



# Board of Park Commissioners Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 9, 2020

3:00 – 5:00 P.M.

<https://youtu.be/M48RbDWJEHg>

<b>Members Present:</b> Eddie Fahnestock, Alejo Cabral, Troy Palmer, Hoyt Hillman, Tori Deatherage, Dale Goter, Ty Tabing
<b>Members Absent:</b> Troy Houtman (Director, Park & Recreation)
<b>City Staff:</b> Elizabeth Harlenske (Assistant City Attorney), Penny Garding (Clerk), Reggie Davidson, Troy Hendricks, Gentry Thiesen, Emma Li-Wormington, David McGuire

<u>Item</u>	<u>Description</u>
	<p><b>Call to Order</b> Eddie Fahnestock, President, called the meeting to order at approximately 3:00 p.m.</p>
	<p><b>Announcements:</b> There were no Announcements</p>
	<p><b>Public Comments:</b> There was no Public Comment</p>
1	<p><b>Approve Minutes</b> Recommended Action: Approve, sign and file minutes of the October 12, 2020, Board of Park Commissioners Regular Meeting. <b>Motion by Palmer, second by Deatherage, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to approve, sign and file the minutes of the October 12, 2020, Board of Park Commissioners Regular Meeting (6-0-1).</b></p>
	<p><b>Officer Elections</b> Fahnestock stated he would be happy to chair this board again for another term. Deatherage expressed agreement. Palmer stated he would like to see Cabral chair too. Fahnestock stated he had spoken to Cabral and would like to move him into the Second Vice President position. With Ramsey being gone, would like to move Deatherage into the First Vice President position. <b>Motion by Palmer, second by Hillman, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to accept the slate of officers presented to the Board: President: Fahnestock; First Vice President: Deatherage; Second Vice President: Cabral. (7-0)</b></p>
2	<p><b>New Items for Consideration:</b> No New Items for Consideration</p>
3A	<p><b>Park Board Retreat</b> Fahnestock stated we need to set a date and time to go over what the future of this board looks like. We want to focus on forward-thinking ideas and what we can do moving forward as opposed a recap like we do every month. Palmer asked if it would be a four hour thing again. Fahnestock responded it shouldn't be that long unless there is something that needs to be discussed for that long. The only difference between a retreat and a normal Park Board meeting is what we want to see in the coming year(s) as opposed to a monthly update. It was agreed that Wednesday, December 9, 3:00 p.m. would be the Park Board 2020 Retreat Meeting. The meeting will be held virtually on Microsoft Teams. Garding will get the meeting set up and sent out to all board members.</p>

	<p>Goter inquired if the Retreat is a public meeting where people are invited to participate and watch. Fahnestock deferred to Davidson for a response. Davidson stated there is not a rule that others could not attend if they so choose. Tabing stated before it was not open to the public. It is strategic planning for the coming year. It is better to do in private and report at the monthly meeting afterwards. Palmer stated he is not aware of any previous retreat having public involved. Goter suggested clarification since it seems to be in conflict with the open meetings act. Harlenske will research and report back to the Board.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p><b>Recreation Update (Reggie Davidson)</b>  Davidson shared October Recreation Highlights.</p> <p><u>Athletics</u>  We had quite a few tournaments at South Lakes this month to close out the year. During the weekend of October 23-25 we had over 110 team participating and games were spread across three complexes. It was a chilly weekend and we sold over 1,100 cups of hot chocolate.  One of our annual slow pitch tournaments was held the weekend of October 17 with 11 teams participating.  Fall slow pitch leagues ended in late October. Two leagues continued through to the first week of November. We had 57 teams across seven leagues.</p> <p><u>Evergreen Recreation Center</u>  We previously mentioned a partnership with University of Kansas School of Medicine and offered Operation Immunization day on October 17. Over 400 people came in and got their flu shot.  The Evergreen gym was rented out every evening for basketball, soccer and volleyball during October.  We also worked with the Health Department to hold an immunization clinic every Thursday from 9:00a-4:00p for kids to come in and get their school immunizations.</p> <p><u>Ralph Wulz Riverside Tennis Center</u>  The Tennis Center was very busy during October. We hosted several different events. One of the bigger ones was the Kansas State High School Athletic Association 3A Girls Tournament on October 16-17. We had teams from all areas of the state including Kansas City, Colby as well as local teams from Classical School of Wichita and Wichita Independent. We are looking forward to hosting the Boys Tournament in the spring.  We also hosted the annual Judges Day Tennis and Pickleball event, hosted by the Wichita Bar Association on October 1. Twenty six members participated in round robin tennis and pickleball. Everyone was excited about the expansion of outdoor pickleball courts.  The second annual ICT Pickleball Tournament was held October 5-6. We had 160 players, some who traveled as far as from Arizona to participate. Because of its popularity, the Center will host two tournaments in 2021 in June and September.  We are in the midst of our renovations of the Center's indoor courts. Resurfacing has been completed. The courts and interior walls of the dome were cleaned, a new surface coating, paint and lines were also completed.</p> <p><u>Lynette Woodard Recreation Center</u>  Woodard continues to be very busy. They have expanded their youth programming and have rentals almost every night. We have some youth sports and tots classes to help generate additional revenue. We are also reaching out with some other unique programs as well. The piano, drum and boxing classes are continuing as well.</p>

