

CITY OF WAUSAU – PARK AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date/Time: July 1st, 2013 at 5:00pm Location: City Hall (407 Grant Street) – Board Room
Members Present: Jim Brezinski, Gary Gisselman, Robert Mielke, David Oberbeck (c)
Members Excused: David Nutting
Others Present: Peter Knotek - Asst. Director, Brad Lenz – City Planning, Pat Peckham – City Pages,
Theresa Clift – Wausau Daily Herald

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 Gisselman to approve the June 3rd, 2013 draft minutes. **Motion carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 4-0.

River Edge Trail/East Riverfront Redevelopment, Discussion and Possible Action on Parkland Dedication and Associated Agreements Related to Parks and Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities – Lenz distributed a map of the riverfront district between the Eye Clinic and Bridge Street. He said trail construction is the highest priority for the riverfront district and they are planning on using it as a major attraction to the whole area. Before the actual design can happen they are looking at the assessment of the land for environmental and geotechnical concerns to see what it's going to take to build the trail. Along with assessment there may be some remediation of some of the contamination that can be done in conjunction with the design. He discussed some of the preliminary concepts.

Oberbeck is concerned that just a bike path will be built without planning for something more urban. He questioned if it made sense to take on more parks or green space when there is a lot of green space along the river. He wondered at what point Council becomes involved in some type of decision process before the design moves forward. Oberbeck requested a presentation of riverfront developments so members can visualize what other cities are doing and how they are making them successful.

Gisselman doesn't want the trail system to have to wait a long time. He wonders if they can invest the money if they don't know about the development. Lenz felt everyone was open to the idea of developing a waterfront more so than just a trail but questioned when it happens. Oberbeck doesn't believe there is a clear vision of the area and felt the building grades and accessibility guidelines needed to be set right the first time so they are not wasting monies. Brezinski thought they shouldn't get too far ahead of themselves because first they have to clean the area up and see what kind of potential is there.

Lenz mentioned the City received a \$200,000 planning grant from the EPA. He said it is for broader area planning where they could look at what they want to do along the riverfront, what type of densities they want to interact with the river. If they want to step back and take a more wholistic approach and work through the planning grant. The grant can tell what the sources of funding are, what the cost is, how it gets done, how its implemented, whether its phased or not, and if they should provide incentives for the developers. That can all be pulled together but it's going to take time and there will be a lot of debate and discussion. They could look at how the riverfront trail segments are flowing and transitioning. There is one vision of the riverfront trail from the past sort of colliding with what they want to do downtown. Gisselman is concerned about the trail development itself. Knotek said they could put some inexpensive material down to have access until this project happens. Knotek said staff will work with Community Development to get a presentation together. Oberbeck would like to have a presentation by the next meeting for this Committee and inviting other Council members.

Swimming Pools – Discussion and Possible Action on Kaiser Pool Reconstruction Project and the Site Constraints and Service Areas of the Other Pools in the Community – Knotek explained that the selection committee decided to go with Aquatic Design Solutions and he discussed the reasons why. The cost will be \$115,000 and he believes they are getting a great team for this project. **Motion** by Brezinski, second by Mielke to approve the selection of Aquatics Design Solutions. **Motion carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 4-0.

Oberbeck wondered about having the three central pools versus reaching out into areas where the City is expanding. He wants to look at how the City would best be served for the next fifty years. He questioned if the Schulenburg site was the

best location for a lazy river and for parking reasons. Knotek said currently the pools are being specifically designed for their sites. Brezinski would only be open to a different location for Schulenburg if the site wasn't appropriate otherwise he was not in favor of moving pools. Gisselman thought attendance numbers should be looked at. Members would like to see updated information from the 2010 census regarding population and trends.

Parkland Dedication – NWA Development, Discussion and Possible Action on Parkland Dedication and Associated Agreements Related to Parks and Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities - Knotek said this development on Northwestern Avenue is for single family housing and some multi-family housing. The owner has offered parkland from the railroad to the river. For the trail they are looking at coming in along the rail line with the hopes that it can be abandoned where it is not used anymore. It had been used for storage for train cars and only a little bit of that happens anymore. The owner has offered to give the department an easement through his property where they still store trains on the rail line. They can bring the trail through the new parkland and the conservancy area and out to Kent Street. There is also a project to pave the Mountain Bay Trail from Camp Phillips Road up to Ryan St. where it is paved in the village of Weston.

Eau Claire River Conservancy – Discuss Project Timeline and Relationships to Other Projects, Funding, and Staff Capabilities – Knotek distributed a timeline and said this year they are taking an existing condition inventory of soils, wetland/floodway, looking at the land base and ownerships, easements, potential facility and program opportunities. They will be looking at what the trail opportunities could be for hiking, biking, snowshoeing, and cross country skiing. In 2014 they will do some permitting, take public input, final design and cost estimates, construct temporary access and parking. In 2015 they will get into construction and will tie into the Kent Street development.

2014 Budget – Discussion and Possible Action on a 2014 Budget Including Seasonal Wage Increase and Increased Full Time Labor Hours – Knotek distributed a handout which showed the departments existing seasonal wage rates. He discussed the departments wage rates compared to other similar entities. He said because the department pays the lowest wages it makes it difficult to attract high quality workers and to retain them. He noted that because of pool construction the department will be saving some money on wages but when all three new pools are operational that will require higher staffing levels. **Motion** by Brezinski, second by Mielke to approve the proposed increase in the seasonal wage schedule as presented. **Motion carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 4-0.

Knotek reported that on the County side the department has taken on the sports complex and also because of increasing demands at the 400 Block, and Athletic Park would like to bring on a full time laborer in the horticulture division for turf management. This position will be funded 75% on the County side and 25% on the City side. Discussion followed. **Motion** by Brezinski, second by Mielke to approve a new full time position to be cost shared 25% City and 75% County. **Motion carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 4-0.

Project Update - Athletic Park – Knotek reported that the grandstand and park designs are nearing completion. There will be a public hearing on July 11th to discuss closing one block of 5th Street and vacating a portion of the alleyway between two homes that were demolished.

Motion by Brezinski, second by Mielke to go into Closed Session Pursuant to Sec. 19.85(1)(e), Wi Stats., for the Purposes of Deliberating or Negotiating the Purchase of Public Properties, the Investment of Public Funds, or Conducting Other Specified Public Business, Whenever Competitive or Bargaining Reasons Require a Closed Session, To Wit: Discussion and Possible Action on Potential Parkland Acquisition. - Roll Call Vote was taken.

Motion by Brezinski, second by Mielke to return to open session. Roll Call Vote was taken. No announcements.

Future Agenda items – presentation of other communities riverfronts, pool attendance figures at season end, Schulenburg pool constraints.

Next Regular Meeting – Monday, August 5th, 2013 at 5:00pm

Adjourn – **Motion** by Brezinski, second by Mielke to adjourn at 6:40pm. **Motion carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 4-0.