

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

4:30 p.m., Snack Bar, Bunker Hill Golf Course

PRESENT: Bob Blocker, Paul Hoffmann, Karen Lyness, Evelyn Nadeau and Mark Noble

ABSENT: Tom Blocklinger and David Schlueter

OTHERS: Staff present: Marie Ware, Pat Prevenas, Bob Fritsch and Eileen Trimble

MINUTES APPROVED; VOTE: It was moved by Nadeau, seconded by Blocker, to approve the minutes of the March 8, 2011, meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

MEMBERS OF DUBUQUE WATERSPORTS CLUB PRESENT TO DISCUSS CLUB AND LEASE:

At the request of the commission, three members of the Dubuque Watersports Club (formerly Dubuque Water Ski Club) were present to discuss the club and their activities – Jim Schumacher (President), Greg Kubitz and Jesse Schekleton.

Mr. Schumacher said the club was first organized in 1958 and they have partnered with the City of Dubuque for 53 consecutive years to take care of the area. In 1965 they hosted their first water ski tournament with 200+ participants and spectators and continued to offer tournaments for twenty years; in 1967 their volunteers removed old cars/trash left from the former race track and trees and grasses were planted in cooperation with the Army Corps of Engineers; in 1968 they held a ski marathon; 1988 hosted the first Dragon Boat Races and have continued that event for twenty four years; host the polar plunge in November. From 1958 to present they host picnics/boat rides for area "challenged" children; sponsor Explorer Scout Ski Troop; annual river clean up along leased property and partner with Leisure Services to offer annual learn to ski day.

Club membership was down but is now building back up and there are currently close to 70 members. A new logo has been developed and they will be selling t-shirts, signs and hats etc with the logo to promote the area. In 2010 they launched a web site with Dubuque 360 and joined the Dubuque Chamber of Commerce. The Club's mission is to provide the City of Dubuque and surrounding areas with water sport opportunities that promote water safety, social vibrancy, healthy living and environmental stewardship all within a family-oriented club atmosphere. They ask that the City renew the Lease Agreement.

Commissioners asked about the upkeep of the area – in a state of disrepair and sometimes an eyesore; why are there no ski tournaments anymore? Mr. Schumacher said the Club quit having tournaments because of the liability involved with the jumps. They are dismantling some of the docks and keeping the best ones. Getting rid of the older dilapidated docks has improved the look of the area. Cash flow is limited because the Club survives exclusively on memberships but they have identified projects that need to be done for aesthetic improvements and plan on getting started as soon as the river recedes from the area.

APPROVE SKI
CLUB LEASE;
VOTE:

General feeling of commissioners was the club needed to demonstrate they can offer things for the city or turn the area into a money maker; improve the aesthetics of the area. Commissioners aren't sure what else could go there since it is in a floodplain. Commissioners liked the direction presented by the club but wanted to make sure cleanup continued to be addressed.

The Commission requested a work plan be presented at the July commission meeting from the Club, on maintenance and improvements to the lease area.

It was moved by Lyness, seconded by Nadeau, to renew the Lease Agreement with Dubuque Watersports Club, to expire April 30, 2012. The motion passed unanimously.

NATIONAL KIDS
TO PARKS DAY;
VOTE:

Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware explained that the first "National Kids to Parks Day" has been organized and launched by the National Park Trust for May 21, 2011 to encourage children and adults to go to the park, hike on a trail, play on a playground, have a pickup game of ball, et cetera. We would like the City Council to proclaim it locally to encourage participation.

It was moved by Nadeau, seconded by Lyness, to recommend City Council to proclaim May 21, 2011 as National Kids to Parks Day. The motion passed unanimously.

PARK DIVISION
REPORT:

Park Division Manager Bob Fritsch informed commissioners:

- ◆ Mississippi should be receding from Miller Riverview Park by Thursday afternoon. Decisions will be made in the next week as to when Ken will put his camper at the park, when to start taking reservations, et cetera. We also have to make sure the new charge card system will be available and working properly. Staff estimates it could cost almost \$25,000 for cleanup.
- ◆ Three youth with barriers to employment will be working with the department for twelve weeks this summer through the IDOT Urban Youth Corps Grant. They will be building 20 handicap accessible picnic areas with concrete pads and handicap tables; plant 500 roses on Highway 20; and help with various other capital improvement projects. While they are working, staff will be training them in safety skills, work skills, life skills, resume writing et cetera.
- ◆ Wednesday and Thursday the historic Whitewater Creek bridge will be getting installed over the pond at Bergfeld Recreation Area. It is a historic span (the last of seven sections) of the bridge that took trains over the Mississippi River. It will eventually have a useable pedestrian walk when decking is placed on it.
- ◆ We have not found any hail damage at Eagle Point, Flora or Murphy Parks from the hail storm of a few weeks ago.

