

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, May 12, 2015

4:30 p.m., Allison-Henderson Building, Upper Level, 1500 Loras Boulevard

PRESENT: Bob Blocker, Paul Hoffmann, Robin Kennicker, Ken Klinge, Kate Lydon and Karen Lyness

ABSENT: Dave Schlueter

STAFF PRESENT: Marie Ware, Steve Fehsal, Dan Kroger, Jolene Rettenberger, Ben Alden, Ken and Nancy Clayton

MINUTES APPROVED; VOTE: It was moved by Blocker, seconded by Lydon, to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2015, meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

RECOMMENDATION REGARDING SLEDDING ORDINANCE 10-5B-12; VOTE: Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware shared with Commissioners that she has worked with the City Attorney's office, Iowa Communities Assurance Pool (ICAP), and O'Connor and English Insurance Agency to review the change in the state legislation and how it relates to the current sledding ordinance. The review of the legislation allows the change of our current practice and ordinances. It means that anyone can sled anywhere on city property. We will no longer designate, inspect and/or sign areas.

It was moved by Blocker, seconded by Hoffmann, to recommend to the City Council to repeal the Sledding Ordinance, 10-5B-12. The motion passed unanimously.

NATIONAL KIDS TO PARKS DAY- MAY 16TH, VOTE: Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware shared with Commissioners that the "National Kids to Parks Day" will be celebrated on Saturday, May 16th. Last year the commission recommended waiving the Eagle Point Park entrance fee on Kids to Parks Day.

It was moved by Lydon, seconded by Kennicker, to waive the entrance fee into Eagle Point Park in celebration of "National Kids to Parks Day" on Saturday, May 16th, 2015. The motion passed unanimously.

PARKS TO PEOPLE: Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware shared with the Commissioners a flier on the *Parks To People*. The Mission is to enhance, promote, sustain and connect our region's cultural, natural and park assets. Our region, which was the only one in the state of Iowa, was chosen for this project in which \$1.9 million dollars are available. We will be focusing efforts on connecting the Mines of Spain to St. Donatus to Bellevue. Other projects include: Maquoketa on the Move, The Mississippi Circuit, Prairie Creek Connections and Crossing the Wapsi: Bridging History. The committee would like to see *A Region of Innovators*, which is a way of helping visitors design their own highly-personalized experiences. We will help build a database and website for people to utilize for things they want to explore outdoors.

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REVIEW OF
CURRENT PARK
STAFFING:

Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal updated Commissioners:

- A packet was shared regarding the FY2016 frozen positions within the Park Division. As presented in our most recent budget hearing, we have a total of five frozen positions, which equals a total amount of 7,713 hours. The new Park Ranger work schedule shows the elimination of 1,132 hours of patrolling (2,096 total hours). Seasonal park laborers will help cover park patrol issues on Saturdays and Sundays between the hours of 8:00 am and 3:00 pm.
- Seasonal workers have been placed at both Flora and Murphy Parks.
- We have hired about 1/3 new park seasonal workers this summer so far.
- We are "cross training" our park employees. This will be beneficial to us as more retirements will be happening.

Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware shared with the Commissioners that it's important that we are all aware of how the frozen positions will have an impact on the department. However, it is also important to know that we will continue to work and be up-to-date with job priorities such as vandalism, graffiti, restroom/building maintenance, refuse collection, grass mowing, weed control, tree calls, flags, playground inspections, snow removal and storm response as needed.

Commissioner Kennicker asked about the status of workers at the Bee Branch. Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware confirmed that in FY 2016, we have funding for Bee Branch maintenance positions. The next phase to be built, we will request an Improvement Package for maintenance coverage.

Commissioner Klinge had a question about who keeps track of working hours of staff with the *Affordable Care Act*. Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal shared that all seasonal workers average about 1,200 total hours (work 40 hours per week from the last week in April through last week in October). For those seasonal workers who work year round, they average about 29 hours per week. Office staff (Peggy Kraus) keeps track of hours.

Commissioner Hoffmann is not happy with the Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project.

REVIEW OF
FLOWER
PLANTING
BASED ON
BUDGET:

Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal shared a list of eliminating plantings throughout the city with Commissioners. As noted, several sites will not have flowers planted and some sites will have fewer flower plantings with the maintenance/watering done by staff at that site. All flowers will be planted in flower baskets by the Memorial Day holiday.

Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware shared that with no planting of flowers along Grandview Avenue, there was a group of citizens who went in front of

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the City Council to express their interest in adopting the plant lawns. She shared there is an E.B. Peony Fund which are funds to maintain the peonies along Grandview Avenue. This group would like to plant perennials in the 45 garden beds and Plymouth Court area. If approved, each area will have a "Block Captain" who will be responsible for weeding, maintaining and watering the garden bed.

To date, the group shared they have \$12,000 in the bank and with more funds coming in, they would like to hire a professional landscaper to plant a variety of perennials. They will maintain the beds through July 1, 2016.

Prior to this approval, Steve Fehsal and Marie Ware will need to review the variety of perennials, plus meet with the Engineering Department and other departments to review the project proposal.

The group estimates the average cost per flower bed is \$600.

Commissioners Lydon and Lyness were happy to hear the news about citizens wanting to help beautify the flower beds along Grandview Avenue.

Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware is preparing information to be placed on the City Council agenda for Monday, May 18th.

PARK DIVISION
REPORT:

Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal updated Commissioners:

- Very busy time of year for staff with mowing grass and spraying weeds.
- We had 378 cars enter Eagle Point Park for the annual Boy Scout's Mother's Day Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, May 10th, 2015.
- Construction is now complete on the campground managers' office at Miller Riverview Park. Park maintenance worker Tim Lattner did a great job on the inside of the office building. We will be installing a ramp for handicap accessibility soon.
- Many thanks to Nicole Breitsprecker for her assistance with the new map of Miller Riverview Park for our online camping software.
- Holiday online camping reservations went well on Wednesday, May 6th. Camping reservations went extremely fast within the first 45 minutes, 72 out of 98 spots were reserved. For the Memorial Day holiday, 50 spots have been reserved online. For the July 4th holiday, 82 spots have been reserved online. For the Labor Day holiday, 20 spots have been reserved online. Many thanks to Ken and Nancy Clayton and Ben Alden and Steve Fehsal for working on the online camping reservation system.
- It is hoped to begin to hard surface some of the campground sites (handicap sites) at Miller Riverview Park with money available in the CIP.

Mark your calendar for the following special events held at the Miller Riverview Campground: Saturday, July 13th – Garage Sale; Saturday, July 25th – Christmas in July; Saturday, August 15th – Pirates Weekend and Saturday, October 3rd – Halloween. In order to participate in the above events, a camping reservation is required.

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Commissioner Lydon asked if we have a plan of action ready for the Emerald Ash Borer. Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal shared that we will be pro-active on removing dead and/or declining Ash trees. Some trees will be given an injection. We are currently working on the plan of action for Emerald Ash Borer which will be presented to the City Council. The Readiness Plan has already been adopted.

Commissioner Klinge shared his frustrations with the online camping reservation system. The campsites went extremely fast online and some people had difficulty making their reservation(s).

Commissioner Blocker also shared his concerns about the new campground manager's office building and how can we secure from vandalism during the off-season. According to Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal, safety measures have and will be put into place.

RECREATION
DIVISION
REPORT:

Recreation Division Manager Dan Kroger updated Commissioners:

- With the assistance of the Park Division, both swimming pools have been filled with water and filter tanks will be cleaned. Opening date for Flora and Sutton swimming pools is Saturday, May 23rd.
- We have received 3,329 registrations for summer activities/classes.
- With the nice weather and no flooding, the Port of Dubuque Marina is \$4,500 ahead of last year. Lots of fuel has been sold at the marina.
- Program Supervisor Brian Feldott has been working with the Dubuque Pony League and the Dream Center for team participation. To date, the Dream Center has two teams that play in the Pony League and baseball games will be held at the Comiskey Park, which is a great location for families and friends to attend.

MANAGER
REPORT:

Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware shared with Commissioners that we will be developing Creek Wood Park (1798 Creek Wood Drive) this calendar year. Monies will be available July 1, 2015.

COMMISSION
COMMUNICA-
TIONS/QUESTIO
NS:

Commissioner Blocker has received notice from City Clerk Kevin Firnstahl about his term expiring on June 30, 2015. Blocker reported he will be reapplying to serve on the Park and Recreation Commission.

Commissioner Klinge asked if the commissioners were going to go on another trolley tour of the parks this year as part of our Park and Recreation Commission meeting. Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware will make arrangements for this to take place later this summer.

ADJOURN;
VOTE:

It was moved by Hoffmann, seconded by Lydon, that the meeting be adjourned at 5:57 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.



Chairperson



Attest