

HARTFORD PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Wednesday, June 7, 2023

5:30 PM – City Hall Council Chambers

Present: Todd Rusniak, Ken Mikulec, Joe Kohler, Kate Carroll, John Klabecek, Dan Hummel

Absent: Scott Helms

1. President Rusniak called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM; "This is an open meeting under 19.81 to 19.98 of the Wisconsin State Statutes".
2. Approval of Minutes – **MOTION BY**, Kohler, seconded by Carroll to approve May minutes.
MOTION CARRIED
3. Informational Monthly Staff Reports – Reviewed. Noted that memberships/attendance is down, but all other enrollments are looking good.
4. Communication and Correspondence –
VFW Post Flag Pole Donation – The Director thanked Ron Schnorenberg and the VFW for their donation of \$4,500 to install a flag pool and American Flag at Independence Park. Ron and members of the VFW felt a flag would be appropriate at this location given the number of athletic events held there. The flag pole that was on top of City Hall is being used, helping save on the cost. The location will be near the shelter at Independence Park as this is the most viable place to run the electric needed for the light.
USTA Venue Service Grant Award – The Director informed the Commission that the department received a \$5,000 grant from USTA – United State Tennis Association. This will be used to replace the backboard at the Willowbrook courts. In addition, the Department had received \$750 from WTA (Wisconsin Tennis Association). This will also be used for the backboard as the cost to replace said backboard is \$12,000. The Director is hoping to receive more donations to cover the entire cost of the backboard.

The Director mentioned that staff has been receiving many calls about tree issues with park land that abuts private property. He wanted to share that he has also heard from some of these property owners thanking staff for their prompt response in resolving their issue.

5. Appearances / Public Comments – None
6. Old Business – None
7. New Business

ADMINISTRATION

2024-2028 Capital Improvement Program – The Commission received the current 2023-2027 CIP list. The Director included the CIP's for the Building (which includes the Library) Cemeteries and Taxi Divisions. Although these departments are not under the Parks and Recreation Commission review, the Director included them for the Commission to have an understanding of what the Director and Parks Maintenance Supervisor oversee.

As staff reviews this list, they update cost projections and requests. In addition, staff is to make requests for 2028 CIP projects. Should a request be made to add or move a project into the current 5-year CIP, another project must move or new funding source for the project being requested to change must be indicated. For new 2028 projects, the Director is considering the following.

5yr Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
Skatepark equipment update
Willowbrook Park bathroom update
Stand alone/permanent pickleball courts/facility
Independence Park playground equipment
Dog Park – expansion/additional park/small dog area.

The Director commented that he hopes, with the help of community member Sean Hampe, to fundraise for some of the Skate Park updates. Sean was very involved in fundraising and helping build the skate park initially.

If the Commission has any additional requests, those should be shared with the Director. President Rusniak expressed his disappointment that the Beine park site was slated in the CIP. Commissioner Hummel would like to be sure continuation/adding to the Rubicon River Trail remains.

RECREATION PROGRAMS / ACTIVITIES

Golf Simulator Update – A photo of the installed golf simulator was shared with the Commission. Installation went smoothly and quickly. The simulator was not as tall as anticipated and thus mechanicals/utilities in the ceiling were not affected as much as originally thought. Some staff were trained on the use and the Director is working on rules, regulations, and policies. Work still needs to be done on the reservation process. As staff finalizes the rules, policies and reservation process, the Simulator is being ‘tested’ by Department Heads and other staff to help us work out the ‘bugs’.

Summer Playground Report – Staff has been hired including a few returning staff. The leaders are all young, but seem willing to learn and eager to work. Most attended a training held in New Berlin over the weekend. In house training will be held this week. Enrollment was able to be increased due to hiring an additional leader. Most sessions have around 35-40 participants with 50 being the maximum allowed enrollment.

Cops Rods and Reels – This yearly event is co-hosted with Slinger and held at the Mill Pond. It will be Wednesday, June 28 from 1-3 PM for kids ages 7-14. Bait is provided as are snacks and tshirts.

ADULT / YOUTH SPORT

Youthball Report – Games have started. T-Ball clinics held last week. There is still a need for umpires. The Youthball Coordinator is doing GREAT! And for the first few games, the Concessions have also been doing well.

Basketball – Ages 6-9 and 4-6 – Starts Saturday, June 10.

