

**DRAFT**  
**CITY OF WAUSAU – PARK AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Date/Time: April 6, 2015 at 5:15pm

Location: Board Room, City Hall

Members Present: Gary Gisselman, Robert Mielke, David Nutting, Tom Neal, David Oberbeck (c)

Others Present: William Duncanson–Director, Peter Knotek – Asst. Director, Blaine Peterson – City Forester, Anne Jacobson – City Attorney, Bill Nagle – Council Person, Mark Macdonald – Wisconsin Woodchucks, Ryan Treu – Wisconsin Woodchucks, Pat Peckham – City Pages, Larry Lee – WSAU Radio, Andy Sims, Lisa Dickas, Thomas Dickas, Patrick Hoerter

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 Oberbeck at 5:15pm.

Public comments – None brought forward

Approval of Minutes – **Motion** by Mielke, second by Neal to approve the Park and Recreation Committee March 2, 2015 draft minutes. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Project Update

Kaiser Pool – Pool slides have been installed. Interior concrete slabs at the bath house have been poured and the building is close to being closed in. Final site work will be completed this spring.

Athletic Neighborhood Park Playground – The new shade structure for the playground has been delivered to the Park Department. Installation is scheduled for late April – early May depending on weather conditions.

Memorial Pool Design – Pool will include pool slides, zero depth entry, play structure, diving board, water walk, area for lap swimming, and shade structures.

Radtke Point Erosion Mitigation – Becher Hoppe has completed the mitigation plans, are finalizing specifications and coordinating with the FAA.

Athletic Park Development and Use Agreements – Discussion and Possible Action on Entering Into a Development Agreement and Amending the Existing Athletic Park Use Agreement Related to Proposed Athletic Park Improvements – Duncanson said that there is an offer of continued improvements at Athletic Park. The first phase involved the new grandstand and came through Mark Macdonald of Wisconsin College Baseball in 2014. It was put together between the City and Wisconsin College Baseball with a development agreement that outlined the responsibilities of each party. The next phase of the project that will go down the third base line and replace existing seating, party deck, restrooms, and concession so staff is in the same process of creating a new Development Agreement and then in conjunction with that amending the existing Athletic Park Use Agreement. This agreement makes clear that the process being used for this project whereby Wisconsin College Baseball is doing a design build and gifting it to the City is of a category, quality, size and complexity that is beyond what the City would do and this makes it a private project not open for public bidding. Because this is outside what the City would do and is an improvement to the existing facility, wage rates would not be required on the project. On the develop agreement there are timelines about the things that need to be accomplished by opening day of this year. Those items can be accomplished by parks and public works staff within existing budgets. There are some things that would have to be budgeted for in 2016. Included in the development agreement is rebuilding 5<sup>th</sup> Street from the park going north up towards Winton Street, restroom improvements, outfield improvements, installation of both outside and inside foul ball warning signs, third base foul line utility work, and warning flash component at the crosswalk of Wausau Avenue and Third Street. The Macdonald Foundation will be replacing the B-poles which are the most important lights for any ball field. The last change involves replacing the words Macdonald Foundation with Wisconsin College Baseball. Gisselman thinks the lights on 5<sup>th</sup> Street are very important to get people to use the Wilson-Hurd parking lot. Nagle commended Macdonalds generosity and his foresight and said the City is taking great pride in the area. The Economic Development Committee has discussed dedicating the entire area as a redevelopment project area. Duncanson mention that the City is committed to looking at a long range parking plan in that area also.

Park staff has worked with the City Attorney and WCB to develop amendments to the Use Agreement which include giving WCB scheduling priority for all baseball related events, extending the agreement for an additional five year period,

approving the improvement proposals, defining and setting fees for “Allowed Combined Facility Events”, clarifying responsibilities for utility payments, clarifying storage of WCB property, extending liquor sales to the Group Outings area and to the entire facility for private events, and updating exclusive access areas. Macdonald said it is a significantly different facility and they wanted to cover some things that previously hadn’t been. **Motion** by Nutting, second by Mielke to approve the development agreement and amendments to the Athletic Park Use Agreement and forward them to Council. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Macdonald, Treu, Nagle left the meeting at 6:00pm