RECREATION
DIVISION
REPORT:

Recreation Division Manager Pat Prevenas informed commissioners:

- ◆ **Golf:** This April had the worst golf rounds for April since 1993. The course opened on March 17th but did not have a lot of good weather; offering a new lunch special – play the first four holes from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for \$5.00

plus \$5.00 for cart - no tee time reservations accepted. ♦ **Winter report** was sent to commissioners and may be found as part of original minutes.

- Hempstead lessons shows a blank because pool was drained since it did not meet federal VGB regulations and we had to give partial refunds to all swim lesson participants;
- after school track meet was held last Thursday with 450 children participating. It was held in cooperation with the School District. They were in charge of the actual meet which was held at University of Dubuque this year;
- adult softball registration is down 25 teams from last year – from 162 to 137;
- fifty-two page summer brochure went out in April and included Multicultural Family Center programs, along with a special insert for Neighborhood Recreation Programs.

♦ We have several **new partnerships** for programs this year – ice skating lessons with Mystique Ice Arena; classes with Montessori School; kids' cooking with Finley Wellness Center; Iron Kids Triathlon with Hy-Vee; and a personal trainer that is offering group physical fitness training classes for adults. ♦ Swimming **pool roofs** are being re-shingled. ♦ The department cooperated with Dubuque Community Schools to apply for a **21st Century Grant**, which was awarded. It will fund after school programming for middle school age students. ♦ The department also applied for and received a grant for a summer VISTA position. The person will go to parks and playground programs in target areas, let citizens know about available programs and encourage them to register and also show up after they register. They will also try to determine why people don't actually show up for the classes once they register, which has been a problem in the past.

MANAGER'S
REPORT:

Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware updated commissioners:

- ♦ **Bee Branch** project meetings are being held on the major look of the landscaping, as it begins near Comiskey area. Planning Services, Engineering and Leisure Services have talked about other grants, funds and fundraising ideas for the project.
- ♦ Full time **Vista Volunteer Service Coordinator** has been hired and will start at the end of June. The position is a one-year full time job that will focus on what we can do as a city to involve more volunteers and then span out to city's partnerships. Over time the hope is that it will become a community project not a project for only our department. VISTA is a service position – they will get a stipend of \$10,000 for working full time hours the entire year.
- ♦ AARP has awarded Dubuque a Cities of Service grant for \$5,000 to help set up a service plan and sustainable model. The grant pays to send Marie and the Vista Coordinator to national conference on community service in June.
- ♦ Department is working on urban forestry evaluation final draft to present to City Manager.
- ♦ Final draft of Catfish Creek Feasibility Study is almost complete.

OTHER
BUSINESS:

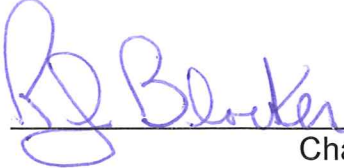
- ▶ Commissioner Blocker asked about the expanded **marina** plans. Manager Ware said the bids for docks have gone out separately from the convenience building and plans are to begin construction on docks next week. The area cannot be open until the grant is completely closed out. Ms. Ware hopes to have this be a leased facility much the same as the

Grand River Center or Five Flags. She and the Engineering Department will be working on RFP's for that in the next couple weeks.

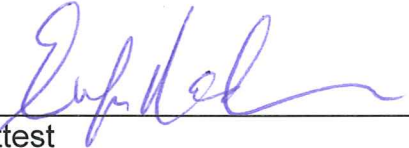
- ▶ Commissioner Noble announced that he will be moving to Michigan so he will not be reapplying for a position with the commission.

ADJOURN;
VOTE:

It was moved by Blocker, seconded by Nadeau, that the meeting be adjourned at 6:05 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.



Chairperson



Attest