

PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, June 9, 2009

6:00 p.m.

- 1) Call to order by Dale Berg.
- 2) Roll Call: Members Present: Audrey Stowell, Heidi Hoekstra, Dale Berg, Carmen Muenich, and Beth Arneberg. Absent: Curt Stepanek and Susan Zukowski.
Staff present: Dick Hebert, Bill Faherty, Terry Johnson, and Chuck Cyr.
- 3) Approval of May 12, 2009, Minutes: **Motion by Carmen Muenich, seconded by Beth Arneberg, all present voting aye, to approve minutes of the May 12, 2009, meeting.**
- 4) Election of Officers: Dale Berg opened the floor for nominations for President. Dale Berg nominated Curt Stepanek, Carmen Muenich seconded, nominations closed. Bill reported that Curt had indicated that he would accept the nomination. Motion by Dale Berg, seconded by Carmen Muenich, casting unanimous ballot for Curt Stepanek as President of the Park Board. All present voted aye.

Dale Berg nominates Carmen Muenich as Vice President. Carmen objects. Carmen Muenich nominates Dale Berg. Beth Arneberg seconded, nominations closed. Dale accepts the nomination. Carmen Muenich moves for unanimous ballot casting Dale Berg as Vice President. Beth Arneberg seconds. All present voted aye.

Dale Berg nominated Audrey Stowell for Secretary. Heidi Hoekstra seconded, nominations closed. Audrey Stowell accepts the nomination. Dale Berg moves and Heidi Hoekstra seconds for unanimous ballot casting Audrey Stowell as Secretary. All present voted aye.

- 5) Personal Appearances: Cari Bowe presented a proposal for a Relay for Life fundraiser for the American Cancer Society. She proposes having a half price admission day at the pool. This would take place on a Saturday. There would be a donation bucket for Relay for Life. Relay for Life would market the event with posters, online and community events in the paper. The only drawback could be weather. The pool hours are 1-6 on Saturdays. Discussion regarding decreased revenue being offset by increased attendance and concession stand use. **Motion by Carmen Muenich, seconded by Beth Arneberg, all present voting aye, to approve the Relay for Life event at the Chippewa pool.** Date will be decided by Cari Bowe at a later time, and the date picked will be provided to Dick Hebert.

Susan Zukowski came at this time.

- 6) Communications. Valley Vineyard Church would like to do a carnival with music and games for kids on July 18th. Because all of the pavilions are booked, they would like to use the old campground area for this function. Brief discussion. Bill will notify them that it is acceptable.

Bill Slaughter is offering free dog training, gifts, and dog waste bags on July 4th. One purpose would be to bring awareness to having people picking up after their dogs. There will also be flyball and agility demonstrations. Carmen suggested Marshall Park was an appropriate location for this. Brief discussion.

- 7) Discuss / consider security system for Zoo & Parks. No report.

8) Update on Current Projects.

a. Canine Leisure Area. Bill will be sending out a letter to all of those who have expressed interest to start thinking of fundraising ideas. Leaning toward Alexander Street area.

b. Bobcat Exhibit Phase 2. Started today. Chuck predicts that it will be done in July. Once done, we will look at doing an open house as we have done in the past for the bears and the cougars.

c. Kell's Corner in Irvine Park. Bill presents a map proposing to have the road run straight and then have a parking lot in the turn around area. There would also be riprap with cement steps and a platform. There is also a new proposed turnaround for those who are carbound to be able to view the dam. Bill believes this could be made into a nice smaller picnic area. He indicates this area is used a lot by people eating lunches. We wouldn't want it to be too big to avoid need for bathrooms and that expense. Vegetation buffer would be placed. Also proposing putting a bridge (where the old Optimist bridge was) to connect the walking trail by the buffalo to the north-end trails. With regard to cost, Bill believes the riprap and platform area would be the most expensive. He hopes to get funding through grants from DNR for this along with private donations from individuals and service groups. This plan does take care of the drainage issue. Carmen questions the timeframe. Bill indicates this is a project that wouldn't be done until 2010-11-12 – really no timeframe in place at this time. It would be phased as funds were available. Bill also mentions that there is an old ice house on the other side of the dam that we should look at restoring at some point in the future. We could potentially use this as a paddle boat rental area. Bill will show the proposal around, get additional comments, find out about cost, etc.

d. Community Gardens at Marshall Park. Bill believes every spot is sold. So far, revenues are \$845.00. Based on WalMart employee time spent, we will also be receiving a \$500.00 donation from WalMart. Chuck is proposing to pick up some irrigation pipes to run four spickets. The water pressure is bursting hoses.

e. Compliance with Title XIV (pool drain). The cost is about \$2,500. Bill would like to get it done this fall after the pool closes, so he will be contacting the Finance Committee to see if there is money available to do it then.

9) 2010 Budget. Bill distributes budget for review. Operation budget needs to be completed by July 2. Bill suggests we review and contact him with any questions. City does need to cut \$575,000 to keep taxes the same.

Dale leaves at this time.

