



## Council Report City of Pataskala Parks Department Lenier Crawford, Parks Manager

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### ➤ New Items

#### • Easter Egg Hunt

- The Easter Egg Hunt was held by Impact City Church on March 23<sup>rd</sup> at Foundation Park.
  - There was a very large crowd for this event, despite the cold and windy conditions.
  - The event was very successful. The park grounds held up well with minimal damage.
  - The Parks department staff, including the seasonal workers, worked very hard in preparation of this event, leading to its success.

#### • Mowing

- Mowing operations at our seven parks will begin on March 27<sup>th</sup>.
  - This is the single most time-consuming aspect of the Parks Department's daily responsibilities during the mowing season.

#### • Freedom Park

- Damage
  - We contracted the grass repair work needed from the damage caused during the shelter rental on March 16<sup>th</sup>.
    - That contractor is charging the city \$1,200.
      - We have invoiced the shelter rental permit holder for that amount, due April 21, 2024.
  - The individual who took out the shelter rental permit will not be permitted to do so at any of our parks in the future.

- **Recreational Program**

- Soccer Program
  - Soccer season is here, and the department is working diligently to ensure that the fields are ready for use.
- Municipal Pool
  - Preparations for the upcoming pool season are underway.
  - Lifeguard training and concession stand training programs have already begun.
  - We have a contractor coming out to verify the location of our underground lines at the pool in anticipation of installation of the shade structure for the baby pool area.

➤ **Ongoing Items**

- **Foundation Park**

- The Parks Department will continue to maintain the walking trails during the winter season.
- Soccer Field Maintenance
  - Several areas of the soccer fields have been identified as needing dressed with top soil.
    - Parks staff members have been working on getting the athletic fields ready for the upcoming soccer season beginning at the end of March.
    - Many fields have been set up for practices and games at Foundation Park. All fields at Foundation Park, Volunteer Park, Municipal and Citizens will be laid out no later than March 20<sup>th</sup> in preparation for the season.
    - We will be using Licking Heights Middle School as an alternative site for practices.
- Ball diamond maintenance.
  - Parks staff has installed 23 yards of infield mix as of 3/12/24 on diamond 3. We have ordered another truck.
    - This work will be finished once we spread the 60 tons of infield mix currently on order. This amount of infield mix is needed to achieve proper grading and to accommodate the longer baselines.
  - We anticipate adding drainage pipe on diamond 2 and 3 along the first and third base lines during the winter season once the

ground is frozen to minimize damage to the area during pipe installation.

- If this project doesn't occur prior to the season we plan to complete this work late in the year 2024.

- **Municipal Park**

- A message board will be installed near the trail at Municipal Park to be used for community park announcements.
- In late March, we will add infield mix to this diamond ball as a part of our routine maintenance efforts.

- **Karr Park**

- We will be cutting back the overgrowth along the tree lines at Karr Park during the winter season.
- The Licking County Soil and Water team have chosen our park for the stream team. The stream team course is being held on April 2nd on site. The stream team is a Volunteer Citizen Science Stream Monitoring program that the LCSWCD administers.
  - The training focusses on macroinvertebrates, habitat, and chemical parameters. Karr Park has easy stream access, in a relatively unstudied watershed (Muddy Fork). We are very excited to host this event.

- **Citizens Park**

- The parks department has surveyed this property and started laying out the areas where a split-rail fence will be installed.
  - The Faith Ann entrance that connects the woods to the Northwest Corner of the park will be included with this small project.
    - We will be using most of our split rail fence stockpile at Freedom Park. Once that project is complete, we will move on to this project at Citizens Park.

- **Volunteer Park**

- We will begin routine maintenance on the ball diamonds in the upcoming weeks in preparation of the LHYA season starting mid-March.
  - Ball diamond mix is required on the east field and will be scheduled.

- **Freedom Park**

- The Freedom Park Improvements Project (walking path project) is a joint venture with the Licking County Parks District. The Parks Department will use the available funds in this year's budget cycle to cover the cost of the project up front. Once the project is complete, we will receive \$25,000 from the Licking County Parks District.
  - The walking path project is nearly complete as of 3/4/2023. The construction of the walking path has gone very well, and the contractor (Petty Farms) has been great to work with.
    - The walking path is currently open for use; however, the project is not yet complete. Due to wet weather, the dirt work to dress up the construction area has been delayed. We anticipate the project to be completed no later than the end of April.
- Basketball Court
  - Law General Contracting is working to get us on their schedule. They believe that they can have this project completed by the end of April.
- Damage
  - We contracted the grass repair work needed from the damage caused during the shelter rental on March 16<sup>th</sup>.
    - That contractor is charging the city \$1,200.
      - We have invoiced the shelter rental permit holder for that amount, due April 21, 2024.
  - The individual who took out the shelter rental permit will not be permitted to do so at any of our parks in the future.

- **Liberty Park**

- Playground/woods
  - Parks staff is planning to cut trees down past the bridge to establish a safe trail around the pond.
    - This is expected to occur in the off-season once seasonals begin working.

- **Park Manager Updates**

- Soccer Program
  - Soccer season is here, and the department is working diligently to ensure that the fields are ready for use.

- As of 3/10/2024 we have 756 total registrations.
    - The soccer program is very successful and continues to grow every year.
- Municipal Pool
  - Preparations for the upcoming pool season are underway.
  - Lifeguard training and concession stand training programs have already begun.
  - We have a contractor coming out to verify the location of our underground lines at the pool in anticipation of installation of the shade structure for the baby pool area.
- Staffing
  - Aquatics
    - Interviews have started. We will have employees completing the onboard process throughout the months of March and April.
- Employee certifications
  - The parks manager will be obtaining a renewal of license to operate the pool facility this season.
  - Several returning aquatic employees will be taking the course to become an Aquatic Facility Operator with the Parks Manager to ensure that we have more than one staff member that is qualified to run the operation.
  - The parks manager will be renewing his Certified Parks and Recreation Professional Certification prior to September. This is a two-year certificate period.
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    - The event was very successful. The park grounds held up well with minimal damage.
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- Mowing
  - Mowing operations at our seven parks will begin on March 27<sup>th</sup>.
    - This is the single most time-consuming aspect of the Parks Department's daily responsibilities during the mowing season.

Respectfully submitted,

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