

PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

DATE: September 11, 2012

PLACE: JP Coughlin Center
Volunteer Room
625 E. Cty. Rd. Y
Oshkosh WI 54901
8:30 a.m..

PRESENT: Parks Committee - Jerry Finch, Mike Norton, Tom Konetzke, Harold Singstock, Don Miller.

ALSO PRESENT: Rob Way – Winnebago County Parks Dept.
Fred Redman, John and Rose Dorsey – Pickleball Enthusiasts
Michelle Kennedy – FWCDP.

1. Call to order – Meeting called to order by Chairman Finch at 8:30 a.m..
2. Approval of August 7, 2012 Minutes – Tom Konetzke moved to approve the minutes with the changing of the word “No” to “Know that” as well as the inclusion of “and salary” to be added in back of the words, “... Vicky’s job description ...”, within item 9. Mike Norton seconded. Motion carried 5-0.
3. Public Comments – none
4. Address Neenah School District’s Response to County’s Proposal for Leasing of Irish Road & West American Drive Property for use as a Dog Park – Rob went-over a few of the details included in his summary of the meeting that took place with Neenah Joint School District representatives on August 20th. Michelle Kennedy brought a paper article to the committee’s attention and mentioned that the survey that was taken polled 50 people who showed overwhelming support for establishment of a dog park. She also shared that it was her opinion that it would be best to resume the search for a site. Harold Singstock indicated that he leans towards discontinuing efforts in going after the school property mainly because of differences dealing with the lack of any possibility of obtaining reimbursement for capital expenses. However he does not oppose putting forth another offer. Jerry Finch expounded upon the plusses and minuses connected to both the school site and the other site that is of interest to the county. Mike Norton then mentioned that his main problem with the school district’s stance is that it omits the possibility of there being a 10 year lease term. Tom Konetzke questioned the usefulness of continuing negotiations with the school district and went on to ask about the correct procedure(s) for pursuing a land purchase if/when we eventually do come across a favorable site. Rob Way subsequently reviewed the process with the committee and stated that his info had come from Corp Counsel. Mike Norton went on to state that he prefers ownership over leasing and that the biggest sticking point with the school district remains the presence of the 3 year window to vacate notice. Mike Norton then motioned to discontinue pursuing the Neenah School District property as a site for a dog park. Motion was seconded by Harold Singstock. A friendly motion was made and agreed upon by Mike Norton and Harold Singstock to include a directive for staff to proceed with evaluating a different north county site

for use as a dog park. Don Miller then asked for more details about the other property and asked how the county would fund its development. Michelle Kennedy recommended that before figures could be put together it would be beneficial to first tour the site in order to begin putting together thoughts on development. Jerry Finch followed-up with a suggestion that one more shot be made at negotiating terms with the school district. Don Miller commented that he preferred ownership to leasing. The vote was called and the motion carried 3 – 2. In closing, Michelle Kennedy presented a thank you letter from a user of the Community Park dog park. Jerry Finch finished with a request that staff write-up an appropriate thank you letter to the school district and also indicate to the Post Crescent that the county will no longer be pursuing the school district property.

5. Discussion of Options for including Pickleball and Basketball Line Markings in the Layout of the Restored Community Park Tennis Courts – Rob Way introduced Fred Redman, a local pickleball enthusiast, who subsequently described the sport of pickleball. He indicated that the game is played on what amounts to a shrunken tennis court (22' X 44') and utilizes a special paddle and ball. He indicated that pickleball is one of the fastest growing sports in the U.S. and has gained a tremendous amount of interest among the 60+ population. Tom Konetzke commented that persons he had talked to enjoy the sport which he also agreed seems to be attracting more interest from the senior crowd. Harold Singstock inquired as to what maintenance costs there would be. Rob Way answered by indicating that since the line markings would be incorporated into the tile pieces themselves there would likely be no cost associated with having to re-mark the pickleball court areas. The word from other parks departments who have this type of tile system is that the surface holds-up very well and that 10 year old courts still look like new today. John Dorsey, another pickleball enthusiast, commented that the popularity is growing outside of Wisconsin as well and he went on to relate how tennis courts are no longer in vogue in the southwest as many facilities have either been built or converted over for use as pickleball courts. Jerry Finch asked about pickleball etiquette. Fred Redman replied that it is a very civil sport with a full array of rules and behavioral guidelines incorporated into the literature developed by the sport's national association. Jerry Finch followed-up with a statement indicating that he would not be in support of allowing formal organized leagues to become established at the site. Tom Konetzke asked about daily maintenance of the courts to which Rob Way replied that the other department with the tile tennis court in place has an employee spend approximately one half hour every other week blowing debris off the surface. Mike Norton pointed out that the addition of the pickleball and basketball court options would help create a niche for another leisure activity to be included within the Community Park. John Dorsey and Fred Redman then proceeded to talk about options for court layouts. Tom Konetzke put forth a question regarding the need to install a practice board at the facility. John Dorsey responded by stating that he had never seen one incorporated into a facility to specifically accommodate pickleball practice. Tom went on to ask staff to explore options and pricing for renovating the 3 north courts as a contingency for future court expansion if the popularity of pickleball were to grow to a point of overload on the 3 south courts. Jerry Finch completed discussion by thanking the guests in attendance and stating that it appears as if the inclusion of pickleball and

basketball court markings is agreed upon as far as the committee is concerned.

6. Parks Director's Updates: ADA, Hmong Labor Day Festival and Open Space Park & Rec. Plan – Rob Way indicated that the bleacher bid was in the process of being awarded. He went on to mention that the Labor Day Hmong Festival had gone over well with no problems encountered. Rob then informed the members that he and Trish Nau of ECWRPC would be meeting the next day in order to discuss aspects of the Open Space Park & Rec. Plan. He added that it was likely that the next committee meeting would involve at least 1 – 1 ½ hours of introducing members to the subject and going over the processes involved in developing the plan.
7. Committee Chairman's Updates: Chairman Finch indicated that aspects of his report had already been addressed earlier in the meeting.
8. Committee Member's Updates: Mike Norton asked staff to expedite the updating of pictures posted on the Parks' website. Don Miller directed a question to Jerry Finch regarding use of the Sheriff's Department's boat for subsequent Parks Committee tours. Jerry responded by indicating that the Sheriff's Department had sold the large boat that use to accommodate the committee during earlier tours. Harold Singstock asked for an update regard the differences between the Farm Bureau and the 4-H in their mutual use of the Expo Food Court. Rob responded by stating that the 3-way meeting that had taken place back in July proved to be productive in ironing-out differences. He added that Vicky Redlin would contact the Farm Bureau's Jim Kasten to ascertain with all certainty whether-or-not the two parties had resolved their differences. Tom Konetzke asked Rob if there was any update on the topic regarding department space needs. Rob noted that there were no new developments that he knew of. He then added that if anything were to come up in the near future it would likely have to do with the findings produced by the architect that Maintenance was contracting with to evaluate the 3 – 4 oldest buildings left on the expo and workshop area campuses. Jerry Finch completed the discussion with a request that the County Executive be invited to attend the upcoming committee meeting involving the updating of the Open Space Park & Rec. Plan.
9. Staff Updates: No other staff present.
10. Next Meeting Date – October 9, 2012 at 8:30 a.m..
11. Adjournment – Chairman Finch called for a motion to adjourn. Tom Konetzke moved to adjourn. Mike Norton seconded. Motion carried 5-0. Meeting adjourned 10:30 a.m..

Respectfully Submitted,
Rob Way
Parks Director/Expo Mgr.