

***The Village of Richfield  
Parks and Recreation  
Annual Report 2020***



## The Year of 2020 Was a Year of Change

The Parks and Recreation department started the year with a change, Director Ruth Jocek retired at the end of 2019. The mayor's office managed the Parks and Recreation department in Ruth's absence. The mayors' executive assistant Debbie Bluso-Rogers acted as the Interim Parks and Recreation Director until her retirement in August where her replacement, Laura Toth, obtained the position.

Thank you to Ruth Jocek for her many years of service taking care of the department.

The Village did not hire a new director in 2020.

Events and items were scheduled or in the process of scheduling for the upcoming season such as, art show, easter egg hunt, tree give-a-way, project pride, paper shredding, Tree City USA, sports programs. summer camp and summer concerts.

Then in early March the COVID-19 epidemic was prominent. Due to the COVID-19 epidemic all items and events were cancelled and Town Hall was closed for a period of time. During this time the part time park employees were furloughed due to the closures.

## Year of Change (cont'd)

Following the Governor's guidelines, the majority of the programs and use of the rentable facilities and the recreation building remained closed through the month of July. During that time the Parks and Recreation building located at 3333 Brecksville Road was closed and it was determined the building simply was not functional.

Part-time staff returned to work on Monday, July 6, 2020 to begin the 2020 physical inventory for the rentable facilities, Parks and Recreation building and Johnson Barn. Non-Village assets were identified and segregated. Anyone who had loaned items to Parks & Recreation were instructed to contact the Interim Director to make arrangements for their property. Affidavits were required to ensure the proper transfer of property. The staff was moved to Town Hall to conduct departmental activities.

Programs and rentable facilities remained closed until the Governor lifted the 10 person in a gathering rule and the Dine Safe Rule.

JumpStart sports clinics offered some sports camps in July, but they were limited to 10 children with strict compliance regulations

## Year of Change (cont'd)

Due to the stringent cleaning measurements bathrooms also remained closed to ensure safety for public and virus spread. The park restrooms opened in September per Donna Skoda's recommendation. The restrooms were cleaning twice a day and hand washing stations were added to Richfield Woods and Town Hall. A porta-potty was added to the Town Hall area.

In June the board and council meetings reconvened and were held by zoom.

A public notice was created and posted August 18, 2020 giving individuals thirty days to pick up their personal property from the recreation building. Identification of items that were moved to Johnson Barn for future summer camp use that consisted of cabinets, counters, shelving, tables, bookcases and chairs.

Thank you to the Service Department for all their help and to Elisabeth Kelly and Jessie Spann for their diligence when cleaning out and organizing the recreation center.



## Year of Change (cont'd)

The Village determined Community Day, Fall Fest, and Holly days would be cancelled.

### Eastwood Barn Preservation



The required section 106 SHPO (Ohio History Connection) application was submitted and under review. SHPO held a zoom meeting and made recommendations, more items were needed to be submitted from TBA at this time ODNR had the funds set aside for the project. Quotes were received for the restoration and the bids were very high. In December a "Save the Barn committee was created and they were looking for additional options to save the barn.

## Year of Change (cont'd)

### Feasibility Study

Prior to the pandemic two proposals were received from PROS Consulting firm and Green Play, LLC. to implement a feasibility study. PROS Consulted was selected to complete the feasibility study. The kickoff meeting was held in September. The core group stakeholders were contacted and verbal interviews took place. The survey was then created, the stakeholders completed the test survey, draft survey letter was reviewed and distributed to village residents. The survey letters were distributed the end of November with a thirty day survey completion. Next steps in after the results were analyzed.

### Program Fees

The review of program fees and rental pricing continued. Items that were of concern were consistency, surrounding are pricing, non-profit rentals. A special meeting was held to discuss the pricing structures.

## Year of Change (cont'd)

### Broadview Heights Partnership

Richfield officials were working out a deal to allow Richfield Village residents to use the Broadview Heights Recreation Center while the Village was without a recreation center of its own. Due to the pandemic Broadview Heights wanted to hold off on pursuing the partnership until the next meeting in December.

### **New Park**

Ending on a high note. Two parcels of land were donated for the Hawkins Road park, one was from the Babb's family and the other was from the Labalzo family. The Board asked for all input on the naming of the new park. The Board reviewed submitted names and decided on Babbs Orchard Park. The future park will have walking trails, fishing pond and dock, pavilion and sledding hill.

## Year of Change (cont'd)

Thank you to all during this trying year.  
Here's to a new and improved year- 2021!

Hopefully, we will be back to full programming  
and full capacity. It will be wonderful to see and  
hear the children playing and enjoying our parks.

### Park Board Members:

Jason Keppler, Chair

Brian Stulak, Vice Chair

Theresa Kovak

Amy Huey

Carolyn Sullivan

Gary Domanick, Council Representative

### Interim Parks and Recreation Director:

Debbie Bluso-Rogers, January-August

Laura Toth, August-December

