

DRAFT
CITY OF WAUSAU – PARK AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date/Time: April 7th, 2014 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: Bill Duncanson–Director, Peter Knotek-Assistant Director, Pat Peckham – City Pages,
Matt Block - CWOCC

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 Park and Recreation Committee March 3rd, 2014 draft minutes. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Recognition of Service – Oberbeck recognized Brezinski for all of his efforts on the Committee and presented him with a plaque. Members and staff thanked Brezinski for all of his years of service. Brezinski said he has enjoyed his time on the Committee and that the community should be proud of the parks it offers its' citizens.

Sylvan Hill Park Future Use – Discussion and Possible Action a a Request by the Central Wisconsin Offroad Cycling Coalition to Allow Sylvan Hills Park to Become a Mountain Bike Park – Duncanson discussed the history of the park and how the land was acquired. He said current uses include cross country skiing, snowshoeing, snowtubing, chalet rental, and dog walking.

The Central Wisconsin Off-road Cycling Coalition (CWOCC) is the local chapter of the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA). Locations that offer a variety of quality mountain biking facilities within 15 miles of a community that provides the necessary support services can qualify for designation as an IMBA Ride Center. There are currently about 15 IMBA ride centers worldwide with two in the Midwest. One is Copper Harbor, MI and the other is in northern Minnesota. These ride centers attract over 30,000 riders annually. Wausau has the opportunity to become the next IMBA Ride Center due to its existing facilities, existing support services for outdoor recreationists, appropriate land opportunities for future facilities, and a dedicated local mountain biking community. CWOCC has developed a master plan to achieve ride center designation and Sylvan Hill Park has been identified as having great potential to become a high quality multi-faceted mountain bike park.

Block discussed a conceptual idea of trails at Sylvan Hill. They would include a trail head and parking near the chalet or else near Coates Lane to separate it from chalet use in the summer. A perimeter trail, downhill trails and pump track were all possibilities. Block said the trails are natural surface dirt, single track, built by professional trail builders, and built transversing the land to make the trails sustainable. They work around trees and trail maintenance is very minimal. Oberbeck questioned if the trails were dedicated to mountain biking. Block said the perimeter trail loop could be built to be multi-use. It could also be used in the winter for a second use such as snowshoeing. Duncanson said the mountain biking community greatly impacts local economics. Gisselman felt this was a great idea for Sylvan Hill and the City and he looks forward to the development. **Motion** by Gisselman, second by Mielke to allow staff to move forward with investigation and planning for this IMBA Ride Center area.

Committee members want to make sure parking needs would be addressed, people in that area and the whole community would be involved and a presentation be made to City Council. Duncanson said Sylvan is used partly as a regional park, it's a community park as far as shelter rentals and the neighborhood uses it for hiking and for dog walking. He said some of the roles may change with development. This would become a very popular local attraction and tourist destination. Duncanson said that when IMBA designates Ride Centers they are looking for communities that already have bike stores, hotels, restaurants, and a commitment to outdoor recreation activities. Block agreed and said they look beyond that to things like the 400 Block, kayak course, and everything else the community has to offer. Brezinski called the question. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Duncanson informed Committee that the Tribute Golf Course is interested in utilizing portions of Sylvan Hill to help in their expansions. They are interested in building a new clubhouse with one of the possible locations being closer to the Sylvan Hill Chalet. They may also have the opportunity to acquire land to the east of Sylvan Hill property and

create another nine holes. If that were to happen they would need access through the parkland. Duncanson said the golf course was happy with the extended cross country ski trails on their property and in the future there could possibly be the opportunity for lit ski trails. He said there are a number of great possibilities there that need to be sorted out to see what will work best. Members discussed possible parking, street, and capacity issues. Duncanson said this will involve a whole new master plan and a lot of research. There are potential limitations due to much of the land having been purchased with grant funds requiring specific public uses. He said public input must be involved and he appreciates the support of the Committee. He mentioned that the Park Commission is supporting the IMBA Ride Center concept.

Block left the meeting at 6:15pm.

Athletic Park Parking – Discussion and Possible Action to Renew the Annual Agreement with Wilson-Hurd to Allow Public Parking for Athletic Park Activities on their Property – Duncanson said this annual agreement is up for renewal. He requests Committee to give approval for staff to work with Wilson Hurd on a final agreement and bring it forth to Council. **Motion** by Mielke, second by Nutting for staff to work out a final agreement with Wilson Hurd for 2014. Oberbeck asked if any major changes to the agreement for this years from last years. Duncanson said only changes may be some of the language on the facility there will be some new lighting, better surfacing and signing. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Department Director Program of Work – Discussion and Possible Action on the Results of the March 13th Eau Claire River Conservancy Public Meeting – Duncanson said the County Administrator has asked department heads to develop higher levels of programs of work that can be charted in a spreadsheet to be discussed by Committee's at least semi-annually. Some of the items on the City side will take longer than a year and a lot of the projects require collaborative work. Gisselman felt the east riverfront development and River Edge Trail were higher priorities as well as Kaiser Pool. Oberbeck thought the dog park should be listed as a higher priority.

Eau Claire River Conservancy Master Plan – Discussion and Possible Action on the Results of the March 13th Eau Claire River Conservancy Public Meeting – Ideas brought forth were nature based recreation, hiking, snowshoeing, nature study, bird watching, photography, kayaking/canoeing, interpretive center, non-groomed cross country skiing, user parking, fishing, bicycling only on the Mountain-Bay Trail extension. Some non-desirable activities mentioned were hunting, and dogs or dog walking. **Motion** by Gisselman, second by Mielke for staff to continue developing a master plan based on these ideas. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Brockmeyer Park Future Use – Discussion and Possible Action on the Next Steps in Planning the Future Use of Brockmeyer Park – At Committee's request staff will work on holding a public meeting in late May at Stettin School to receive community input regarding the future use of Brockmeyer Park.

Project Update

Athletic Park Grandstand – Progress continues with the majority of exterior work completed. Windows, stairwells and interior finishes will be underway soon. A ceremonial first seat installation event was held Monday, April 1st.

Athletic Park Neighborhood Park – Work is beginning on the neighborhood park. Following demolition of the vacated 5th Street utility work and fence column foundations will begin. Mechanized ground thawing will most likely be required for some portions of the park site.

Kaiser Pool – The Department has received and is reviewing near final construction documents for the pool project.

Future Agenda Items – Bill's program of work – Kaiser Pool, Eau Claire River Conservancy, Athletic Neighborhood Park, Brockmeyer, etc.

Next Regular Meeting – Monday, May 5th, 2014 at 5:00pm

Adjourn - Motion by Brezinski, second by Mielke to adjourn the meeting at 6:40pm. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.