

PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Name of Commission,

Board or Committee: Parks & Recreation Committee

Date & Time of Meeting: Monday, October 5, 2009 at 2:00 P.M.

Place of Meeting: Coughlin Building (Volunteer Room)
625 E. County Rd. Y, Oshkosh WI

Present: Jerry Finch, Mike Norton, Nancy Barker, Arlene Schmuhl, Tom Konetzke.

Also present: Rob Way, Vicky Redlin, Loren Dieck, Bob Lohry – Winnebago County Parks, Pat Wolff – Oshkosh Northwestern, Donna Lohry – citizen, Claude Thompson – County Supervisor District 14.

1. Call to order – Meeting called to order by Chairman Finch at 2:00 p.m.
2. Approval of August 31, 2009 Minutes – Chairman Finch called for a motion to approve the August 31, 2009 meeting minutes. Arlene Schmuhl moved to approve the 8/31/09 meeting minutes. Nancy Barker seconded. Motion carried 5-0.
3. Public Comments – Donna Lohry spoke regarding her desire to see the Winnebago County Community Park Swimming beach reopened as a fully lifeguarded facility. She stated that the lack of chlorine in the water was attractive for those with allergies to the chemical. She brought up a few options for funding the added expense of the lifeguards and thanked the Committee for allowing her to speak. Claude Thompson also spoke regarding reopening the beach with lifeguards. He stated he would approve of the additional funding if it could be off set by fees.
4. Discussion of 2010 Community Park Beach Programming – Rob Way went over the numbers for past years operations at the beach when it was a fully lifeguarded facility and the years that it was open or closed. He explained that in the proposed `10 Parks Budget that has been submitted, there is no funding included for operating the Service Center at the beach. The beach itself would continue to remain open as a swim at your own risk facility. At some later date the beach house could be rented out as a shelter but that is not a topic to discuss at this time. Mike Norton requested the cost of lifeguards and offsetting revenue for 2004, the last year the beach was operated by the Parks Dept. with lifeguards. Rob explained that since his research is not complete he would prefer to only give averages for costs as records going back are either unavailable or difficult to find. The average total amount of revenue from 1994-2004 is \$11,000.00. The average cost of beach wages and fringes including lifeguards attendants & management, ran at between \$53,000.00 and \$55,000.00 with a total operations budget of about \$60,000.00 annually for the same time period. Admission and concession revenue averaged \$8,500.00 for admissions and \$2,300.00 for concessions from 1994-2004. Admission was charged at \$1.50 per day for children and \$2.50 per day for adults. Four to six lifeguards were on duty at all times. To begin to cover costs of lifeguarding the beach the admission fees would have to rise dramatically. The average tax levy would be \$45,000.00 for the facility. Mike Norton stated that he feels to leave it open to swim at your own risk is the best option due to the waning popularity of the facility. Nancy Barker agreed and stated that she would love to see it reopen as a guarded facility but that the attendance dollars just were not there. Jerry Finch also stated that he would like to have the beach remain as a swim at your own risk facility but monitor it occasionally to see what the attendance is and if the persons using the facility are the coming back time after time or if it is attracting new visitors. Donna Lohry asked if an Ad Hoc committee could be formed to study the options for reopening the beach as a lifeguarded facility with a decision in a month. Tom Konetzke compared the beach with a similar area in Menasha where there is no issue regarding the beach being unguarded. Arlene Schmuhl stated that part of the current draw is that it is free. Rob is getting the figures from the Winneconne Park beach to see how this similar facility is doing. Chairman Finch then proceeded to appoint an ad hoc

committee consisting of Tom Konetzke, Mike Norton, Rob Way and Donna Lohry to explore the options for funding a lifeguarded beach and return with info at a meeting later this year or early next.

