

What to do with Academy Park?

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“David made plans to extend the stage area, because Kiwanis always has to put up their own stage (extension),” Welch said. “This would enable them to just use what’s there – plus any other concerts ... they’ll be able to use it. It’ll be there permanently.”

Giusiana said the stage will sit on the ground like a deck attached to a house.

In addition, he and Welch said the new location is better situated for external electrical connections.

HPC member Jim Fittante of Fittante Architecture also worked on the bandshell project.

His colleague, Rita Geiben, said, “I think it’s great. I think it looks very nice.”

Chairwoman Loretta Frankovitch said, “I think it looks great. I don’t have a problem with it. I think it looks very nice. We need to move it somewhere.”

Planning Board member Diana Lewandowski simply said, “Love it.”

Both boards voted in favor of the concept, which will seek final approval from the Village Board on Monday.

The Academy Park bleachers were demolished earlier this year, courtesy of Lewiston Event Center co-owner Harold Hibbard. They had been used in conjunction with the bandshell. Welch said no new seating would be created for the bandshell.

She said the village is hoping to add an open-air pavilion near the stage. Grant money also is pending for renovations to the bathroom facilities at the park’s northeast corner.

One year ago, the Academy Park committee met to discuss the site’s future. Welch has repeatedly said she wants the park utilized more than it is now, with just a few dozen dates taken for the Peach Festival, Artisan Farmers Market, Wine Festival and car cruises. She has expressed concern the Kiwanians’ carnival rides cause irreparable damage to the park, preventing the field

from being used more often.

After much debate within the Red Brick Municipal Building last year, the Village Board approved the Kiwanis Club’s request to hold the 2020 Peach Festival at Academy Park. Of course, that event was cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Kiwanians received permission to return in 2021 – without any fanfare, or discussion by trustees – at the Sept. 8 Village Board meeting.

The consensus among Academy Park committee members was that the Peach Festival and additional activities (picnics, perhaps an ice rink/splash pad) can coexist.

Fittante, who was working on the master plan, said at that time, “I think there’s a happy medium, that would benefit (everyone).”

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‘Loop’ (cont.)

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Another traditional aspect of the school year – the “snow day” – is also being reimagined for 2020-21. Superintendent Paul Casseri has announced Lewiston-Porter will not use snow/cold closure days this year. If there is a need to close school for inclement weather this winter, a snow/cold closure day would revert to a virtual Monday for students expected to be in-person sessions that day. The only issue might be inclement weather coupled with a power outage. We will deal with that scenario if it were to develop, but generally, in a snow/cold closure situation, technology and communication are accessible at home.

Lew-Port is ready and able to shift to the remote learning format, keeping its students and staff safe in the event of dangerous winter weather without the loss of

critical instructional time.

Each year, the district builds in at least three snow/cold days in its school calendar. These non-instructional days (“days off”) will be added to the calendar, with no need to go to bed with your pajamas inside-out.

Currently, the State Education Department is allowing all synchronous and asynchronous days to be counted toward the 180 days of required school. This gives Lewiston-Porter many days available beyond the required 180 days of instruction. To even out the number of instructional days for green and white group students, we will add two noninstructional days in lieu of using weather days. The calendar changes developed in lieu of the use of snow/cold days are as follows. The President’s Day holiday will be extended to include both Monday, Feb. 15, and Tuesday, Feb. 16; the Memorial Day holiday recess will now include Thursday, May 27; Friday, May 28; and Monday, May 31. Parents and families can now plan their schedules around these days.

Visit the Lew-Port website for details and the full 2020-21 calendar.

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