	<p>Staff has submitted three new adaptive recreation classes that will begin in January 2021 at Woodard and Atwater. We are looking for ways to reach those in the community with cognitive and physical disabilities. The classes will be coming in the spring and summer. If it is as successful as some of the other programs we expect to see quite a few people coming through.</p> <p><u>Gift Certificates</u></p> <p>The new software we rolled out gives us the capability to offer gift certificates that can be sold to the community. We will begin a marketing campaign to push through the holiday season. The certificates will be redeemable for any of our programs we offer in Park and Rec and the Rec Division, with the exception of Golf because they already have their own. Palmer inquired if the increases we are seeing are a direct result of COVID and the kids not being in school. Davidson responded he thinks it is with the limited options available in the community.</p> <p>Goter stated in the recent Golf Advisory Committee meeting they had discussion about compliance, have you had any difficulty enforcing and getting cooperation on the COVID protocol you employ. Davidson responded they have not had any major challenges with it. They discuss up front what the restrictions are for using the facility. Once they are on site for programs and events we give out constant reminders that we need to adhere or it jeopardizes our ability to offer the services. Goter asked if there have been any incidences of outbreak as a result of any of these activities that you are aware of. Davidson responded no, we have been through the summer up to now with very limited cases. Once we know of them they have been addressed immediately and have not had any outbreaks. Goter stated the numbers are still going up and are a concern. What have we learned about running these types of activities and what works and what is important to do, what maybe is not so important and what maximizes the opportunities for the citizens to participate. Davidson responded the big thing for us, especially during summer camp, was the preventative measures to catch anyone on the front end before there was the potential to have any impact on others. As well as education, continuing to let people know the importance of washing hands and staying socially distant; putting those restrictions in place and limiting the number of people we allow into the programs as well. Summer camp was reduced to 50% capacity and at the rec centers we are limiting it to 15 people gathering for each of our classes. Goter asked if participation has been limited because of some of the protocols put in place. Davidson responded yes. Goter asked if people have been turned away because of limiting capacities. Davidson responded we have tried to let people know up front what we are doing and have tried to add in more classes at different times to accommodate, but yes, there have been instances where we have reached that max number and people have not been able to participate.</p>
5	<p><b>Golf Update (Troy Hendricks)</b></p> <p>Fahnestock stated the Golf Advisory Committee met three weeks ago and had good discussion about furlough ideas and possible cart fee increases to put us on par with the other area golf courses.</p> <p>Cabral and Tabing have nominations for members of the Golf Advisory Committee. Cabral stated his nomination is Kyle Ellison, the Executive Director of Real Men, Real Heroes and a young avid golfer. Tabing stated his nomination is Nile Dillmore. He is a former state representative of Kansas and also served on the Golf Advisory Committee years ago. He stepped down when his wife was elected to City Council. He's golfed at Sim for many years and a big advocate for the sport.</p> <p><b>Motion by Fahnestock, second by Goter, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED to accept Kyle Ellison and Nile Dillmore to the Golf Advisory Committee. (7-0)</b></p>