10) Donation Fund Report. Bill distributed CF Parks Recreation Donation Funds report. Typically people donate funds for things to be done now. If they want it to be used in the future, we recommend using Endowment Fund. Endowment Fund report also distributed. **Motion by Carmen Muenich, seconded by Beth Arneberg, all present voting aye, to accept reports as reported.**

11) Emerald Ash Borer Report. Right now, the City has 1,200 boulevard trees. This doesn't include any private trees. There is planning being discussed on a regional level, and Bill and Glen from the street department are involved with that. Bill believes our ordinance says that we can mark private trees for removal. Contract the work if needed and then charge the homeowner. He will check that out. Discussion regarding looking into chipping up the ash trees and hopefully making it into a resource.

This could likely not be done if we become quarantined. There is a lot of information available online regarding the ash borer and recognizing trees, etc. Bill would like to look at taking a certain percentage of ash trees down each year, so that it isn't being done all at once. Bill indicates that after the elm trees, the City did try to plant various species as replacements rather than one species. He anticipates that we would do the same with the ash.

12) Discuss/consider Recreation Program report.

a. Outdoor Swimming Pool. Dick reports that the pool opened on Tuesday, June 9. Staff was hired this week. 70% of our staff is high school students. Training also occurred this week. Swimming lessons start next week. The pool will be closing August 23. Dick reports that we usually get a cold spell and things slow down. Also, pool staff is an issue. Cari Bowe questioned whether we've ever considered doing a dog walk that ends at pool with a dog swim. Dick reports that Eau Claire has done it after the pool closes. He will call Eau Claire to find out about issues they might have.

b. Summer Activities. Some youth programs start next week. Dick is hiring staff for that right now. Bill and Dick will be discussing how minimum wage (going to \$7.25) affects seasonal staff's pay scales.

13) Discuss/consider Personnel Report. Bill needs to report to Personnel committee regarding all of the staff by July 4. They want tasks assigned and percentage assigned to each task.

14) Discuss/consider Friends of Irvine Park Zoo Report. They did have an annual meeting. They are doing very well with brick sales, etc.

15) Discuss/consider Parks Maintenance Report.

a. Irvine Park.

1. Shelters. Chuck reports that they are putting up a shelter in one of the pine groves and one down by Bridgewater – (16 x 30) around 50-people capacity. Likely won't reserve – no electricity plus using DNR money.

2. Native Tree Trail. Bill reports the group meets every Tuesday. The trail is going to start by the sidewalk next to the main pavilion, follow the creek, cross the road by the bridge, and then goes out to Bridgewater. Bill indicates we'd like to put in hard granite trail. It's a little more expensive, but it will do a better job. The cost is \$4,800 to go from pavilion to bridge. Talking about an 8' trail that could be used for biking. This would also be handicapped accessible. Talking about getting people off the main roads. Bill believes there will be money donated for this purpose. Beth wonders if 8' is too wide. One of our goals is to open up the creek, and this does that. Bill will meet with Don Bichner to discuss. Do the first phase. If receptive, Bill can put the remaining **Motion by Carmen Muenich, seconded by Heidi Hoekstra, all present voting aye, to approve the first phase with donation funds.**

b. Casper Park. Getting things ready for Leinie's night, which will be on June 17 at Gannon field at 7:00 p.m.

1. Main Shelter. Will be finished with lights.

2. Batting Cages. The cost to put batting cages for softball is about \$20,000. There would be four total cages; one for each field.

3. Bleachers & Press box at Gannon field. Bill hasn't gotten a definitive price back on these, but he believes it will be around \$70,000. The goal is for having bleachers for 500 people.
 4. Signs. Price on digital sign in front of the concession stand to run menu and advertising. Approximately \$8,000-\$10,000. Looking at having the Leinenkugel Family Softball Complex written with aluminum lettering on side of roof. Caspers would also be recognized.
- c. Neighborhood Parks. The parks are being cut by the Street Dept. The weeds will be sprayed at Buchanan. Chuck Cyr indicates that the tennis courts are bad, and crack filling is a possibility – probably in the fall.
- 16) Discuss/Consider Board Member comments or concerns. Carmen Muenich indicates that he received two calls from individuals expressing appreciation for opening up the bear den drive on weekends. Audrey Stowell wondered about the animals. There isn't a market for the fallow deer, so we are having a hard time getting rid of them. Bill does report that the ostrich (who Beth indicates is ornery) is here. There are new baby elk, buffalo, and antelope. Ground hogs will be placed in the prairie dog exhibit. Audrey Stowell has received comments regarding the skateboard park. It sounds like there is potentially another group that has taken it over. Bill will see if the police can increase patrol of the area. Discussion regarding some of the vendors.

17) Approve Claims. Motion by Heidi Hoekstra, seconded by Carmen Muenich, all present voting aye, to approve claims of \$29, 747.85.

18) Adjournment. Motion by Carmen Muenich, seconded by Heidi Hoekstra, all present voting aye, to adjourn.

Submitted by:

Audrey Stowell, Secretary