

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, December 9, 2014
4:30 p.m., Snack Bar, Bunker Hill Golf Course

PRESENT: Paul Hoffmann, Robin Kennicker, Ken Klinge, Kate Lydon, Karen Lyness and David Schlueter

ABSENT: Bob Blocker

STAFF PRESENT: Marie Ware, Steve Fehsal, Dan Kroger, Eileen Trimble

MINUTES APPROVED; VOTE: It was moved by Lyness, seconded by Kennicker, to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2014, meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

FY 2016 OPERATING BUDGET SUBMITTAL REVIEW, RECOMMENDATION; VOTE: Expense / Revenue Summaries, Improvement Level Request lists and Park Equipment Priority List may be found as part of the original minutes.

Recreation Division Manager Dan Kroger told commissioners that currently the only fee increase proposed was to raise golf cart rental 50 cents. Golf Maintenance and Golf Operations activities combined are to be self supporting and supplement the enterprise fund. Administration expense is up over \$300,000 this year due to moving full time salaries to that activity. We were looking at all the activities and trying to be more accurate for budget programming so that all the program activities are more reflective of actual expenses and revenue related to the actual programs paid for out of those activities. **Youth Sports** used to be called Children's Activities and it now includes after school sports, summer baseball / softball / golf, Karate partnerships, etc. **Therapeutic and After School** now includes the after school program along with special population activities. **Recreation Classes** used to include some of the youth sports and after school expenses but now is enrichment classes and playtime and free open gym expense. Most of the programs in this activity are 80-20 partnerships. **CD Target** budget request is consistent with past years. In **Adult Athletics** we used to pay scorekeepers and umpires/referees out of a contractual line item. We are recommending taking the scorekeeper amount and moving it to seasonal employees to pay for a site supervisor at McAleece during softball season. There would no longer be scorekeepers. **Marina:** Staff continues to look for ways to increase revenue and decrease expenses. In the C-Store we constantly reevaluate inventory – what sells the most / what are boaters asking for, etc. The actual expense over the last two years was a little lower than proposed budget. The annual report showing a lot more detail on calendar year expenses and revenue will be coming to the commission at a future meeting.

Commissioner Lyness asked what kind of shape the pools were in. Mr. Kroger said both pools are almost 25 years old but they are ok. Some of the projects in the capital improvement budget include a new heater at Flora, addressing the cracks at Sutton, both water playgrounds, and drain work at Sutton. There is a CIP request to hire a consultant to assess both pools.

Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal told commissioners the park budget was similar to the past few years. Fifteen improvement level items were being requested.

It was moved by Hoffmann, seconded by Schlueter, to accept the Park and Recreation Divisions' operating budgets as proposed by staff. The motion passed unanimously.

PETS IN PARKS-
ORDINANCE
RECOMMEN-
DATION; VOTE:

Commission Chair Ken Klinge had the following comments regarding the public meeting: he recorded 19 in favor of changing the ordinance and 10 against. Requests were made that the commission consider banning certain types of dogs and banning dogs from Farmer's Market and All that Jazz and those types of events.

Commissioner Lydon said Dubuque Main Street is dealing with the issue of whether to allow pets at Farmer's Market and big downtown events – it would be their call. In reference to banning certain breeds of dogs, many cities are now repealing their ban on certain breeds of dogs because it comes down to the owner being responsible. Ms. Lydon distributed a list of possible extra sites to place dog waste stations, including a cost estimate. She feels having dog waste bags and trash cans at these extra locations will help the situation. Manager Ware said with the current budget restrictions, any extra funding would be unlikely.

Manager Ware told commissioners that Barry Lindahl, City Attorney reviewed the proposed amendment and made some minor changes that did not change the intent of the proposal, i.e., where it was "animals" it is now "dog or cat." He also made the wording consistent with other parts of City Ordinance related to "parks, trails, open spaces and areas."

Commissioner Hoffmann asked where we are at with enforcement. He hikes at Mines of Spain fairly often with his dogs and even though signs are posted that dogs must be on a leash there are dogs running loose all the time. He wants to know how we are going to enforce the ordinance if we allow pets in all areas – he wants this to work but is concerned that we have under-addressed the enforcement issue.

Manager Ware said we are currently tracking and logging instances where pets are in parks where they are not supposed to be. From an enforcement perspective, full time park patrol would be able to write municipal infractions but we are down to 1 full time patrol. If the City Manager approves, the seasonal patrol can get trained to write tickets for municipal infractions. There are two animal control officers but as with park patrol, they are not working all the time and are part-time. Police response would depend on what else is going on and if there were higher priority calls.

Commissioner Lydon said overall we need to have more awareness and education for the public. It is good that we kept track of parks where infractions occurred. It looks like the numbers are going down. Basically it's the same thing for vandalism, littering, etc – no enforcement. Commissioner Lyness feels the public won't take the ordinance seriously until somebody gets fined and it makes the news/newspaper.

It was moved by Schlueter, seconded by Lydon, to accept the changes to the language of the ordinance recommended by Legal Department December 9th and recommend the proposed ordinance amendment to the City Council. The motion failed 3-3 with Kennicker, Lydon and Schlueter voting yes; Hoffmann, Klinge and Lyness voting no.