Tennis Lessons – Youth Ages 4-13, Adult Ages 14+, Starts June 12. Level 4 lessons will be cancelled as no one has registered. Level 2 had a wait last. Staff will be looking at moving some on the waitlist to other levels as appropriate to accommodate more students.

AQUATICS

Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center –

SEASON OPENING SCHEDULE – The pool opened for weekend hours on June 3 and 4. Attendance was good with 900 on Saturday and 500-600 on Sunday. We also held the Summer Splash event – and end of school party for middle school students this past Friday, June 3. There was a good turnout as the weather was splendid. Over 200 kids attended this swim party that has music, games and concessions.

SWIM PASS SALES – Sales for season passes are going well and should be on target to match sales from last year.

SWIM LESSONS – Swim lessons registrations have been going very well. As staff is able to, instructors will be added as well as instructor aides for some classes, to be able to add more classes/openings.

WATER WALK CHANGES – Three of the ‘floating animals’ that are part of the water walk are worn and weathered, some with severe cracking giving it sharp surfaces. The Aquatic Fitness Supervisor researched the cost of replacing them and it was quite expensive. He then researched other options and found a very cost effective ‘floating circle/tube’ that comes in multiple colors. Staff was concerned that they may look cheap and detract from the water walk. However, once installed they do look great.

Alderperson Kohler asked if the sun shades were holding up. The Maintenance Supervisor commented they were at about 75%. Some patching has been done over the years and fading, but in all, they were holding up well, given their age. However, he did state they likely will need to be replaced within 3-5 years.

Signicast Family Aquatic Center

SESSION 2 SWIM LESSONS – This session will start June 12. Classes are about 90% full, which is a great percentage!

The Director informed the Commission that he and the Maintenance Supervisor met with a representative from Water Play – the company the new play feature for the indoor pool is being ordered from. The three of them discussed the installation schedule in conjunction with the other pool maintenance being done in August. Water Play feels confident they can install within the August shut down schedule.

PARKS OPERATIONS

Centennial Park Update- The pavilion is taking shape. However, not so much on the rest of the park as staff continues to wait for the DNR to approve the City’s soil remediation plan. Staff is hopeful this will be next week.

Parks Staffing Report – Parks have hired 4 seasonal employees and sifting through applications about possibly adding an additional seasonal staff member. As for the full-time position that is to be added in July, Luke Bares has been offered the position and he has accepted. Luke lives in Richfield and currently works for the West Bend Park, Rec and Forestry Dept. Luke has a CDL, pesticide applicator certification and climber trimmer, bucket operator/forester certifications and has a BA in Recreation Management from UW LaCrosse. Luke begins July 10.

Parks Project Report – The Director thanked Dan Hummel and his crew for spreading gravel on our disc golf tee pads. The Park crew installed the swing set purchased with a donation by VFW. Staff was able to get it installed prior to the Memorial Day Ceremony. Photos of the installation process was shared in the Commission packet. In addition to installing the swing set by Memorial Day, staff has been working hard to clean up and mow and trim the cemeteries.

Other seasonal work:

- Mowing and trimming
- Restroom Cleaning
- Shelter Reservation Preparations
- Tree Removals
- Memorial Day Preparation at the Cemetery and Sawyer Park
- Riverwalk Work with VBH
- Playground Equipment Installation – Sawyer Park
- High School Day Of Service Assistance

Discuss July Commission Meeting and Park Tour – The Director confirmed if the July 5 meeting would work in Commissioner’s holiday schedule and if that meeting should be the annual park tour. Commission was favorable to both. The Director also said to reach out to him should anyone have suggestions on which parks to tour. As of now, he will plan to include Centennial and the Recreation Center back lot to discuss pickleball (and look at the golf simulator).

OTHER REPORTS /COMMISSION REQUESTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY Mikulec, seconded by Hummel to adjourn at 6:15 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

Submitted by,

Randy Wojtasiak and Sara Cummings

"Persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations for attendance at the meeting should contact the City Clerk at least one (1) business day prior to the meeting." Members of the Common Council may attend the above meeting. Pursuant to State ex rel. Badke v. Greendale Village Board, 173 Wis. 2d 553, 494 N.W. 2d 408 (1993) such attendance may be considered a meeting of the Common Council may attend the meeting without violating the open meeting law."