**Deatherage left meeting at approximately 3:18 pm**

Hendricks stated October rounds were up 45% over October 2019 with 13,828 rounds compared to 9,544 in 2019. Year-to-date rounds are up 9% over 2019 despite two courses being closed for three weeks and two courses closed for seven weeks. Rounds in 2020 for the first ten months have also exceeded rounds in 2016, 2017 and 2018 based on a four course system even with those closures. Concession sales continue to be strong. Division-wide we are up 19% with MacDonald at a 35% increase, Tex Consolver at 32%, Sim at 23% and Auburn Hills is down for a second month, by 1%. Greens fees were up 24% compared to 2019 even without the adjustment for memberships. All four courses were up in 2020. When factoring the membership fees being allocated to the golf courses, the fees were up 86% compared to 2019. MacDonald is at 114%, Auburn Hills at 86%, Tex Consolver is up 83% and Sim is at 73%. With all the extra play we have more people riding golf carts so cart rentals continue to be strong in October. MacDonald is up 72% over 2019, Tex Consolver up 49%, Auburn Hills up 45% and Sim up 38%; with the Division being up 49% over October 2019. The driving range continues to be strong with the Division up 222% over 2019, Tex Consolver is up 143%, Auburn Hills up 120%, and MacDonald is up 100%.

Hendricks stated they did a comparison of cart fees at five golf facilities in our area, three peer cities and the City of Wichita Golf Division. The City of Lincoln, Nebraska, their full cart and half cart fee is \$34 and \$17 per person. Quail Ridge and Hesston both have a different rate weekdays and weekends. Quail Ridge is at \$34 on weekends and \$22 on weekdays for a full cart. For half carts they were \$17 on weekends and \$11 on weekdays. Carey Park in Hutchinson was \$32 and \$16. Oklahoma City courses are at \$30 and \$15. Tulsa is at \$28 and \$14. Cherry Oaks is at \$27 and \$13.50. Hesston is at \$26 on weekends and \$24 on weekdays for a full cart and \$13 and \$12. Hidden Lakes in Derby is at \$13 per person for a half cart and \$26 for a full cart. We are at the bottom of the list at \$25 and \$12.50. The chart also shows if we went up \$1 how much revenue would be generated and if we went up \$1.50, \$2.50, \$3.50 and \$4.50. The committee member that were present felt that a \$1 increase is what they would be in favor of and wanted to have brought to this body to talk about a possible \$1 cart fee increase. Fahnestock stated we had three or four on the Golf Advisory Committee Teams call so it did not meet a quorum so they had a discussion about this. Goter stated there were four on the call. He inquired about the rounds at Auburn Hills. The rounds are up more than at any other course about 5,000 rounds, concession revenue is down 1%. He does not understand why concession revenue would be down at a course that has well-financed golfers. Hendricks responded they are down 1% in October, the rounds were not up 5,000 for the month of October. He thinks they have limited hours on when the snack bar is open, they are doing a lot of it out of the golf shop. He was also off a little in September so that is how Scot has chosen to manage the concession area at this time. Goter stated that is troublesome but he does not want to put it on the Pro. They have no staff and are so overwhelmed. It seems inconsistent that MacDonald would be up 40% and Auburn would be down. On the cart fee issue, you indicated after the mask mandate expires you intend to go to 80% of the cart fee for a single rider. Davidson stated the mask mandate is scheduled to expire on December 9, 2020, but with the increase in cases and the impact it has had on City Hall, it is unlikely it will expire on December 9 and will most likely be extended. Hendricks stated the 80% was put on the list as a proposal for discussion and not anything written in stone. These are things for the GAC to discuss, think about and look at regarding the single-rider cart. We heard from those who were at the meeting that a \$1 or \$2 increase for a single rider was something they did not have an issue with and was something to be

discussed with the Park Board. Goter stated the consensus of those who were at the GAC meeting was that a \$1 increase was reasonable given our position relative to the other courses in the area. Palmer asked where \$26 puts us. Hendricks responded it would be \$27 for a full cart and \$13.50 per person. Palmer asked where that puts us in relation to everyone else. Hendricks responded that would put us slightly ahead of Hidden Lakes. Of the nine courses on the list it puts us in the #8 position. Hillman inquired what the profit would be on a \$1 increase. Hendricks responded based on the 2019 cart fee it would be about a \$75,000 annual increase for the golf system. Fahnestock inquired where that money goes. Hendricks responded it goes into Operations.

