

**VERMILION PARKS & RECREATION BOARD**  
Minutes of September 16, 2025 - 6:00 p.m.

Tina Swinehart, Chairperson called the meeting of September 16, 2025, to order.

Roll Call: Tina Swinehart, Liz Elden, Connie Laughlin, Phil Dombrowski, Karen Viterna. Absent: Mark Musial, Supt. Dr. David Hile

*Also, Present:* Marc Weisenberger, Parks Operation Manager; Mayor Forthofer; Chad Kuhns, Recreation Director; Melanie Wood, Clerk of Council

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**Approval of Minutes:**

L. Elden MOVED; P. Dombrowski seconded to approve the meeting minutes of August 19, 2025. Roll Call Vote 4 YEAS; 1 PRESENT (Viterna). MOTION CARRIED.

**Correspondence/Presentations:**

Kate Repola, Executive Director of Main Street Vermilion said she is excited to announce the Vermilion Lighthouse has been named an official stop on the America 250 Ohio Lake Erie to Ohio River Trail. It is part of a statewide trail and tales program to celebrate the upcoming 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States. In 2026, the United States will celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the of the Declaration of Independence and each state of the nation has been encouraged to create a celebration to reflect its unique contribution to the Nation's history. One of the ways Ohio is participating in celebrating is the creation of the Lake Erie to Ohio River Trail in which the Vermilion Lighthouse is now an official stop. This trail highlights over 150 sights across Ohio telling the story of how the State's waterways have shaped communities, commerce, and culture for more than two centuries. Main Street Vermilion is happily the coordinating agency for the honor. Their welcome center is stocked with brochures, trail information as well as souvenirs to help visitors enjoy our special lighthouse. They will also be providing The Shore Thing with information to provide for visitors as well at the beach. This trail is active for the remainder of 2025 and throughout all of 2026. She passed out the trail information to the board. She said this is a really exciting thing and there is nothing the city or the Parks Department needs to do other than enjoy some additional attention of the lighthouse. It was exciting to be put on the trail, and it is a great way for Ohio and Vermilion to celebrate America's 250th anniversary. M. Weisenburger said Tim Costello is working on lining up a painter to come in and touch up some different areas on the lighthouse.

K. Repola said their office is open seven days a week in the season and then weekdays from January through April so they will have a lot of time to welcome visitors to Vermilion. If anyone has any other ideas on ways to celebrate, please let them know.

Marilyn Brill of 1745 Cooper Foster Park Road said she was there in June to tell them about the Little Free Library that Brownhelm Historical would like to put at Showse Park. In late August she received a call from Amy Martin with the Kiwanis Club who wanted to partner with their group to make sure this was going to work. On September 8<sup>th</sup> they met with three Kiwanis members at Showse Park as well as a couple from Brownhelm Historical Society and resident Helen Taft. They walked the whole park with maps, and they had a board meeting with the Brownhelm Historical Society and they are going to go ahead with sharing the cost of the Little

Free Library and it will be a replica of the Vermilion on the Lake Clubhouse. They have a builder who will produce a Little Free Library, and they will have two posts to set in the ground. They have a couple of locations picked out, but they would like to know what Marc and the Parks Department have as an idea. There is a shelter near the playground area, and they thought it could work there, or by a lone tree back further. Either place is okay with them, and they know there are other things going on such as the story trails from the Ritter Library and she knows the flag area will be installed in the next few months. The Kiwanis Club would also like to include a couple of colorful Adirondack chairs and a small picnic table for children to sit and get a book and read or color. So not only will there be a playground area, but they can come and sit and read. She wanted to give an update that they are going to move forward with it. They would like to meet Marc some day at Showse Park to get an idea of where everything is going to be. She loves the Fund the Fish campaign and Brownhelm Historical will probably be making a donation to that as well. They will be working with the Parks Board to make it happen because they want the children in the neighborhood to be able to get to a Little Free Library as soon as possible.

T. Swinehart asked the anticipated time the Little Free Library would be completed. M. Brill answered spring; the builder in the Kiwanis Club is going to take pictures and they will be able to give dimensions to the size of the Little Free Library. Children's books are a lot bigger than the typical books we read so it will be a little bit larger than the other Free Libraries you see all over the Vermilion area. K. Viterna asked who would maintain the picnic table and chairs and what the materials would be. M. Brill answered the Little Free Library will be maintained by the Brownhelm Historical Society and the Kiwanis Club are the group asking about the Adirondack chairs and tables and as for maintenance, it will be up to them, and she will check with Amy to make sure they are willing to maintain it. They have one member of Kiwanis Club who is an artist and she will do some nice artwork. She talked about how colorful Main Street Beach is, so they want to try to show off Showse Park as well. It is going to take two teams to get this done and she believes it is a good partnership for them as well as the community. P. Dombrowski asked M. Weisenburger to give them the date they will be meeting at Showse Park so he and the rest of the subcommittee can attend to look at locations.

