

Mayor David L. Koontz

Parks & Cemetery Board Memorandum

To: Karla R. Richards, Clerk of Council
From: Paula Fisher, Interim Boards & Commissions Secretary
Date: 10/8/09
Re: Approved/Signed Parks & Cemetery Board Minutes September 10, 2009

Attached you will find a copy of the approved/signed minutes from the Park & Cemetery Board meeting held on Thursday, September 10, 2009

Please note that the original document has been forwarded to, and will be on file with the Clerk of Council for the official record.

E-Mail: Mayor (per Admin. Asst.)
Administrative Officer
Finance Director
Office Manager
Law Director
Director of Planning & Community Development
Superintendent of Building & Zoning
Building & Zoning Inspector
Municipal Engineer
Council (6)
Parks & Recreation Board (5)

CC: Parks Crew Leader
Tom Jones (Council)
PRB File/Posting
William Mowery

**PARK & CEMETERY BOARD
CITY OF NORTON**

Thursday, September 10, 2009

The Park and Cemetery Board of the City of Norton, Ohio, convened for a public meeting in Council Chambers of the Safety Administration Building. Chairperson Neva Gibson called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

ATTENDANCE:

PRESENT: Neva Gibson, Pam Dixon, Scott Testa, Lisa Merrick
ABSENT: John Conklin
ALSO PRESENT: Ruth Stimac

I. OLD BUSINESS:

Chairperson Gibson asked Ms. Merrick about the update on the Cemetery. Ms. Merrick stated that she had outlined all the work that has been done at Western Star Cemetery. (See Attached). Ms. Merrick stated that she has a copy of the letter that she sent to the Barberton Herald as a rebuttal to the letter about the Norton Center Cemetery. (See Attached). Ms. Merrick gave a news article about the Shade Tree Commission in Wadsworth. (See Attached).

II. NEW BUSINESS:

Chairperson Gibson called on Ruth Stimac to talk about the soccer fields. Ms. Stimac stated that she was waiting for the update from John Conklin about having the use of the baseball fields so we can take the backstops down at Loyal Oak for the soccer groups. Mr. Testa questioned if we have gotten any information about Trinity Broadcasting fields. Ms. Gibson stated that she had Ms. Fisher talk to the Community Planning Director to see if Jeff Pritchard had talked to him about it. Ms. Fisher stated she talked directly to Jeff Pritchard and he stated he had never had a chance to go down to Trinity Broadcasting to talk to them however now Mr. Conklin and Mr. Ryland may want to go down and talk to Trinity.

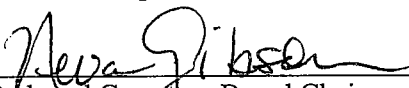
There was discussion since Norton Mayor's Court on Thursdays, that the meetings have to find a new date to have the Board meetings. We are looking at either the first or third Wednesdays of the month. Ms. Fisher is going to check the calendar to see what would be a good date.

III. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:

The Board reviewed the minutes of Thursday, August 13, 2009. Chairperson Gibson called for a motion to approve the minutes. **Mr. Testa moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Ms. Dixon seconded the motion. ROLL CALL: Mr. Testa-Yes, Ms. Dixon - Yes, Ms. Gibson - Yes, Ms. Merrick - Yes. The motion passed 4-0, approving the minutes. Minutes were signed and processed accordingly.**

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Gibson stated the next meeting is not yet scheduled. With no further business coming before the Board, Chairperson Gibson adjourned the meeting at 6:00 p.m.