**Motion by Goter, second by Palmer, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED that the Board recommend to City Council to adopt a \$1 increase in the cart rental fee.**

Fahnestock stated right now the City has put in place a four week furlough for City golf staff. We recommended cutting that in half to two weeks. Has there been any movement on either side there? Hendricks responded yes, he provided a lot of information to the Budget Analyst. The answer is no, it is not going to be shortened. When you look at where we need to be financially by year's end in order to get through first quarter 2021 so we don't have to dip into funds from the City to cover shortfalls. If we shorten the furlough schedule they do not feel we will be able to meet that goal. Fahnestock stated it is important to show solidarity to the people who have worked hard this summer to get us in the black. It is an interesting move to turn our backs on them at this point and continue with the four week furloughs. He recommends each board member send an email to their City Councilmember showing solidarity for our golf employees that have worked so hard to get us where we are right now. Hillman expressed agreement. Goter added the members of the GAC that were at the meeting (Goter, Fahnestock, Ferris and Schodorf) all agreed "it is criminal" to take money away from these people who have worked so hard to keep the courses open with limited staff and doing a tremendous job and are now losing one-twelfth of their income when we are in the black and could easily absorb that. Considering there is a major change of ownership and administration on the table that could happen in the next few months. It seems ill timed to penalize these employees. He looked at the Golf Division Budget. That \$240,000 that goes to Central Administration is a flat amount of money assigned to each department. \$47,000 to the City Manager's Office, \$70,000 to finance, they should take a hit as well. You would think they would reduce that allocation to help lessen that burden on the employees. All we asked for was that the furloughs be cut in half. The money is there and you are going to balance the budget at the end of the year; making employees suffer does not make much sense. He encourages the Park Board to take a more formal position in encouraging the Manager and advising City Council that the furloughs are "criminal." Tabing inquired if there is a larger context for this discussion. Furloughs are not entered into lightly. If this is a city-wide policy and we are trying to exempt golf from something that is applicable to all managers above a certain level, he can't imagine that going anywhere. Is there a larger context for this discussion? Hendricks responded this was part of the plan that was put into place to reduce expenditures for golf with the COVID crisis. The Adopted Budget that was adopted earlier this summer included this furlough plan. Since Council has approved that we are locked into it. Tabing asked how the furloughs would work. Will they rotate staff in and out to keep the course open? Hendricks responded they made an adjustment to the plan this year and none of the golf courses will be closed like they were last year. The only staff that will be furloughed is our full time City staff (20 employees). They will be furloughed one week at a time spread out because if they are out of paid status for two weeks in a pay period it has a direct impact on their retirement. We have four people who are within one month to 18 months of being able to take their retirement. We are trying to help them keep their years of service with the City. Goter asked if they are hiring more part-timers to fill in

