



Portage Parks Foundation Board Meeting Minutes
January 14, 2026

Portage Parks Foundation Board Present: Pete Strazdas, Jason Kamrath, Steve Meier, Chris Pollack, Lora Seifert, Shannon Myers, Chris Fusciardi, Jeff Ruhland

Board Absent (excused): Patti Lent

Board Absent (unexcused): N/A

Guests: Ms. Kathleen Hoyle – Director of Portage Parks & Recreation & Senior Center
 Ms. Tara Gish – Chairperson for Portage Parks Board

Meeting started and roll conducted at 5:32 pm.

I. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion to approve corrected version of November 12, 2025 minutes by Ms. Seifert and second by Mr. Ruhland. Unanimous vote to update and approve.

II. 2026 MEETING CALENDAR

Tentative Meeting Dates: **Jan 14th, Mar 11th, May 13th, July 8th, Sept 9th, Nov 11th**

III. ADDITIONAL / SPECIAL BOARD MEETINGS

N/A

IV. FINANCIAL UPDATE – Mr. Fusciardi

a. Income/Expense Budget Statement

10/31/2025 Bank Statement Balance		\$	176,057.73		
				Total Donations Received in Period:	
Donations	General Fund		\$244.53	\$	11,190.56
Donations	Leaf-A-Legacy		\$10,946.03		
Expenses	Oktoberfest		(\$648.75)		
Expenses	General Fund		(\$99.90)		
Expenses	JAS Inspirational Garden		(\$80,000.00)		
Interest Income	General Fund		\$70.29		
Fund Transfer	JAS Inspirational Garden		\$1,272.89		
Fund Transfer	General Fund		(\$1,921.64)		
Fund Transfer	Oktoberfest		\$648.75		
10/31/2025 Bank Statement Balance			\$106,569.93		
12/31/2025 PayPal Balance			\$0.00		
12/31/2025 Total Cash Position			\$106,569.93		



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b. *Project Fund Balances*

	Fund Balance @ November Meeting		Fund Balance @ January Meeting
ADA Swing	\$ 25.00	\$	25.00
Scholarship Donations	\$ 1,960.00	\$	1,960.00
Bike Trail Stations	\$ -	\$	-
Trail Endowment Fund	\$ 2,464.00	\$	2,464.00
General Fund	\$ 46,890.28	\$	45,183.56
Oktoberfest	\$ 2,000.00	\$	2,000.00
JAS Inspirational Garden	\$ 79,469.40	\$	742.29
Leaf-A-Legacy	\$ 43,249.05	\$	54,195.08
Special Projects	\$ -	\$	-
Total Balance	\$ 176,057.73	\$	106,569.93

V. COMMUNICATION UPDATE

- a. *Website Corrections & Updates*
 - Website updated to reflect current board members and future meeting dates.
- b. *Emails & Responses – No new activity*
- c. *LARA & IRS Form 1024 Status – Mr. Fuscuardi & Ms. Myers*
 - LARA filing by October 1, 2025 – **Filed on time**
 - IRS 990N filing by November 15, 2025 – **Filed on time**
(2025 submission will require filing a 990-EZ form)

VI. PROJECTS/PROGRAMS UPDATE

- a. *Bike Repair Station – 5 locations determined*
 - Eliason Nature Reserve Trail – **STATUS: Not complete**
 - Celery Flats – **completed and operational**
 - Lakeview Park – **STATUS: Complete.**
 - Fund approval granted in May 2025 meeting
 - Bicentennial Park at Portage Creek – **STATUS: Not scheduled**
 - Bicentennial Trail Head at Kilgore Rd. – **STATUS: Not scheduled**
- b. *Trail Endowment Fund – Funds transfer - STATUS: No new activity*
- c. *Scholarship Program - STATUS: No new activity*
- d. *ADA Swing – STATUS: No new activity*
- e. *Judy Acker-Smith Inspirational Garden – Goal of \$150k reached.*
 - i. **STATUS: Completed**
 - ii. Balance of funds (\$742.29) to be used for maintenance.