Manager Ware will check with Legal Department on what the proper procedure is now since the vote ended in a tie with one commissioner missing.

EMERALD ASH
BORER
READINESS
PLAN; VOTE:

Manager Fehsal discussed the Emerald Ash Borer Readiness Plan distributed to commissioners that may be found as part of the original minutes. The purpose of the plan is to outline what to do in preparation once EAB gets to Dubuque – our options, things we need to address, etc. Many cities have EAB readiness plans but each is unique depending on the city. The plan does not say how we will manage the problem, the City Council and staff will have to make those decisions as more information is researched and brought forward. Information regarding Emerald Ash Borer is on the city website for the public.

Commissioner Hoffmann asked if an injection would take care of an infected tree and Mr. Fehsal said it potentially could as long as the infection was not past a certain point.

The tree crew has inventoried all city parks and street trees to see how many Ash trees there are on city property; a copy of the map and the numbers will be sent to commissioners. Mr. Fehsal mentioned that there are 107 ash trees in Flora Park alone. Currently when the crew cuts down an Ash tree they check the wood over to make sure the tree was not infected.

Commissioner Kennicker asked what we will do with the wood if we cut down Ash trees. Mr. Fehsal said most cities use for firewood but that is part of the plan, to come up with those strategies. Manager Ware said we are working with other departments like Public Works and Public Information to have a good coordinated plan. The goal is to be proactive so we don't get hit and overwhelmed all at one time.

It was moved by Hoffmann, seconded by Lyness, to recommend the Emerald Ash Borer Readiness Plan to the City Council. The motion passed unanimously.

SLEDDING
ORDINANCE
UPDATE:

Manager Ware informed commissioners that their recommendation to amend City Ordinance to prohibit sledding, downhill skiing, snowboarding or tobogganing except in certain designated areas in certain City parks is moving forward and is on the December 15th City Council agenda.

Ms. Ware reminded commissioners that there is no immunity for sledding for municipalities right now. Last year the House passed a bill but it did not make it through the Senate. The two designated places allowed in the proposed ordinance will be Allison-Henderson and Bunker Hill. Citizens can contact Leisure Services if they want to add a different location. Staff would then check a requested area to make sure the location is safe for possible addition to the it is safe

Commissioner Schlueter said we had signage up last year and he was wondering if there were any issues with injuries / lawsuits. Mr. Fehsal said most injuries go unreported.

PARK DIVISION
REPORT:

Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal informed Commissioners:

- ◆ Continue to work on budget.
- ◆ We are working on coming up with a management strategy for EAB.
- ◆ Mr. Fehsal is working on an RFP for skate park consultant.
- ◆ The Parks to People group meets every couple weeks to work on a plan.
- ◆ Kelly Goossen was hired as the Horticulturist but that leaves an Assistant Horticulturist position vacant.
- ◆ Plants will be arriving for the greenhouse next week so staff will be working on those along with the usual work on picnic tables.
- ◆ Staff is working on some renovation projects and some outdoor projects that we are able to do since the weather has been nice.

RECREATION
DIVISION
REPORT:

Recreation Division Manager Dan Kroger informed Commissioners:

- ◆ New winter/spring brochures will be mailed December 19th.
- ◆ Staff is working on online marketing for golf and the pro shop. They will be open four hours per week Monday through Friday during the winter; 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- ◆ A revised job description to hire the new golf pro is in the works.
- ◆ Facilities Manager sent a survey to 200 boaters that stayed at the Marina at least one night last year to see what they were doing while in Dubuque – 31 replied back (15%). Of the 31 responses, 24 different restaurants were visited; hotel reservations were made at 8 different hotels for at least one night; 22 other places were visited. It shows there are a lot of businesses impacted by the City having the Marina.

MANAGER
REPORT:

Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware informed Commissioners:

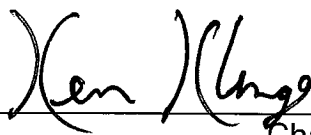
- ◆ A lot of time is being spent on the budget, finding savings for budget - what projects can be delayed, what equipment purchases can be delayed, etc. At the budget meeting with the City Manager and Budget Director, the City Manager was very complimentary to our leadership team and staff on the work

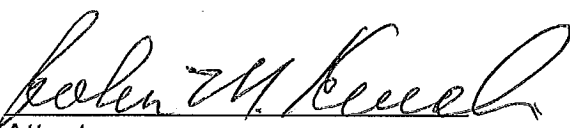
they have done – working together here as a team and working with other departments and partnering with outside organizations. ♦ A copy of the City Council Goals and Priorities including Management Agenda for 2014-2016 was included in commission agenda packet and may be found as part of the original minutes.

Commissioner Hoffmann asked if we would have trouble with Bee Branch with the shortage of staff yet continued expansion of the project. Ms. Ware said it takes a year to build a section and a two-year maintenance requirement for the contractor is built into the contract. Ms. Ware said the department has been very involved in the planning process to give suggestions on how to make things low maintenance and use sustainable practices.

ADJOURN;
VOTE:

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


Chairperson


Attest