#### Community Event Group Use Permits:

*-Fred Miggins – Event: 2026 Ice a Fair; Date of Use: 6:00 am on February 7 through 12:00 pm on February 8, 2026; Exchange Park, Friendship Park, Village Green, Victory Park, City Parking Lot Greens, East Exchange Park*

Kate Repola represented the Ice a Fair event and stated there would be no changes from the 2025 event.

**L. Elden MOVED;** C. Laughlin seconded to approve the use of the listed parks on February 7 and 8, 2026 for the Ice a Fair event. Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

*-Richard & Karen Kime – Event: Market in the Park; Date of Use: 7/4,7/11, 7/18, 7/25, 8/8, 8/15, 8/22, 8/29/2026; Time: 7:00 am – 4:00 pm; Victory Park.*

Kate Repola explained they had just finished their season of Market in the Park and it was a really successful season in Victory Park and they would like to do it again next year. They are asking for nine dates in 2026 from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. L. Elden asked if they would be doing the event on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. K. Repola said the committee wants to do it on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, she said it is TBD at this time, but she would like to ask for it and if it changed, she would let the Parks Department know. People are in town and looking for things to do. They conducted a survey with the vendors, and they responded they would like to come on that day.

K. Viterna MOVED; L. Elden seconded to approve Market in the Park on the days listed from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Victory Park. Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

City Council Representative Report: No report.

Mayor's Report: No Report.

Recreation Director's Report:

Chad Kuhns said they are hosting this week for Vermilion Youth Football, and this is their second time hosting for the season. They have about 90 kids playing football and this is the largest turnout they have had so far and great representation from the cheerleaders as well. The season will end at the end of October. T. Swinehart asked what they do when they host. C. Kuhns answered they will have games all day starting at 9:00 a.m. and going through about 4:00 p.m. It makes it easier for the referees. They have different host sites each week and all the games are played at those three sites so it may not be all Vermilion games. T. Swinehart asked what field they play on. C. Kuhns answered they play in the Varsity Stadium.

Service Director's Report: No Report.

Parks Operation Manager Report:

Marc Weisenberger reported they began trail maintenance on the trails at Sherod Park, and they sprayed for weeds and will work on removing the weeds now that they have died off. They will also be resurfacing some of the areas that had some erosion through the fall. The AED installation and security cameras installation are continuing and have been completed at Main Street Beach, the Skate Park and is currently in progress at Showse Park.

Pool winterization is about 90% complete. There are a couple things to do in the bath house yet. The pool has been winterized, and a new cover has been installed and it fits really well.

They are working on playground maintenance and repairs as well. He asked the board to consider approving \$45,000 from the 204 Account for site improvements and access improvements to the new playground, public art, and flag memorial area at Showse Park. He let the board know the engineered plans have been completed and stamped and he had them with him if anyone would like to view them. It will include sidewalks and a ramp approach to get guests to the playground and the public art and flag memorial area. It will also include some drainage and a couple other things that tie together to bring the area to completion.

T. Swinehart asked if he was expecting to have the site completed. M. Weisenberger answered yes, this fall and Jeff will update the board on some specifics when they get to the reports.

Budget/Finance Subcommittee Report:

L. Elden said she met with Marc and Tina this week and they looked at the funds through year end and they are in good shape. They are able to confirm there are funds available in Fund 204 to do the improvements at Showse Park and they will continue to work towards 2026.

Main Street Beach Revitalization Project:

T. Swinehart reported she spoke with Marc about the gate that is still open, and they are working on getting the gate closed or some solution. There will be a camera there as well. They are working on completing the sign on the side of the pump house and there are some other various signs in the works, and it is looking good down there.

Mayor Forthofer said they learned today that the city's IT provider should have the pole installed next week at which time the camera can be placed on it too. Once the camera is up, he will feel more comfortable reemploying the gate. The VPD raves about the security camera at the upper deck that can monitor all the way over to the west pier and zoom in with great clarity.

L. Elden asked if there was a target date for the sign on the pump house and if it would go up with the summer side or the winter side. T. Swinehart said the winter side will go up first and November 1<sup>st</sup> would be really nice. They are waiting for the frame to be built so it can be attached around the perimeter of the south side of the building. It all takes time, hopefully it will be up November 1<sup>st</sup> with the winter picture.