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VII. NEXT STEPS & ADJOURNMENT

a. FUNDRAISING EVENTS UPDATE

Corporate Sponsor(s) by Park Location: Ms. Hoyle

- Corporate Sponsor(s) by park location – an etched glass plaque of the corporate sponsor was under discussion. More discussion to progress regarding ideas, costs. Labor vs. Monetary Donation (\$1k, \$5k or \$10k sponsorship amounts). Twenty (20) parks in total. Mr. Kamrath requested a DRAFT of the Corporate Sponsorship guidelines from Ms. Hoyle for potential corporate park location sponsors opportunities. **STATUS: Not discussed**

Annual Portage Parks Membership: Ms. Hoyle

- Portage Parks Annual Membership – discussion pertained to the Portage Senior Center membership and their success. Ms. Hoyle will provide the 5 different levels that can potentially be added to the website. **STATUS: Not discussed**

Leaf-A-Legacy Committee: Ms. Hoyle & Mr. Strazdas

- The Leaf-A-Legacy program will wrap up May 7, 2026
- Dedication to take place at the hayloft in Celery Flats on May 7.
- A plaque with doner names to be located near the hayloft.
- Mr. Pollack and Mr. Ruhland to determine status of donation letters with Mr. Meier, since his departure from the board in November.
- Ms. Hoyle to provide date when \$50K from foundation can be provided to Portage.

Oktoberfest Annual Fundraiser (tentative September 26, 2026 – 2pm to 7 pm):

- September 19, 2026 will not work with the Parks Dept schedule. September 26 is the next best alternative. Mr. Ruhland to check to see if the band can be rescheduled for the 26th. Date to be established outside of Foundation meeting such that Ms. Hoyle can publish the date.
- Sub-committee meetings will be required to divide up tasks
- Requested location: South Westnedge Park Pavilion.



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Summer Concert Fundraising – Mr. Kamrath

- Ms. Hoyle shared a draft of the band lineup and dates. Dates are: June 4, June 11, July 9, July 23, August 27.
- Consensus of Foundation members is that this fundraising effort will continue for all 2026 concerts.

Miscellaneous

- Ms. Hoyle suggested there may be an opportunity for beverage sales at Friday on the Flats. Ms. Hoyle to update in subsequent meeting(s). The Foundation board has yet to commit to this fundraising opportunity.

MISCELLANEOUS ACTIONS

General Fund: Ms. Hoyle & Mr. Strazdas

STATUS: Not discussed in meeting

- Mr. Strazdas requested an updated list of 2026 Parks Board projects from Ms. Hoyle that can be funded by the General fund, such that one check can be written to cover all. Previously identified items up for consideration are:
 - Picnic in the park - \$750 (Annually)
 - Mr. Crispy Give Away - \$500
 - Garlic Mustard Pull - \$400 (Annually)
 - Park Passport/Walking Stick - \$1,200
 - Free Lending Library - \$500

Historical Markers: Ms. Hoyle

- Potential for Historical Markers throughout the Portage Parks System **STATUS: Not discussed in meeting**
 - Two Locations identified: Austin Lake Tavern & Lathrop Hotel (approximately \$30K-\$50K each)
 - Sponsors needed
 - 12 site locations determined, w/ possibility of 15 total.



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West Lake Outlook Renovation: Ms. Hoyle and Mr. Strazdas

STATUS: Not discussed in meeting

- A \$50K grant opportunity exists toward renovating West Lake Outlook (replacement of damaged awning)
- Ms. Hoyle to submit application along with support letter provided by Mr. Strazdas

The Meeting adjourned at 6:08 PM. Motion to adjourn by Mr. Strazdas

Next Meeting: March 11, 2026 at 5:30 pm at 320 Library Lane Conference Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chris Pollack, Portage Parks Foundation Board Secretary