for that need. Hendricks responded no, they are hiring to replace the ones leaving to go back to school. There is an assistant superintendent position that has been open since May that is frozen. When we opened back up we asked each Golf Professional and Superintendent to give us a list of how many people they would need to operate for the rest of the year. They gave us their list of what bodies they needed for the rest of the year and what they currently had on their employee list so we opened up for x number of positions to fill. We can only fill a position when it becomes vacant. They have people working maybe 15 hours a week taking a position and not working the 30 hours they could be, making it more difficult to fill the hours they need. Goter stated Tabing's question about context is a good one. When Hendricks mentioned the decision was made when the budget was adopted several months ago there was a \$500,000 deficit projected. Today because of cost cutting and increased demand they are in the black \$140,000. A decision made in August in that context would seem to be appropriately reviewed at this time. If we don't have that kind of flexibility we are not good managers. Hendricks responded he had this discussion with the Senior Budget Analyst two weeks ago and the response was this is what the proposal was for your budget adjustments and because Council approved it that is what you have to live with. Goter stated this is an enterprise fund and should run like a business not a government. It needs to have flexibility and be responsive to changing circumstances. Hendricks stated he does not like having to furlough staff. Palmer asked what is being furloughed from City Hall. Hendricks responded he cannot tell about other departments outside of Park & Recreation. He does not believe there is anyone in Forestry, Park Maintenance or Recreation that is being furloughed right now. As far as he knows the furloughs for the Park Department are only affecting golf. Palmer asked if Golf isn't where the department makes most of its money. Hendricks responded he does not follow what Reggie's group is doing he is more interested in what Golf is doing. Li-Wormington stated Park Maintenance and Recreation are not enterprise funds so the City is funding them. Only a few programs they have are 100% cost recovery; most are supported by general funds. Maybe it would be good to have Goltry come to a meeting and share these questions and concerns with her and let her answer them. Palmer responded that would be great but these furloughs start next month. Hendricks stated they started two weeks ago. Palmer added he does not feel we can wait. He agrees with Goter and Ferris that it is "criminal" to take these guys money after they worked hard to get us in the position we are in and yet continue to pay \$240,000 to the general fund, and we are going to cut people loose but no one else is. Li-Wormington offered to schedule a meeting with members of the board and Goltry. Goter stated we don't need more of that information, the context is clear, the Golf Division is the only one being furloughed. The decision was made several months ago and the dynamics of the Golf Division have changed financially. It would seem appropriate for the Park Board to make a formal recommendation to the City Manager and the Council. Although the furloughs have started no one is taking four weeks off the top, if you went to half furloughs you could implement that without any problem. Hendricks confirmed that is correct. Goter made a motion that the Park Board recommend to the City Manager and the Council that the Golf furloughs be cut in half in recognition of the surplus budget that is projected for the end of the year and in recognition of the hard work of the employees who made it possible. Fahnestock advised everyone to email their City Council member or Mayor and maybe cc Mr. Robert Layton, City Manager. He does not know if this is too aggressive of an approach but his supports the golf staff. He asked Hendricks if this recommendation goes to Council and they vote it down, what happens next. Palmer responded we have four weeks of furlough. Fahnestock agreed, that is right. Hendricks stated yes, there are two weeks in 2020 and two weeks in the first two months of 2021. Fahnestock added if we start the conversation with our City Council members, do we have a better chance of getting it done

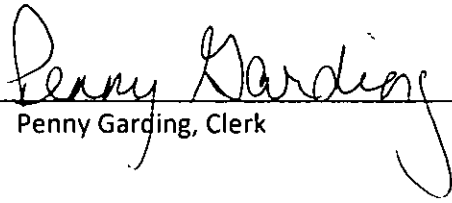
that way? What are your thoughts? Palmer stated if we go to our councilmembers and they listen to us because they nominated us it should speak volumes. Davidson stated agreement that if it goes to the councilmembers it would go to the channels and be acknowledged. Fahnestock stated he wants to be careful that we are not being too aggressive. He wants to treat the situation delicately. Goter stated there is a history of some the recommendations of the Park Board not making it to the Council. He understands that we are all appointed by someone on the council but it undermines the purpose of having the Park Board. We have an influence as a group, otherwise there would be no reason to have a Park Board meeting. This is going to fall on the Manager, there is not time for the Council. He is not sure the Council has the authority to tell the Manager not to furlough. It's a budget issue. Given the circumstances a Park Board recommendation to the Manager is effective. Tabing stated he is not sure about "if this...then that". If we do this then the surplus at the end of the year goes from what to what? Is it that simple? Or would the decision maker say if you are set on that two week furlough the reality is 1.5 people will get laid off. He is not sure we fully understand what the implications are for us to gallantly say let's save the golf workers. Lots of people have lost their jobs to the pandemic. If the alternative is people will lose their jobs, I want to know that now before I make a vote on this really important issue. Fahnestock responded that is what he is concerned with, that is why he is strongly advising that we email our councilmembers and the manager if we are in agreeance here as opposed to formally taking it to Council. Goter asked Hendricks what the 50% reduction in furloughs is in actual dollars. Hendricks responded about \$45,000. Goter stated if you took 12% away from that general administration budget you've covered half that already. There is a place to do this but putting it on people is unfair. If you reduce the general administration allocations, they can't take a 12% cut and protect workers who are going to be hurt by this. Laying back here is not good for golf, not good for golfers and not good for employees. Palmer added we have to let people know the Park Board supports them, it's not just about golf it's about the Park Board and where we are and where we stand. Does our vote count or not count. Fahnestock called for a vote on the motion on the table. Tabing stated this is the first surplus we have had in how long? Is it unprecedented to have a surplus, there is a lot of catching up to do in terms of deficit. He thinks a larger discussion about this is important. Hendricks added on the rounds report at the end of October 2018 we were at a +\$177,000 for the year and 2018 we \$767,000 to the good, in 2017 we were \$351,000. This is for the end of October. In 2016 we were \$449,000. We make money between March and September, we try to break even for October and then we lose money in November, December, January and February. We need to have a surplus going into the winter to get by those lean months. What Goltry put together and provided to the City Manager, and based on the emails he received from Mr. Goter, Mr. Fahnestock, Mr. Ferris and Mr. Schodorf. We provided him information and put some stuff together with Goltry so she could put together some projections for the last three months of the year. The information she put together showed that we would not have enough money at year end to sustain us for the beginning of the next golf season and we would run out of money in the first three months, even with the furlough plan that is in place if it was cut in half. Goter stated the last two years have ended with a deficit and Council has provided an infusion of General Fund dollars of \$200,000-\$300,000 a year for the last two years. That's the context Tabing is talking about, but we are not paying that back with the \$100,000; every year stands by itself. 2018 and 2019 were balanced but were balanced because there was a budgeted deficit. The budget book shows the Golf Division has budgeted a deficit for the next 2-3 years. So the fact this year you are \$100,000+ in the black without a General Fund subsidy is unusual. There is no obligation to go back and pay the debt City Council covered the last two years; you would never catch up. We are talking about now and the capacity to do it now with the funds that are available. Palmer