Athletic Park Parking – Discussion and Possible Action on Renewing a Temporary Easement Agreement with Wilson – Hurd for Athletic Park Parking – Duncanson said this is an annual agreement that Wilson-Hurd offers to the City. There are no changes and their only requirement is that the place is kept clean and people aren’t charged to park there. It’s a gift to the City and it just needs to be renewed annually. Oberbeck asked if this could become more than a temporary agreement. Knotek said they aren’t amendable to that at this time. Discussion followed. **Motion** by Mielke, second by Gisselman to approve renewing the annual temporary easement agreement with Wilson-Hurd. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Playground Equipment Renovation Plan – Discussion and Possible Action on Multi-Year Plan to Bring City Parks Playground Equipment Into Compliance With Recently Modified Accessibility and Safety Standards – A detailed list of all the playground equipment was reviewed. Knotek explained that some of the playgrounds require new play equipment because they don’t meet the latest revisions to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Some of the playgrounds can be upgraded and every one of those needs safety surfacing. Knotek discussed the different types of safety surfaces. He said there is around \$350,000 worth of work. In the past staff has submitted playgrounds to CIP every year with a grouping of two-three playgrounds for around \$100,000 which hasn’t been successful. Oberbeck said that Weston is adding an ADA accessible playground in their comprehensive plan and wondered if Wausau should consider one as well. He was wondering if that would satisfy some of the requirements. Knotek said they could satisfy a lot of the requirements with one playground but Wausau has a neighborhood park system and he believes they would see resistance from other neighborhoods if they did that. Oberbeck questioned if they are spreading out too much and doing too little at each park not accomplishing much versus looking at a major renovation that could meet requirements and accomplish something for the City. Knotek did not think that with fifteen playgrounds that they could get by with only having one or two accessible. He does not believe that would meet the intent of the law. They wouldn’t all have to be accessible but the accessibility has to be scattered around. They need to have a program started so if they get an ADA complaint they can say they are in the process of addressing this issue. Oberbeck would like to see something at Brockmeyer Park because they aren’t creating anything for that area of the city. Other communities are doing fully accessible playgrounds and he doesn’t know why Wausau can’t put some money into CIP for an accessible playground when they spent millions for pools. Duncanson said that even if they do nothing for ADA they still have fall safety issues at a lot of the playgrounds so they need to act for multiple reasons. Oberbeck felt that should be maintenance and just put into the budget because the City has responsibility to keep the playgrounds safe. Duncanson questioned if Committee wanted staff to bring forth a CIP project based on the list provided. They have had broader discussions about reviewing the master plan at Brockmeyer to bring that along with the concept of a larger playground. Knotek said he could prepare a CIP project that deals with the safety surfacing issues and then look at putting money together for a large single site playground if that is what they wanted to see. **Motion** by Gisselman, second by Nutting to take the information on what is needed to make the playgrounds safe and any alternations to equipment to make them safe as well as looking at moving forward on a larger accessible playground in the master plan for Brockmeyer Park and send it to CIP for funding in 2016 phased over two years. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Animals in Parks – Discussion and Possible Action to Revise Existing Ordinance to Not Allow Animals in the Marathon County Sports Complex or Marathon Park Amphitheater – Duncanson said that is a common practice at facilities that have lots of people, lots of activity and high end turf to not allow animals because of safety issues, user conflicts and turf damage. Staff is requesting the City of Wausau also modify its ordinances to not allow animals at the Marathon County Sports Complex and the Marathon Park Amphitheater. The Amphitheater is already in the County ordinance. Service animals, assistance animals, and animals for education or expositions are allowed. If Committee considers approving this he asks the motion include that Marathon County be allowed to adopt the City of Wausau ordinance. The reason is that

the department is all County employees but enforce City ordinances if they are adopted as County ordinances. Then staff can enforce them through that mechanism which also makes it possible for the City Police Department to enforce these ordinances in County parks within the City limits. **Motion** by Mielke, second by Neal to follow staff in their recommendation to change the ordinance to not allow Animals in the Marathon County Sports Complex or Marathon Park Amphitheater and also include that Marathon County be able to adopt the City ordinances. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Emerald Ash Borer – Report on the Current Status of Emerald Ash Borer in Wisconsin and City of Wausau Planned Response Needs – Peterson gave information about what happens when the borer is found in a community. He said that the first couple of years the trees start to die and after two to five years that death rate increases exponentially. The closest location to Wausau that the borer has now been found is Rhinelander. It also is in Appleton and in other areas surrounding central Wisconsin. Peterson had done a comparison of Wausau to the City of Fond du Lac. In 2014 Fond du Lac budgeted \$110,000 and in 2015 increased the budget to \$200,000 for ash removal, stump grinding, replacing, and some chemical treatment. It has not been found Fond du Lac yet but is in a bordering suburb. Wausau has not budgeted any amount yet. Wausau started with 6,200 ash street trees and is now down to 5,271 primarily through street reconstruction. Duncanson said the City doesn't have to spend a huge amount of money upfront, they can wait for it to happen but when it does they better be ready to move. Peterson said once it is found in Wausau they will have a few years but after that few years is over they will be doing nothing but removing ash trees. He said they are identifying some landscape quality historic ash trees to save through chemical treatment but cannot afford to save many. Individual homeowners may do chemical treatment for their own trees. There will be a huge amount of ash that will need to be disposed of. Questions were answered.

Future Agenda Items – street trees, Brockmeyer Park master plan, CIP

Next Regular Meeting – Monday, May 4, 2015 at 5:15pm at Board Room, City Hall.

Adjourn - **Motion** by Nutting, second by Gisselman to adjourn at 7:00 p.m. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.