

Recreation Committee Minutes

Honorable Council
City of Newark, Ohio
April 2, 2024

There was a meeting of the Recreation Committee on Monday April 1, 2024. These members were present:

Colton Rine, Chair
Beth Bline
Dustin Neely

1. **Resolution No. 24-30** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO TO PROCEED WITH THE STEPS NECESSARY TO RENAME TOWNE COMMONS PARK AKA FRONT STREET PARK AKA EASY STREET PARK, PARCEL NO. 054-258866-00.000 AS HOPE PARK.

Chance Patznick, Cemetery/Parks Superintendent – Thank you. This has been a long time coming. I was approached almost a year ago, I think by Beth about this, and I've asked her and Shelby, who isn't here to speak on this, if you would give us a little background.

Ms. Bline – Yes. It was soon after the election I was contacted by a resident that said the park was overflowing with garbage and there was a lot of inappropriate behaviors there. So, we started gathering volunteers, and to this point, I believe up to 40 have given their time and even out of their own pocket to help restore this park. So, in noting that they wanted to be a place where people would go to enjoy with their kids, and there's no name. And so the young lady, most notably, Shelby Hopkins said, "How about Hope Park?".

Ms. Patznick - This park does not have a sign currently, and it goes by I want to say 3 different names at this point. We've called it Town Commons Park, we've called it Front St. Park, we've called it Easy Park. So, we're just excited now that it's gone through the Citizens Advisory on Council for Recreation, to give it an official name and give it an official sign.

Mr. Rine – I know it as Front St. Park. If you look at Google, I think it has it as Easy St., I don't know who put it on Google.

Ms. Patznick – It might be Town Commons I just checked. Like I said, it has gone by 3 different names, so we're excited to finally nail down one name hopefully.

Mr. Rine – Yeah, like when Beth and I met up to clean, she said the park name, and I was like, "What is that?". I had to do my research. Questions from Council?

Mr. Neely – You said it went through the Citizens Advisory Council? Was there any negative feedback or any opposition?

Ms. Patznick – There wasn't, and one thing that we did to make sure that we didn't get any negative feedback on this was to reach out to Barbara Gilkes the grant writer for the

city to look at the background of the park to see if there's any reasoning for the name Town Commons. We reached out to the Licking County Historical Society and nobody found any significance to the name Town Commons, Front St., or Easy St. Park.

Mr. Rine – Questions from the audience?

Mr. Marmie – I want to thank you, Chance, for coming forward, also to make folks aware on Council legally there is an ordinance out there that this name change can come straight to Council and not go through Committee, but with trying to be transparent, and like you said, does anybody object or anything, I thought that it would be best that it ran through the Committee. I think we are going to try to clean up that ordinance that allows things to come straight from the Recreation Committee to Council because that contradicts our rules of Council. Meaning that it either comes through Committee or Rule 11 as in the 2 ways that it gets on Council agenda. So, we're going to work on that, but Chance said there was no reason to try to push it through, so she graciously accepted to just come to Committee, have it go through Committee, and really appreciate that, and thought it was a good gesture as far as letting folks talk about it or ask questions if they have them. So, thank you.

Motion by Ms. Bline, Second by Mr. Neely, Motion passed 3-0

Meeting stands adjourned

Colton Rine, Chair