



**CITY OF WALLED LAKE  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2023**

The Meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

**PLEDGE TO FLAG**

**ROLL CALL:** Adams, Arnold, Fernandes, Johnson, Masi, O'Rourke, Robertson

**ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** City Manager Whitt, Assistant City Manager Jaquays, HR Director Sears

**REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES:** None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**P&R 01-01-24 APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 8, 2024, PARKS AND  
RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

Motion by Robertson, seconded by Johnson, **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY:** To approve the October 9, 2023, Parks and Recreation meeting minutes.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:** None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

**DISCUSSION:**

1. Tree Lighting After Action Report

Chairman O'Rourke took a moment to thank staff, the Parks & Rec team, the Department of Public Works, and everyone else involved, for putting together a great Tree Lighting event. Mr. O'Rourke said that this was the best the campus has ever looked. Mr. O'Rourke said he enjoyed the added lighting & decorations. Mr. O'Rourke explained that the Department of Public Works did a great job with decorating.

Commissioner Johnson also took time to thank staff, including Mayor Ackley for getting the event kicked off and her efforts in getting attendees excited. Mr. Johnson said that this year even saw major improvements, and that the Santa station was a great success. Mr. Johnson said that Commissioner Adams did a great job at the cookies & hot coca

station. Mr. Johnson also gave a shout out to City Manager Whitt, Chairman O'Rourke, and Commissioner Robertson for their assistance and team effort.

Chairman O'Rourke brought up the need for a better sound system/ microphone for both the Tree Lighting and other city events, including the Spring Egg Hunt to give us better projection. Mr. O'Rourke said, at this year's Tree Lighting, he spoke with some Department of Public Works workers regarding the need for better projection. Mr. O'Rourke added that the events are getting larger, and this sound system would help. Mr. O'Rourke inquired about the process of finding a better sound system and determining a budget to do so.

City Manager Whitt said that this is a good time to bring this topic up, as the budget is currently being worked on. Mr. Whitt said that we recognize and have discussed the need for a better sound system and that the administration will work on finding one and adding one to the budget. Mr. Whitt said any suggestions are welcome.

Chairman O'Rourke said that the current system is older, and it is harder to get the microphone to connect, as we are aware. Mr. O'Rourke said he can stop by Paulson's and see what he can find.

City Manager Whitt said any information is welcome to be sent over and administration will take a look at it. Mr. Whitt explained that we also need a good sound system for other events, such as our Veterans' Day ceremony and other musical events and now is the time to find one. Mr. Whitt said we will add this to the agenda for next year, alongside a few other items to improve upon.

Commissioner Masi said he will email Chairman O'Rourke. Mr. Masi said he has a contact right down the road for a sound system supplier that he has worked with a lot at the high schools. Mr. Masi said this group sets up the sound systems for the Wixom concerts and has portable systems.

Chairman O'Rourke asked that this discussion be added to next month's agenda.

Commissioner Johnson said that we do not need anything extravagant for a sound system. Mr. Johnson said in addition to Paulson's being a great resource, Guitar Center has some great deals. Mr. Johnson said Guitar Center has package deals that a lot of bands utilize. Mr. Johnson said that they have a package deal where you can buy used or brand new. Mr. Johnson said, if you buy it used, Guitar Center will give you a warranty and you can save money. Mr. Johnson said you can purchase big subs through them, a mixing board, and a wireless microphone at a good deal. Mr. Johnson said we can get something as simple as a couple towers, that would be easy for us to set up. Mr. Johnson also explained that we can start with a little set-up and always add on depending on our needs.

Chairman O'Rourke said we will table this discussion to the next meeting and can look into doing a needs assessment on how many speakers we may need for our events. Mr. O'Rourke said one more item we can look into is the configuration of the podium and audience at events, such as the Tree Lighting. Mr. O'Rourke said, the last couple of

years, the audience seems to be at the tree and then b-lines to the fire department. Mr. O'Rourke suggested we may want to move the podium further into the parking lot facing the tree and that we can look into diagrams in the future. Mr. O'Rourke stated we would certainly want to get the Department of Public Work's thoughts on the matter and the feasibility of it as well.

