

DRAFT
CITY OF WAUSAU – PARK AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date/Time: August 4th, 2014 at 5:15pm Location: Sylvan Hill Chalet (1329 Sylvan Street)
Members Present: Gary Gisselman, Robert Mielke, David Nutting, Tom Neal, David Oberbeck (c),
Others Present: William Duncanson–Director, Blaine Peterson–City Forester, Keene Winters – Councilman District 6, Jared Adkins – WAOW Channel 9, Kim Pittsley, Doug Pittsley, James Conan, David Kuphal, David Flickinger, Matt Block – CWOCC, Marie Schmidt, Joan Cybela, Doug Cybela, Dick Rayborn

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 5:15pm. No public comments.

Approval of Minutes – **Motion** by Nutting, second by Neal to approve the Park and Recreation Committee July 7th, 2014 draft minutes. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Sylvan Hill Park Future Uses – Discussion and Possible Action on Developing Mountain Bike Facilities at Sylvan Hill Park – Duncanson said that Sylvan Hill Park was created as a community park to provide specialized recreation opportunities to the Wausau area and beyond. Community parks are larger and have higher levels of facilities than neighborhood parks. The popularity of winter use has gone up significantly at the park and now the concept of mountain biking has been brought up. International Mountain Bike Association Ride Centers are located within fifteen miles of the center of a community and have different types of trails. They are developed for a whole range of recreational riders from beginners to advanced. In the Wausau area they are looking to develop a number of different facilities that would hopefully become a tourist draw. A number of communities are looking to participate including Rib Mountain, Rothschild, and Weston. Wausau is considering Sylvan Hill Park to host three different types of trails and have a trail head facility. Committee has given direction to staff to work with CWOCC and go further in conceptual design as far as potential layout, potential types of trails, and the potential cost to have trail design professionals come in and see what is possible on the site.

Public present had concerns regarding injuries to bikers and walkers, restroom facilities, erosion control, and environmental impact. Duncanson explained how recreational immunity applies. He also mentioned that if fees are charged that generate profits the responsibility for liability also increases. Block said site lines and intersections are addressed in the design. Duncanson said if the City is inviting people to bike there it will have to provide restroom facilities. He mentioned in regard to erosion control the CWOCC attends trail building and maintenance seminars. Currently, they do lot of trail building and maintenance at the Nine Mile Forest Unit. Block said that lot of science goes into trail design. The natural terrain is used to design the trails and there a lot of techniques used depending on the type of terrain. There are also different water control methods used when designing trails. Duncanson said from a staff perspective, it has years of experience with cross country ski trails and mountain bike trails at Nine Mile and working with volunteer groups so he doesn't have a concern about being able to properly maintain the trails. Oberbeck said this could be the economic engine that brings people to the City. He felt it was a good use of the resource and the use would be spread around the community. Duncanson said the second option shows a trailhead at the end of Coates Lane. This location is between the high school and the middle school so the majority of the traffic would be aligned with school traffic. Sylvan Hill Chalet could continue to be available for weddings and picnics. Neal felt it was a great opportunity to use the park and bring people to the community. There would be an increased number of trails that pedestrians could use in the earlier spring and later fall. Trails are designed to follow contours of natural hillside and are not designed to create erosion. He liked the idea for a variety of reasons. Mielke agreed. He felt it could help economically and he also prefers the second option. He felt it would be more beneficial and away from the residential. Oberbeck said having this separate area would also allow for winter access in that area. Nutting said the County has been studying how to attract young urban professionals and they are constantly looking at what can be done to utilize more public areas. Duncanson said they could use a design proposal by Trail Solutions for guidance to budget the appropriate amount of money and then go out on competitive basis to professional trail design firms. The money is not identified in the budget at this time. He suggests they budget this for 2015 and also seek other funding to get it underway. Gisselman asked what the City's financial commitment would be. Duncanson said that would include signage, cleanup, and utility usage. Oberbeck wondered if trail fees could be used for this.

