hold indefinitely-Concrete pads under bleachers.

### Lakeside

a) Member Maley showed the board his power point on items that might be considered for the playground area. Musical Flowers \$1600, Xylophone \$6000, Musical Bench. He showed the board play equipment in the shape of a boat-the board expressed interest to keep with the lake theme. Exercise Stations for adults and kids could be added along the sidewalk. Secretary Pranger showed the board a new catalog from Summit Supply with ideas for a musical park or adult workout stations.

b) The board requested Pranger look into a possible grant for the installation of a small boat ramp at the east end of Lakeside Park. Pranger stated there is money available through Land & Water Conservation funds for this type of project. Boat ramp for kayak, canoes, and paddleboards-Land Water Conservation Grant

\*\*location for President Furlow's bench-Pranger suggested it be installed at the musical bells in Gaff Park.

### Sycamore Park

On Hold-The board discussed the need for a hitching post in Sycamore Park so the Amish quit tying their horses to the trees. Secretary Partner suggested we contact the Amish bishop and ask them to maintain a poop station, so the manure is not leaching into the Little Lake. President Wilkinson stated she might have a contact. The board also stated if a hitching post is installed someone needs to be responsible for cleaning up the horse waste-this can also be discussed with the Amish.

Miscellaneous Business: The board discussed member ethics and stated they would like the Town Council to pass a policy that background checks be performed for all board members prior to appointment. Any board member arrested for a felony will be automatically placed on a leave of absence from the board until the court hearing. The board members' seats are to remain open and not filled until a determination is made in court. Secretary Pranger stated she will forward their concerns to the Town Council for their input and possible policy update.