

## CITY OF WAUSAU – PARK AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date/Time: June 3rd, 2013 at 5:00pm Location: City Hall (407 Grant Street) – Board Room  
Members Present: Jim Brezinski, Gary Gisselman, Robert Mielke, David Nutting, David Oberbeck (c)  
Others Present: William Duncanson - Director, Peter Knotek - Asst. Director, Pat Peckham – City Pages

In accordance with Chapter 19, Wisc. Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and sent to the Daily Herald in the proper manner. It was noted that there was a quorum present and the meeting was called to order by Chairperson Oberbeck at 5:00pm.

Approval of Minutes – **Motion** by Mielke, second by Nutting to approve the May 6th, 2013 draft minutes. **Motion carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

### 2014 Budget – Discussion and Possible Action on:

2014 Departmental Operating Budget Initiatives – Duncanson said there has not been an across the board seasonal wage increase of park employees since 2003 and the department is experiencing the impacts. Applications and the quality of applicants are down, and the department is not retaining employees for multiple years like it used to. He gave examples of the turnover in pool staff. Duncanson explained that first year seasonal laborers are being paid \$7.55 an hour compared to Weston which pays \$9.00, Wausau City DPW which pays \$9.68, and the County Highway Department which pays \$10.70 an hour. He said there hadn't been an increase for the majority of seasonal positions but they did raise the rates for staff at Sylvan Tubing Hill when it became difficult to find and retain seasonal employees. After those wages were increased they now have more returning and dependable employees. Duncanson said staff believes they can make some adjustments in the number of seasonal positions and how they are utilized to help cover a portion of the \$32,000 needed. Oberbeck felt there should be a City wide standard set up and the Park Department seasonal wages should fall within that. Oberbeck said parks always has money left over at the end of the year and Committee had talked about reassigning dollars back into personnel so this should be brought forth to Finance Committee. **Motion** by Brezinski, second by Mielke that staff brings back recommended rates for seasonal wages and work with Personnel so that it falls within other County and City seasonal wages. **Motion carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Duncanson said the County is in the midst of a classification compensation study. It will be presented to County Board in June to be acted on in July. Staff is going to be well through the budgeting process before they will know what the County's payroll will be. The cost will come across to the City through the employees that do work for the City.

Duncanson said there are a lot of large projects going on in the City. Athletic Park has projects both inside and outside of the park. That work includes permitting, design, design reviews and public hearings. Rivers Edge Trail work is going on with the east riverfront development. City staff is trying to get more grant funds so that the trail can be designed and built. There are a lot of special events going on The 400 Block and there is an increase in sporting events because of the success of the Sports Authority in conjunction with public facilities. On the County side staff is participating to an extent in construction of the Sports Complex at Holtz Krause because the Department is going to inherit and manage it. There is a horse barn project in Marathon Park, possible locker room addition at the Multipurpose building, replacement of the County Highway Y bridge at Eau Claire Dells, the Outdoor Recreation Plan, and County special events. This is essentially overwhelming professional administrative staff and limits their ability to do smaller projects or respond to new initiatives.

Duncanson discussed post Act 10 management. He said prior to this supervision was much simpler. They dealt with union contracts that had standards worked out for what work fell to which job classification, performance standards were based on the minimum acceptable, and the disciplinary process was laid out. Now supervisors have to become better managers in dealing with individuals. That is a significant change. Supervisory staff is spending more time on people management. Both the City and the County are investing time and education for managers to be able to do that.

Duncanson said that trash, vandalism and other bad behavior is increasing in the parks. There are more incidences of drunkenness and fights. Oberbeck said with 10% unemployment and City ordinances allowing alcohol in the parks this and blight in the City will not be solved.

2014 Capital Improvement Projects – Projects include 1) the Memorial and Schulenburg pool designs. The design money for both pools would be \$366,000. Oberbeck mentioned he received a couple calls questioning the location of the west side pool. Wausau is expanding and those pools were sited a long time ago. 2) the new neighborhood park at

Athletic Park. The project will cost \$350,000 and \$215,000 is possibly anticipated from outside sources. 3) the Kaiser Pool remodel construction costs are 2.5 million dollars. 4) the Athletic Park historical wall repair. The wall from 1936 needs attention like tuck pointing and cap restoration. The cost for this has yet to be determined. 5) rolling stock. Knotek listed some of the equipment and said the City's fifty percent share would be \$153,500. **Motion** by Mielke, second by Brezinski to approve the Capital Improvement Projects and move them forward to the C.I.P. Committee. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Eau Claire River Conservancy – Discussion and Possible Action on Planning and Construction Timeline – Duncanson said work is still in progress as far as potential land acquisition. Channel 9 is doing some corporate considerations as far as gifting land and granting easements. The City is facing additional work having to do with potential developments plans east of the railroad tracks off of Northwestern and how the Mountain-Bay Trail could be connected. Duncanson had hoped by this time to have had public meetings and discussions about master planning but the other major City and County projects have taken staff's available time. He suggests putting construction funding back a year to do better developmental work. Gisselman and Brezinski both expressed disappointment with the delay. They wonder if someone should be hired temporarily to help with all of the projects that are occurring city wide. Duncanson said a consultant could design the Conservancy but staff would still have to put together a Request for Proposal, guidelines, and administer it and by that time would have 30-40% of time invested. Oberbeck felt funding could be a challenge with all of the projects the City is considering. He said there are other factors involved like the development east of the railroad tracks and also the Channel 9 land. Oberbeck and Nutting both expressed the importance that things be jointly done and anything that can be anticipated in that area like roadways and parking should be coordinated. Discussion followed. Committee requests that at the next meeting staff present a timeline for completion of the project with coordination points and any options that would accelerate it.

Nutting left the meeting at 6:00pm

Urban Design Standards – Discussion of Upcoming City Initiative to Update Our Urban Design Standards – Oberbeck said an RFP was sent out for hiring an urban design planning firm to start working with the City to develop overall urban design standards. They will look at ordinances that possibly restrict the City and other things in the community. He believes the Committee and Park Department should have a representative and be a part of it. Gisselman questioned whose office it was being developed out of. Oberbeck said the Planning Department. Duncanson said the Parks Department deals with urban forestry street design and is also involved in storm water runoff. He also mentioned that the types of subdivisions being built now often have limited road access points and little sidewalk. We need to determine how to have a walkable, bikeable community. Oberbeck mentioned laws are being put in effect in other places which makes it more difficult to remove mature trees because of street projects. **Motion** by Brezinski, second by Mielke that the Parks Department and this Committee be integrated into the project. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 4-0.

Summer Program Update – Duncanson reported that the playgrounds program, swimming and tennis lessons will start on June 10<sup>th</sup>. Swimming pools will open on June 7<sup>th</sup>. There will be a second Splash Into Safety day at Kaiser on June 15<sup>th</sup>. Soccer camp will start on June 17<sup>th</sup>. He said now all that is needed is a little more warmth.

Project Update - Athletic Park Projects – Knotek reported that the Athletic Park projects are moving rapidly. They have solidified the interior park designs and are about ready to go into construction documents and specifications. The preliminary design work has been done on the neighborhood park outside of Athletic Park. Knotek said they are also working on permitting and relocating utilities. Kaiser Pool – Design RFP – Knotek reported that five firms submitted proposals. A review team will meet and rate the firms.

Future Agenda items – conservancy timeline and steps, 2014 budget, east side Rivers Edge Trail update

Next Regular Meeting – Monday, July 1st, 2013 at 5:00pm

Adjourn – **Motion** by Brezinski, second by Mielke to adjourn at 6:30pm. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 4-0.