Block said the local club helps to maintain trails. Duncanson said over time as the quality of the development increases fees may come but there may not be fees immediately. **Motion** by Nutting, second by Mielke to direct staff to go to the next stage to find the funding to solicit professional design services potentially including City funding out of the 2015 budget. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Street Tree Removal Request – Discussion and Possible on Request to Remove Street Tree at 630 Kickbusch Due to Sewer Problems – Peterson explained that the sewer laterals are the home owners responsibility from the home out to where it's connected to the main. Generally the City denies requests for removal of trees to keep roots out of the sewer and that's how most other communities also handle it. If a tree has to be removed for a sewer lateral replacement the City will do that. Peterson said that sewer laterals have a life span. Conan James, owner of 630 Kickbusch, discussed his situation. He said the line falls a foot to the right of the tree and it also transitions from four feet to six feet deep. He said a camera had showed the pipe is bowed and has standing water. The most damage to the pipe is approximately four to five feet away from the drop where the roots have penetrated the seams. The plumber believes the roots are from this tree. Nutting said he sends someone through his system twice a year. James said he has to figure if he should continue to do that or just replace the lateral which will require the tree to be removed. Duncanson explained that generally tree roots don't go deep unless there is a travelway or they are getting water and nutrients. Roots will grow where water and nutrients are. Water and nutrients don't happen unless the sewer line has failed. Trees don't have extra sensory perception to know where there are pipes. It's the leak that potentially the roots will follow once they get to that water. Peterson mentioned there is another tree 25 feet to the east. If roots from that tree are currently not in there partially, they will be eventually. Discussion on other possible options followed. Duncanson reiterated that the pipe failed and that's why the roots ended up there. This is about looking long term at the homeowner to make a commitment to have something done that is not going to continue to be a problem. Mielke said he felt for the homeowner but he himself also has to have someone go through his line every year. James said he didn't mind the maintenance if it was a four inch pipe all the way and could be cleared but it's not. There is a transition and they can't guarantee they will get the root growth to the point where it won't block every time. Oberbeck said it sounded like repair work has to be done. **Motion** by Gisselman, second by Mielke to agree with the City Forester to not cut the tree down until the City determines the tree must come down. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

2015 Budget – Discussion and Possible Action on the Initial 2015 Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Budget Proposal – Duncanson provided a budget summary and said the initial advice to the department was to prepare a budget with a zero percent increase in non-personnel items. The initial outcome and keeping all facilities and programs operating at 2014 levels was accomplished but in order to do that staff had to cut \$13,800 dollars from small maintenance projects. One thing staff wants to change is to do all of the tree take downs and stump removal in house instead of contracting some of it out. Duncanson noted the department expended 99.3 percent of its non-personnel budget in 2013. Duncanson said they had a lot of snow to remove this year and also had to use overtime to complete the Athletic Park project on time. So we have already expended 94% of our overtime budget and expect to be \$10,000 over budget on non-personnel expenses. Oberbeck was concerned about keeping up the quality of the parks and doing more things when the budget keeps decreasing. He mentioned in the past the department had been returning monies. Duncanson said that was in the personnel budget. Oberbeck said some of those monies should be taken and put into the non-personnel budget. Duncanson said that had been talked about but the City is not at that point yet. Duncanson said the budget advice also was to list additional needs separately. He said the department first listed small maintenance projects because of the backlog for those. Second is \$20,000 in 400 Block water costs. When the department started operating the 400 Block they did not budget the water costs, that was budgeted in the general City budget. In the last couple years the water bill gets taken out of the parks budget even though the department isn't budgeting for it which means the department is losing its ability to do work elsewhere. Duncanson discussed how use on the 400 Block continues to expand and with that the costs for clean up and maintenance of the Block has also increased. Costs to clean up after events has been going up but revenues are not going up with it. Duncanson discussed some of the Wausau Events events. Oberbeck said those events have to be paid for somewhere and it is currently coming directly out of parks budget. He felt the Committee should direct staff to develop a listing of operational costs that the Committee would ask that the City devote to the parks budget above and beyond the zero percent. Gisselman said they need to ask Finance Committee to set some policy direction and recommendations to

City Council and they also need an arrangement with Wausau Events. Oberbeck said priorities will have to be set and that will become more critical. More discussion will occur at Finance Committee.

Project Update

Stinchfield Creek Trail – Project bid opening occurred July 29, 2014. The construction bid came in within budget but material costs are currently beyond budget. Materials costs are being reviewed before the construction bid is awarded.

Kaiser Pool Rebid – Project bids are due August 12, 2014. Pre-qualification statements are due August 6, 2014.

Future Agenda Items – budget, pools, mountain biking at Sylvan Hill Chalet, dog park, street tree program

Next Regular Meeting – Tuesday, September 2nd, 2014 at 5:15pm at Board Room, City Hall.

Adjourn - Motion by Gisselman, second by Mielke to adjourn the meeting at 7:10pm. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.