5. Consideration of Offer to Accept Donation of Property – Rob Way reported that he has spoken to Chuck Farrey regarding the property in question and was told that the land owner approached the township over a year ago to offer the property to the town. The town had turned-down the offer. Dave Misterek from the DNR was consulted and he stated to Rob that the site comprises what amounts to a typical town dump that existed during a time that was largely unregulated. As such, he indicated that there was the possibility for toxins to be present on the property that could someday poise a concern if they were to migrate to nearby residential wells. Mike Norton moved to turn down the offer of the property. Nancy Barker seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

6. Commemorative Trail Bench – Discussion of Wording Options – Rob Way provided a hand out with photos of the proposed type of bench. This is the bench that is currently being used by the Parks Dept. for commemorative donations. There will be a charge of \$100 - \$250 extra for putting wording on the bench. There can be anywhere from 60 to 120 characters in the message. Mike Norton stated that he would still like to see a sign or plaque kiosk at the site explaining the filming of the movie. Jerry Finch and Rob Way will meet with the Town of Clayton chairman or Parks Board chairman to discuss the wording for the bench, the possibility for a sign/plaque and the costs incurred by each entity. Mike Norton moved to approve the installation of a bench and/or sign plaque pending approval of the wording to be inscribed on each. Tom Konetzke seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

7. Approve Transfer of Kubota Front Deck Mower from Airport – Rob Way went over the benefits for acquiring the surplus tractor from the airport. Mike Norton moved to approve the transfer of equipment from the Airport to the Parks. Tom Konetzke seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

8. Request Acceptance of Capital Equipment Item Change within Parks Proposed `10 Budget – Rob Way explained the need to replace the Komatsu loader instead of the otherwise approved Kubota tractor for the 2010 capital budget. The Komatsu has recently been deemed the piece of equipment most likely to breakdown and parts are not readily available. Mike Norton moved to approve the change in the `10 Capital Budget items. Tom Konetzke seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

9. Review of AutumnFest `09 – A hand out was included in packets regarding this year's Autumn Fest. Vicky Redlin stated that any suggestions for the event would be welcome, but there is a limit to the amount of activities that can be done at the event due to the lack of volunteers.

10. Lighthouse Info Regarding Renaming and Shoreline Rehab – Rob Way reported that the shoreline rehab for the Asylum Point island needs to be done but there is no money to do it. The boat launch fund cannot be used as the island is not part of the boat launch area. The cost is approximately \$12,000.00. He will seek grants for help in funding the project. Naming rights were not discussed.

11. Approval of Easement Request from WP&L to Convert an Electric Distribution Line to an Underground Service that Crosses the Mascoutin Valley Trail – Rob Way stated that it is good news that the power company wants to move the wires underground and to officially establish a utility easement where there has formally never been one. This will be ascetically more pleasing for trail users. The trail will only be disrupted for a day or two for installation. John Bodnar must still approve the agreement. Arlene Schmuhl moved to approve the easement with approval from John Bodnar. Mike Norton seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

12. Parks Director's updates: FEMA funding & Lake Poygan Bt. Lndg. Proj. Update – The FEMA grant money has come in for damage repair to Waukau Creek. There is still one outstanding issue, of trail levels to be addressed before the project is finished. The Poygan boat launch project should be starting in the next week or two. Radtke Contractors got the bid for the Poygan project.

13. Committee Chairman's updates: - Chairman Finch attended the WCA convention and looked for opportunities for grants and sponsorships for the department. He asked if the Committee was comfortable with him approaching some area businesses regarding funding for the tennis courts. The Committee agreed that Chairman Finch could approach such businesses in the interest of marketing sponsorship funding for tennis court repairs.

14. Committee Member's updates: - Mike Norton also attended the WCA conference and took in an invasive species program which he will discuss at the next meeting. He also attended Hmong Fest. Nancy Barker reported that she is seeking events at which to hand out information on the ongoing census. Arlene Schmuhl reported that the Visitor's Guide and a fishing guide will be finished soon. She also will be planning a segment of the Discover WI program.

15. Staff Updates: - Bob Lohry reported on the completion of the Asylum Point bollard project and passed out photos.

16. Future Agenda Items: Examination of Future Infrastructure Needs, Parks Department Software Needs.

17. Next Meeting Date – November 2, 2009 at 2:00 p.m.

18. Adjournment – Chairman Finch called for a motion to adjourn. Mike Norton moved to adjourn. Nancy Barker seconded. Motion carried 5-0. Meeting adjourned 4:02 p.m.