Parks & Recreation Coordinator Hall thanked the commissioners for all their support with the Tree Lighting, as well as those that were able to come and volunteer at the event. Ms. Hall said that the event was a success and that the families and performers seemed happy. Ms. Hall said that there was an increase in attendees this year. Ms. Hall discussed some of the areas of improvement for next year, including a new PA system, as previously discussed by the commissioners, purchasing more cookies and water, investing in new hot cocoa heaters, adjusting the layout, and roping certain areas off.

Commissioner Johnson suggested having some sort of signage regarding making sure parents are supervising their children. Mr. Johnson said that he had children throwing things at him, as well as heckling some of the police and fire officers.

City Manager Whitt supported Commissioner Johnson's thoughts and stated he also witnessed children throwing items. Mr. Whitt explained that the administration will work towards addressing these issues for future events. Mr. Whitt also stated we lost Santa Claus for next year, as Mr. Schrader is no longer with the city and has started as the County Administrator/ Executive of Wyoming County, New York. Mr. Whitt said that if anyone knows of someone who may be interested in filling the role to please let us know.

Commissioner Adams concurred with Commissioner Johnson's thoughts. Commissioner Adams suggested that we add a handwashing or sanitation center to the cookies and hot cocoa station given the event takes place during flu season.

## 2. Market Place PowerPoint Presentation

Parks & Recreation Coordinator Hall said that at the conclusion of each market season, a survey is sent out to all vendors who participated. Ms. Hall explained that the survey is utilized to gather feedback to improve the market for future seasons. Ms. Hall said the survey closed on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, and that 24 responses were received. Ms. Hall said that she has prepared a PowerPoint presentation that goes over the feedback received, including charts and statistics, retention information, demographic information, and more. Ms. Hall said that she would like the commissioners to review the PowerPoint presentation and bring any questions, comments, concerns, or feedback they have to next month's meeting for discussion. Ms. Hall said any of these items may be emailed over as well.

## 3. 2024 Schedule of Regular Meetings

Parks & Recreation Coordinator Hall provided the 2024 Schedule of Regular Meetings to commissioners attending in-person and online. Ms. Hall said that the schedule was

approved, and the commissioners are welcome to reach out with any questions they may have.

4. 2024 Schedule of Events

Parks & Recreation Coordinator Hall went over the main event dates for 2024, including the following: the Spring Egg Hunt on March 30<sup>th</sup>, Opening Day of the Market Place Season on May 1<sup>st</sup>, Memorial Day Parade on May 27<sup>th</sup>, Walled Lake Fireworks sponsored by the Civic Fund on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, Last Day of the Market Season on October 30<sup>th</sup>, and the Tree Lighting on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Ms. Hall explained they are still finalizing the Summer Concert Series dates and performances, but they will take place June-August.

5. Spring Egg Hunt Preparation

Parks & Recreation Coordinator Hall said that they have begun the planning process and advertising for the Annual Spring Egg Hunt, that will take place on Saturday, March 30<sup>th</sup> from 11am-1pm. Ms. Hall said, once the flyer and ad are finalized, she will be sure to send them out and provide them at the following meeting. Ms. Hall said that they will be counting eggs and ordering candy early next month. Ms. Hall said they are working on securing the entertainment, including the magician, petting zoo, and pony rides. Ms. Hall said that the obstacle course inflatable has been ordered and that Harvest Kettle Corn, one of the Market Place vendors, will be on-site to provide warm popcorn. Ms. Hall said the tentative egg stuffing day will be on Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10am, the Saturday before the event.

Chairman O'Rourke asked what assistance we typically need from the commissioners the day of the event.

HR Director Sears said assistance is needed with the stuffing of the eggs. Mrs. Sears said that a few thousand eggs need to be stuffed on that Saturday before the event. Mrs. Sears said that on the day of the event, assistance is needed with roping off certain areas, spreading out the eggs throughout the park, and putting signage out. Mrs. Sears said an announcer will be needed to announce the start of the egg hunt. Mrs. Sears also mentioned that some of the commissioners could assist with monitoring the bounce house and other events taking place.

Commissioner Fernandes brought up that the last weekend of Spring Break for Walled Lake Schools is the same weekend the event is taking place.

HR Director Sears thanked Ms. Fernandes and said that information will be taken into consideration.

**P&R 01-02-24      ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

---

Kaylee Hall  
Recording Secretary

---

Dennis O'Rourke  
Chairman