Park and Cemetery Board Chairperson
Or Vice-Chairperson



Park & Cemetery Board Vice-Chairperson
or Member

10-7-09
Date:

**CITY OF NORTON, OHIO
PARK AND CEMETERY BOARD**

GUEST ATTENDANCE RECORD

The following were present at the Meeting of the Park and Cemetery Board,

Held on: **Thursday, September 10, 2009**

NAME:

ADDRESS:

Ruth Stimac 2682 Dal Dr Norton

Stenographer

Western Star Cemetery update by Lisa Merrick, September 2009

- 1. Stone marker placed for Helene Warner and the cremains of Constance Louise Winkler**
- 2. Plot purchases #88, C&D for Robert and Betty Reitz**
- 3. Bench donation by Tom Dayton, repairs made by Archer Merrick**
- 4. Five headstones returned and placed by Summit Memorials, took six more back with them to their shop.**
- 5. Kiwanis of Norton made a donation towards the flagpole and the solar powered flagpole light.**
- 6. Ordered and received the flagpole from George "Poggy" Dudo or Richfield, OH. He also donated a polyester flag of better quality than the one that came with the flagpole.**
- 7. City workers placed the William Lampson marker. While at the cemetery, I spoke with Vern Tenny about the placement of the new bench and the flagpole. We agreed on a central location in the center of the old section. This is aesthetic as well as making it easier for maintenance.**
- 8. City workers cleared trees and brush on the south side of the fence**
- 9. Sent a letter of response to the Barberton Herald regarding the condition of the Norton Center Cemetery.**
- 10. Plaque purchased to honor the contribution from the Kiwanis Club of Norton. Plaque is mounted on the new bench.**

September 3, 2009

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing this letter in response to one of the articles printed in the *Views Line* in the *Barberton Herald*. This article was printed in the July 30th edition and was entitled, "Honor the Dead".

To the person who wrote the letter about the *Norton Center Cemetery*. You are more than welcome to come to the *Norton Parks and Cemetery Board* meeting held once a month at 5:00 in the Norton Administration building. Please feel free to present your ideas about how you would like to maintain and clean-up this cemetery.

Yes, some of the stones are falling over. That is because of the freezing and thawing that happens every winter. As I walk through the cemetery, I see very few sunken graves. At the time that these burials were done, there were no concrete vaults and there will be some sinking. There is one big hole in the center of the cemetery and that is where a bush was taken out.

I have almost single handedly taken on the entire project to resurrect the *Western Star Cemetery* on Medina Line Rd. This included asking individuals and groups for their help. I was able to acquire new trees, repair and reset headstones, filled low spots with topsoil, acquire new benches, a Revolutionary War marker and a new flagpole.

Instead of pointing out what needs to be done, why not make a positive step for your community and donate some of your time just as I have done.

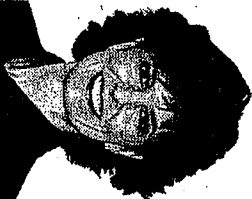
Lisa A. Merrick

Honor the dead

Have any of the Norton city officials been by the old cemetery behind the village shopping center recently? The city officials and residents should be ashamed of themselves! The cemetery goes back to about 1800. It's a mess! The grass is cut. But most of the headstones are toppled over,

and graves are caving in. You have kids who have to do community service work for graduation. You have people who have do community service work through the courts. Where are the scout troops that are looking for community service projects? Get these people together, and do something about this wonderful old cemetery.

A moment with the mayor...



Robin Laubaugh
Wadsworth Mayor

Shade Tree Commission

Since the city receives many calls about the trees on tree lawns, I thought I'd tell you a little about our Shade Tree Commission. We are fortunate to have this commis-

sion, which was established in 1959, and by ordinance definition, has the power to plan and recommend whatever is necessary for the planting, trimming and removal of trees and shrubs in public ways. The commission is made up of a combination of city and Council representatives and Wadsworth residents. Of special mention are Merv Snider, who served the commission for 21 years, and Walt Wend-schuh, who served for 30 years.

Although the Shade Tree Commission makes decisions on what types of trees to plant in the tree lawns, after a tree has been planted, it is the individual homeowner's responsibility to care for the tree. Many homeowners do not realize that: When a new tree is planted by the city's Parks Department, each home is given an information sheet on tree care. However, once a home changes ownership, the information does not always get passed on. Watering, fertilizing and pruning the trees is part of the individual's property maintenance, just like other trees, shrubs and

flowers on the property.