	<p>added the whole point of the membership was to generate monthly income, are we taking that into account? Hendricks responded yes, we are. Goter stated the big picture is the \$140,000 in the black projected at the end of the year and meanwhile employees took one-twelfth cut in salary. Palmer stated we already know they are taking half of that because they already started furloughing the first two weeks. Goter responded no, nobody is taking four weeks at a time. If the Manager were to say tomorrow 50% of the furlough, everyone could take their two weeks this year. Hendricks responded that is correct.</p> <p>Fahnestock called for vote on the motion.</p> <p><b>Motion by Goter, second by Palmer, that the Park Board recommend to the City Manager and the Council that the Golf furloughs be cut in half in recognition of the surplus budget that is projected for the end of the year and in recognition of the hard work of the employees who made it possible. Motion carries (5-1)</b>  <b>(Palmer, Goter, Hillman, Cabral, Fahnestock – Yes; Tabing – No).</b></p>
6	<p><b>Wichita Parks Foundation Update (Troy Houtman)</b>  Garding stated the Foundation met last Wednesday. They introduced two new prospective board members: Kristen Marr, Fidelity Bank and William Polite, USD 259. They will hold an off-line vote on acceptance of the two members. The board was introduced to a proposal from a local artist on a custom bench to be placed in several city parks. The cost for the benches would be potentially be split between Park &amp; Recreation Department and the Parks Foundation. The board agreed to hear the proposal at the December meeting. Park Board member Alejo Cabral will begin serving as the liaison between the Park Board and the Parks Foundation starting with the December meeting. They are completing the scoring matrix that will be used in determining which projects to help fund with the Plates for Parks monies.</p>
7	<p><b>OJ Watson Park Committee Update (Troy Houtman)</b>  Davidson stated the Drive-Boo went extremely well. Over 1,600 people came through for that event. We are looking at expanding for next year. Wicked Island brought in \$19,000 in revenue. The open space in the park is still getting a lot of use.</p>
8	<p><b>Aquatics Master Plan Update (Troy Houtman)</b>  Davidson stated the Aquatics plan is still on track. We are on schedule to be ready for 2021. We are beginning to plan for a naming celebration for the new facility at McAdams Park.</p>
9	<p><b>President's Update (Eddie Fahnestock)</b>  No President's Update</p>
10	<p><b>Director's Update (Troy Houtman)</b>  Davidson stated we are scheduled for our CAPRA review in March, 2021. Thiesen will be bringing a couple items to the board next month to get us ready for that. Thiesen stated upcoming visit will be a virtual one this time. We've put together all of our evidence and she is now focused on putting together the narrative.  Davidson added next month we will also be bring our Code of Conduct Policy that we want to implement along with some updates to our rental policy.</p>
	<p><b>Adjourn</b>  There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:22 p.m.</p>



The next regularly scheduled meeting will be a virtual meeting held on Monday, December 14, 2020.

\_\_\_\_\_/s/ Eddie Fahnestock  
Eddie Fahnestock, President

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Penny Garding, Clerk