

**Kankakee Valley Park District**  
**Blue Ribbon Committee**  
**June 26, 2017**

The Blue Ribbon Committee was called to order at 7:04pm by President Hollis. Those present for roll call were Commissioner B. Spriggs, D. Tucker, M. Mullady, and D. Skelly. Staff present: Dayna Heitz, Rick Collins, Melissa Woodard, Attorney John Coghlan.

Blue Ribbon Committee present: Norman Grimley & Steve Hunter

**Blue Ribbon Committee**

Thanks for coming. Wanted to give you an update. You put a lot into the Blue Ribbon Panel. Went through what your suggestions were. We have followed quite a few of them. Haven't been able to do some. The needs assessments are under way for the parks now. It started out as the trees. Have had lots of calls about trees. Then went over to the playgrounds and realized we needed mulch, repairs, edging etc.

Steve asked where we get the mulch? Director Heitz said from Rainbow Farms. It's a very specific type of playground mulch that we receive certification papers and those in turn are given to our risk management. We must meet the playground safety standards.

Been keeping up with the mowing but the rain sometimes sets it back. When they came back from layoffs we are down 3 full time maintenance guys. Washington Park has been addressed. The mounds of dirt are in the process of being moved. Commissioner Tucker said it was good to see the activity. The journal was there too. Commissioner Hollis goes by there every day. Slowly sees the improvement. Nice when the community can see the improvements. Listening to someone or doing the small things they ask, it might be small to us but to them it's huge.

Steve asked which things we suggested are you doing? We did talk about contracting the landscaping. There are only 2 we haven't gotten to. The preventative maintenance and foster groups to adopt a park.

You heard what's going on in Splash Valley. Did do a needs assessment. No one really came to the meetings so most of our suggestions came from survey online.

We haven't done board training. There is more administratively that we haven't done than we have. Financially we have done everything.

Norman asked are you working on a plan B in case you can't bond? Director Heitz said she got notice about what's going on down in Springfield. We have gone in and cut almost every expense that we thought wasn't necessary. Work force and benefits was the biggest cut. The tax dollars that we receive do not cover our expenses.

Steve asked about internships? We did look for unpaid interns. All want to be paid now. Could they get credit hours for their school? Norman said it would be free labor and good for our youth.

What about community services hours for the high schools? The high schools are now going to mandatory service hours. Reach out to Kankakee County Cultivators.

Norman asked how the metro bus is working for the District? Might want to check in with them. They set up programs or charities and do some things for the community. They get federal money and do have some to use in the community. Maybe we could work together.

Steve said the local banks are supposed to kick back some money to local groups. Community reinvestment act.

Norman said to go talk to Aqua and see if there are things they want to sponsor.

Nucor steel has a lot of money too. Go out there and make your pitch.

You have had some bad press. Forget what's in the past, only thinking about the future now. Progressing and thinking ahead. You are doing everything humanly possible to make this better for the community.

Commissioner Tucker said you are here and want to help us. Because of the bad stuff, people aren't receptive to hearing from us. Norman said he would go with us if he thinks he can help us.

Steve asked if we could meet in September or October.

## **ADJOURN MEETING**

7:30pm

Respectfully submitted: Melissa Woodard