#### Showse Park Revitalization & Transformation Project:

P. Dombrowski said he is super excited as to what is going on at Showse Park, it has taken a little longer than they had hoped but as Marc said they have the plans in place now. He was able to get a mock block for the veteran's memorial patio they are putting in to show the colors they are looking at for the partnership they have with SightOne Landscaping in Avon to get them the blocks at an extreme discount at 50% off which is just above what the at cost would be. They have plenty of stone for the project plus more if they were to expand. The colors match with what they are doing with the engraved stones people can purchase online to honor or memorialize friends and loved ones for the patio as well.

J. Lucas said the delay was well worth it because of what is to be on the mound, it needed to be reengineered. They employed Rafter out of Oberlin and the plans have been run past the administration and they have been stamped by the engineer and are in good order. They have an electrical contractor they will be scheduling to install the service that will go directly from the pump station to the back end of pavilion one (the middle of the park). What they are going to have installed there is a 60AMP breaker box which will service not only the cameras and the AED, but it will also provide to the mound. There will be two lines coming off that, one will go with a low-level light for the fish sculpture, the other will go directly to the rear south which will be for the Veteran's Memorial. It will serve the dark sky approved light at the top of the 60-foot pole and there will also be outlets at the base which could be for amplification equipment, microphones for administration to give ceremonies and other things to come in the park. The box will also serve in the future, which could potentially be for something like a comfort station, which is the perfect location to get to the back space.

Engineering has been completed, grading work is being scheduled, and they are extremely excited by what they have enhanced by reengineering because of the addition of the Veteran's Memorial Plaza. Right now, they are scheduling concurrently the grading with the concrete and drainage work. The delay was to ensure the ADA compliant walkway was effective and they optimized the space and to minimize the railings and some of the other features that would maybe block the view. It is in a very beautiful location of how they will be able to see once they get up on the mound – connect with the walkway around the playground but also to connect to the Memorial Plaza. A lot of thought went into that. Additionally, on top of the concrete being poured for the walkways there will be a footer base for the flagpole as well as a four-inch concrete pad for the installation of the pavers on top. The concrete base will help keep the paver area smooth and even. P. Dombrowski said with it being a man-made mound, nature hasn't settled it so they put a thick slab of concrete that will prevent freeze

and thaw heaping. J. Lucas said they will be ordering the dark sky approved down lighting which will be able to illuminate a 12 x 18-foot flag but also to have downlighting onto the memorial pavers so if someone is enjoying it in the evening it will have appropriate lighting.

You have probably noticed some of the older equipment is gone including the old swing set and soccer goals. There were some dirt piles that were knocked down in preparation for everything that is going to be happening, so it is getting cleaned up. They will be installing eight new parch benches on September 24<sup>th</sup> that will be along the fitness trail, and they will have concrete supports on the side with natural wood slats for seating and for the back and will be sitting on sandstone bases. If it gets too wet or moist, the feet will be on sandstone bases. There will be six cameras focused on almost every area of the park for safety which will be installed immediately after the electricity. They are going to get signage that will say "monitored 24/7" as well. Tomorrow, he will be meeting with the Service Director regarding the See Something, Say Something Campaign, as opposed to the community watch signs which are a little bit faded and old from the 80's which will be removed. The See Something, Say Something pilot for the Vermilion on the Lake Community will then blend into the safety features of the park. Not only are they getting sewer laterals, a new waterline, new roads and a park upgrade, they are really looking to renovate that area.

They are currently working on getting quotes for the revitalization of the existing surface for the sports complex which are basketball courts and tennis courts. They are prepping for pickleball, basketball, foursquare and hopscotch in multi-coastal colors. The chain-link fence fabric is down, and they have a painter who came by for no cost and took one of the poles to see if they can renovate them as opposed to the expensive cost of a fence. He stripped, sanded, primed the poles and then painted them with black paint and they look like brand new for just the cost of paint. They are going to explore using the same fence posts but taking them down from 10 foot to 8 foot and some sections to 5 feet.

T. Swinehart said she looked at the plan and she was really surprised to see a 90-degree angle on a handicap accessible sidewalk. Having pushed her mother in a wheelchair for many years, those are really tough, so she is wondering why it wasn't rounded out. J. Lucas answered pursuant to the rules of ADA compliance, they need that angle because it will be a landing pad. There will be some areas that have the grade and then there will be a landing pad and then there is a turn, and they go up, so it is pretty impressive. They have learned a lot and there have been a lot of changes in respect to the ADA rules of access. They are ensuring the safety of those who use those routes up. They had the same questions, and the engineers insured them that this is the latest in compliance.

T. Swinehart asked if people are not on Facebook, how do they get information about all of this? J. Lucas said the beautiful thing about living in Vermilion is they have this beautiful newspaper called the Vermilion Photojournal and they have a top-notch reporter who supports them and has done it without them asking. Candy has done a fantastic job updating the residents.

