



Portage Parks Foundation Board Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2025

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

Board Absent (excused): Jeff Ruhland

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 5:31 pm.

I. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion to approve September 24, 2025 minutes by Mr. Kamrath and second by Ms. Seifert
Unanimous vote to 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 (as of October 31, 2025 statement)*

- Huntington Account Balance - \$176,057.73
- PayPal - \$0
- Donations Received - \$9,911.60

b. *Project Fund Balances*

1. ADA Swing - \$25
2. Scholarship Program - \$1,960
3. Bike Repair Stations - \$0
4. Trail Endowment - \$2,464
5. General Fund – \$46,890.28



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6. Oktoberfest Fundraiser - \$2,000.00
7. Inspirational Garden (Judy Acker-Smith) - \$79,469.40
8. Leaf-A-Legacy Tree Program - \$43,249.05
9. Special Projects - \$0

V. COMMUNICATION UPDATE

- a. *Website Corrections & Updates*
 - Leaf-A-Legacy prompt is now on home page of website.
 - Ms. Myers raised question regarding interest in posting IRS documentation on website. Ms. Lent to review other similar websites for relevant content and will update in January 2026 meeting.
- b. *Emails & Responses* – No new activity
- c. *LARA & IRS Form 1024 Status* – Mr. Fusciardi & Ms. Myers
 - LARA filing by October 1, 2025 – **Completed**
 - IRS 990N filing by November 15, 2025 – **On track for submission** (2025 submission will require filing a 990-EZ form)

VI. PROJECTS/PROGRAMS UPDATE

- a. *Bike Repair Station* – 5 locations determined
 - Eliason Nature Reserve Trail – completed and operational
 - Celery Flats – completed and operational
 - Lakeview Park – **STATUS: No update.**
 - 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**



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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: No change**

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: No change**

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

- One final communication for public donations was requested in the November Portager.
- The Leaf-A-Legacy program will wrap up May 7, 2026
- Additional recognition for donors will be discussed in 2026 meetings.

Oktoberfest Annual Fundraiser (September 19, 2026 – 2pm to 7 pm): Mr. Meier

- Tentative date of September 19, 2026 established. Mr. Meier to communicate date to Ms. Hoyle and Ms. Dunn via email to ensure there are no other Parks conflicts
- Requested location: South Westnedge Park Pavilion.



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Judy Acker-Smith Inspirational Garden: Ms. Hoyle & Ms. Myer

- Fundraising complete and \$80,000 check written to the city at the conclusion of November Foundation meeting (motion by Mr. Pollack, second by Mr. Meier). Ms. Myers and Mr. Fusciardi to review and discuss fund balance immediately after the November meeting. Any remaining funds to be used for minor landscaping or maintenance activities at site.

Summer Concert Fundraising – Mr. Kamrath

- Six (6) events are being planned for 2026. Ms. Hoyle will advise.
- 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 at the Flats. Ms. Hoyle to update in subsequent meeting(s). The Board will then assess whether fundraising via beverage sales is an option.

MISCELLANEOUS ACTIONS

General Fund: Ms. Hoyle & Mr. Strazdas

STATUS: No change

- 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



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Historical Markers: Ms. Hoyle

- Potential for Historical Markers throughout the Portage Parks System

STATUS: No change

- Two Locations identified: Austin Lake Tavern & Lathrop Hotel (approximately \$30K-\$50K each)
- Sponsors needed
- 12 site locations determined, w/ possibility of 15 total.

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

STATUS: No change

- 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

Board Foundation Changes

- On October 1, Steve Meier submitted his letter of resignation to the Foundation board. The board accepted Mr. Meier's resignation with a motion from Mr. Fusciardi and second by Ms. Seifert. THANK YOU STEVE FOR ALL YOUR DEDICATION AND WORK.
- Mr. Ruhland will be picking up checks from the Parks building and Mr. Pollack will replace Mr. Meier on the Huntington Bank account. Mr. Pollack to meet Mr. Strazdas (along with a copy of the latest meeting minutes) at Huntington Bank to update the account personnel changes.

The Meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM. Motion to adjourn by Mr. Strazdas

Next Meeting: January 14, 2026 at 5:30 pm at 320 Library Lane Conference Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chris Pollack, Portage Parks Foundation Board Secretary