The Shade Tree Commission recommends watering trees from April through mid-November (or until the ground freezes). A significant number of trees do not survive each year due to lack of water. All young trees, fewer than four years old, require a minimum of five to eight gallons of water per week. The water should be added over a 30- to 45-minute period. This slow application allows the water to soak deeply into the ground where the tree roots are located, rather than running off horizontally into the surrounding area. Remember, when water bans are imposed, it does not apply to trees, shrubs, gardens and flowers - only to lawns.

Over-mulching is another reason trees do not survive. It is recommended that no more than two inches of mulch be placed around the base of a tree and, if possible, don't let the mulch come into contact with the tree trunk. Many homeowners and landscapers place a significant amount of mulch around trees, which can result in

the death of a tree due to several reasons. As the mulch decays, fungal strands form to generate a barrier that blocks water from passing through the mulch and into the soil below. Additionally, roots may try to grow into the mulch to seek moisture; and during periods of prolonged wet weather, the bark can decay under the mulch, leaving the trunk exposed to disease. All of these potential problems can result in the tree's death.

In addition to homeowners, our Parks Department and the Shade Tree Commission, the Kiwanis Club members volunteer their time to help remove low branches and suckers on trees in specific areas of the city identified by the Commission. This action eliminates a safety hazard (low-lying branches) to residents, as well as an energy drain on the trees. With so many trees to care for, the Commission is very appreciative of the Kiwanis' help.

I thank our residents, the Parks Department, the Shade Tree Commission and the Kiwanis Club for their help in caring for trees. Together, we can uphold our designation as a "Tree City, USA."

Until next week...

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Outline of information gathering from Wadsworth Tree City

As requested by Chairperson, Neva Gibson, I was in contact with people in the City of Wadsworth about the tree city designation.

On May 4th I met with and talked at length with Sueanne Cummings who is a member of the tree city board in Wadsworth. Sueanne Cummings, 469 Crestwood, Wadsworth, OH 44281, (330) 336-3390

Her first and most definite suggestion was to get into contact with Alan Siewert, who is the urban forester for N.E. Ohio. He will give a free presentation and will essentially explain everything that we would need to know. His phone number is (440) 632-5299 and he can be reached at alan.siewert@dnr.state.oh.us.

Sueanne gave me an account of what Wadsworth started in the past and where they are now. Here is a brief description

*starting in 1960, builders in the city paid, 10 cents for a linear frontage foot. This money was held in escrow and as the money accrued, the trees would be purchased.

*Today, the money that the builders pay could be in the ballpark of \$5.00 per linear foot.

*Trees are planted in the tree lawn. This is also where the gas and electric lines are laid. Also, overhead may be power-lines. Homeowners are expected, not, required to water new trees as they are planted. This has become somewhat of a problem with maintenance.

My impression is that there is a mountainous amount of paperwork involved with this project every year and that all planted trees and work with the trees IE; trimming, fertilizing etc .must be continually documented.

I have made copies of the information that she passed on to me. She has attended workshops that were paid for by the City of Wadsworth. Apparently, there are four workshops for people interested in being a part of the tree city designation.

Outline of the progress @ Western Star and other cemeteries

Western Star

*Been in contact with a local Boy Scout troop to erect the fallen headstones, do repairs and clear the corners of leaves by the fence. The city has paid for headstone cement to fix broken headstones. Summit Memorials will come out to help us in our efforts and show us how to use the product, free of charge.

*A Veterans group is interested in locating all of the veterans of the War of 1812. They may be interested in installing markers for many that are missing. On June 6th, I met with Judy Davis of OGS and we identified the burial sites of the veterans of the War of 1812. One was missing a headstone, but we managed to conclude where the burial was.

*Parking for the memorial event planned for the spring of 2010 has been secured by the gentleman across from the cemetery. He has graciously provided his front field for parking! The Norton PD has also been notified for traffic control when needed.

*Two articles appeared concerning the clean-up and needed repairs to Western Star Cemetery and the Johnson Corners Cemetery. See attached articles from the Beacon Journal on June 2nd, 2009 and The Norton Post, May 31, 2009