K. Viterna said she is thinking about maintenance and the natural wood in the concrete ends of the benches and asked if he described them correctly. M. Weisenburger said they are exactly like what they are using at Sherod Park and all they need maintenance wise is once a year to be covered in waterproofing and the Lion's Club has adopted those and has been doing it for them. They will be assembling the benches at Showse Park as well. J. Lucas said if you are willing and want to help install the benches they will be doing it with the Lion's Club on September 24<sup>th</sup>.

Recreation and School Relations: No report.

### Vermilion Community Pool Subcommittee:

K. Viterna said when she started on the Park's Board in 2023, she was asked to be on the pool subcommittee. The pool has had a historical financial struggle, and she is happy to report this year they expect to break even and will not be in the red. She attributes the success to the staff, volunteers, and sponsors. In the coming years ahead, they have work to do for the pool because it has outlived its life expectancy. People like it and enjoy it, and they have a splash pad to add to it next year and thanked everyone for making it happen. T. Swinehart thanked K. Viterna for all the work she did on the sponsorships in particular and she has been very attentive to the pool. P. Dombrowski said he grew up a swimmer himself for fun and competitively thought high school and college and to see the local pool be the successful is amazing to see.

### Public Art Subcommittee:

L. Elden invited everyone to join her in making a donation to the Fund the Fish Campaign. They have selected a fabricator and are working on engineered drawings. As they heard last month, the buoy tree will go forward again.

### Recreation Department Subcommittee:

T. Swinehart said the rec department subcommittee is preparing to meet next week and she has gathered up a lot of information John Ross lead before he moved so they will be moving forward on that very soon.

### Rotary Park Subcommittee:

K. Viterna said they did have a clean-up at the park, and it looks good. Mark is going to help with the flag ropes that are jammed up right now which is why they were unable to lower the U.S. Flag on September 11<sup>th</sup> because they can't make it any lower than the Ohio Flag and the ropes will be fixed soon. They do have the final plan for Rotary Park, and the board has to review and approve it and asked to be added to the October Parks Agenda for the presentation on that plan.

### Pickleball Subcommittee:

C. Laughlin reported the pickleball courts are being used regularly. She has been out playing herself as well. She and Marc are still working on a sign, and he is going to go ahead and order it as they are pretty happy with what they have for rules. There were people when she was there using the courts, but no one was waiting so it wasn't a big deal. They are going to do the paddle system and Marc is going to order that. The only other thing she would suggest is to order baskets to hold the balls and she thinks they need four in total. The only negative thing she has seen on the Facebook pickleball site she put up years ago is the mowing on the side. She knows there is mesh laying there and a lot of weeds are growing through, and the neighbors are getting a little antsy. M. Weisenburger said he would take a look at it.

### OPEN TO THE AUDIENCE:

Helen Taft of 3972 Edgewater Drive said she went to the meeting with the Kiwanis Club and Marilyn, and they were so positive and so eager to make this a fun reading area and she was wondering since the library wants to have their path if they can somehow incorporate the two. The library would be changing their signage throughout the year, and they can provide a book that would go along their signage to keep it somewhat cohesive. She does have some lingering doubts about the playground at Shoswse Park. It is a little nebulous to her where the playground stops and then the hardscape for the Veteran's Memorial Plaza begins. Will there be some kind of barrier or bushes? P. Dombrowski said it has not been finalized, he does know they are in compliance of distance from the play area to walking areas. H. Taft asked from the playground to the hardscape? P. Dombrowski answered yes, they are within the fall zones. H. Taft said perhaps when they meet with Marilyn and the Kiwanis club – she has heard people say it seems congested at the mound and not being able to visualize it so perhaps they can go over it and somehow put some kind of marking of where the hardscape is and how much there will be. P. Dombrowski said the entire Showse Park team needs to get there and plan out exactly the stopping points of the Memorial Plaza as well so that is not written in stone they are working on the ADA and concrete walkway finalized and installed before they know exactly where the patio will go. H. Taft asked if the patio side was engineered. P. Dombrowski said it was part of the new plan they can show her after the meeting. They moved the walkway to not go around it but separate the two sections. H. Taft said the drawings change frequently, which she understands due to compliance. She is concerned about the hard surface and kids. She is a retired nurse, and she has seen so many accidents and it just looks so much smaller now that the flag was incorporated into it. That is her concern, and she would be glad if she could be there and they could show her where it is going to be.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

L. Elden MOVED; P. Dombrowski seconded to authorize \$45,000 from the 204 Capital Fund for Showse Park for the civil improvements around the site. Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

Tina Swinehart adjourned the meeting upon no further discussion.

**NEXT MEETING:**

October 21, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m.

Location: Vermilion Municipal Complex, 687 Decatur Street, Vermilion

*Transcribed by - Melanie Wood, Clerk of Council*