

DRAFT

CITY OF WAUSAU – PARK AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date/Time: July 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, Karyn Powers – Recreation Superintendent, Blaine Peterson – City Forester, Pat Peckham – City Pages, 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 June 1st, 2015 draft minutes. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Street Tree C.I.P. Project – Discussion and Possible Action on the 2016 Street Tree Software and Inventory Project – Duncanson said the Committee had some questions about the C.I.P project that came out of the LEAN process on how to improve the effectiveness of the street tree program. One of the primary recommendations was to acquire a new software inventory system that would allow the Park Department to better manage the street tree program. Additional information had been previously distributed to Committee. Peterson said the City has over 25,000 street trees and doesn't have an inventory of them. There is a database that he developed that has gone through several changes which is not an inventory but just keeps records and doesn't mesh removals and planting sites. He believes an inventory is needed. Staff could do the inventory only if they did nothing else at all which isn't feasible. They would like to contract the initial inventory with a tree service company that has inventoried trees before. Staff would then have the software and hardware that would allow them to update the inventory in real time which would save them time. Gisselman questioned if this would help Peterson in the future. Peterson said it would give him more accurate information about all of the trees. Nutting would like to make sure they have a program that would be continually updatable. Neal wondered if the tree database had functions or could project anything beyond just having fields of data. Peterson said it's not a particular database and that the Engineering Department has a database they may be able to utilize that they use for signs. Neal said he is not so much concerned about the cost of the software but rather the cost of the effort to do the inventory itself which is considerable. He wondered if the information was needed within months or if it could be an ongoing process done across time. Nutting questioned if what they already have could be put into the new program. Peterson said what they have now is not meshable with an inventory. There is not internal staff to do inventoring of all the trees as they cannot keep up with routine work. Duncanson said the point of hiring out the inventory is to get all the data entered during a limited time period so then staff can maintain it as they perform work on trees. If staff tries to build the inventory by the time they get to all the trees the initial information is going to be old and bad. They will never have a good enough database to do predictions or generate lists to act on. Peterson said the inventory could be spread over a couple years but more than three years would be spreading it out too far. Oberbeck wondered if they should start building the database in areas of new construction. As they were replacing trees not in good locations and rethinking the policy of what the streets look like. He doesn't know what they are going to accomplish by having a database of all the trees if they if they can't get to or rarely get to all the trees. Peterson said they are planting trees in better sites and are trying to do it better than it was previously. Members questioned if the inventoring had to be done all at once or if it could be done in two phases. Duncanson thought the total cost may be higher if it's spread out depending how the contract is set up. Neal did not think the project would have to be restarted. The RFP should go out so the vendor is told they are looking at a two or three year scenario for budgeting purposes. Gisselman said if it makes it more palatable to the CIP Committee and for budget purposes he could go along with a two year project. Neal thought they should have the option of three years. Peterson said if it is Committee's direction to look at multiple years, two years possibly three they could work with that. **Motion** by Gisselman, second by Neal for staff to provide a phased option for the street tree Capital Improvement Program project. Motion **carried** by voice vote.

Peterson left the meeting at 5:45pm

Summer Program Update – Report and Discussion on Current Park and Recreation Programs – Powers reported that in the first five days that Kaiser Pool has been opened attendance has been 2,823 at Kaiser alone. For perspective last year’s total attendance for Memorial and Schulenburg was 4000 for three weeks in June. Concessions are averaging about \$500 a day at Kaiser Pool. Schulenburg Pool is also doing well with attendance of 828. Powers said that the Department is continuing to partner with the Wausau School District’s Community Connection for the playground program and they currently have 196 children in the afternoons. The morning sites have 36 children. 147 children are registered in tennis camp, 221 children are registered in swimming lessons, 25 people are registered for family tennis, and there are 25 children in soccer camp. Gisselman questioned if the Noon Optimists will be furnishing the free week at the pools. Powers said that will occur the last week in July, Monday through Friday at Schulenburg Pool, Kaiser Pool and the Splash Pad. The Noon Optimists will be covering entrance fees for youth up to age 17 from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Noon Optimists know that Kaiser Pool is more popular and costs more and they also wanted to include the Splash Pad this year. Mielke commended Powers and her staff. Powers will check into credit card use at Kaiser Pool.

Hoerter and Powers left at 6:00 p.m.

2016 Budget – Discussion and Possible Action on Initial 2016 Department Budget – Duncanson said the budget is being put together with the direction of “cost to continue” and they have to make sure that facilities are taken care of and as new things get built that they are maintained properly so there are good levels of service to the public. Duncanson said that 75% of the budget is wages and benefits. Oberbeck said by adding all these new facilities the “cost to continue” really isn’t an increase for the Parks Department because there is no option but to address some of the costs to maintain those facilities. The cost is not an increase to the Department, it’s an increase because of what is going on in other departments as far as adding in additional areas to take care of. There has been new development on the riverfront, Athletic Park, and new pools. Decisions were made to do these improvements so this is required, it’s not an option. Gisselman thought that some of the east riverfront was coming out of developmental monies. Duncanson said the construction funds are but not operation and maintenance funds. He listed six different areas of the east river redevelopment area which are going to have an impact on the parks budget. For example on the Rivers Edge Trail there are paths that parallel the channel, a connector path to Third Street, walkways that go down to seating areas, mass planting areas, lighting systems, benches, and trash receptacles. Oberbeck said he has looked more into TIF Districts and the possibility as development occurs that some of that money can come back out of that TIF for operational costs. Duncanson said part of the concept along the east river front area is to potentially create a bid district that can pay for some of these costs once it’s occupied. Some of it will be developed over the next couple of years and there is warranty on plant material but not all routine maintenance will be covered. He has staff making calculations on what it is going to cost to mow it, have trash picked up, walkways cleared of snow in winter, and to make sure things are in good shape. There will be less landscape maintenance in the first year but after that things will need to be pruned. They will not be running into all of the costs immediately. Gisselman said they have to ask themselves what are they doing today that will cost them money in the future. Oberbeck said as part of the budget process they have to put in every year until the development contributes to the tax base. Duncanson discussed some of the landscaping details. He described the wharf and finger piers. The wharf itself will have some maintenance but the finger piers are all floating piers so they will have to be installed and removed annually. It gives people the option to come to shore and visit business along there. Duncanson said staff is identifying these types of costs. Those are costs the Department is not experiencing today but it’s a cost to continue these projects. The City is committed on these projects so the Department sees these as an existing cost. Duncanson said DPW would manage the parking lots and the Parks Department would maintain the boulevards between First Street and the railroad tracks until businesses are developed. In time businesses should become responsible for adjoining sidewalks and maintenance of the turf. Duncanson discussed the narrow area to the north that isn’t commercially developable so it will be public greenspace. Part of the grant involves outdoor exercise equipment so there will be equipment underneath the Bridge Street Bridge. Duncanson said he wanted to give Committee a list of things that is going to cause the Department to ask for more money than last year and he wanted them to have the justification for that on the front end so they aren’t surprised. **Motion** by Mielke, second by Gisselman to move forward with addressing the costs associated with development that is already underway and make a recommendation that they move forward as a “cost to continue” not as an additional cost. **Motion carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Fee Directive – Discussion and Possible Action on Setting Park and Recreation Fees for 2016 and 2017 – Duncanson said that shelters are reservable a year in advance so 2017 rates are listed. Staff looked at fees that have been charged and some of them have not been increased in four or five years. Labor, materials and supplies costs are increasing. The Consumer Price Index has not been moved much over the last year but a lot of that is made up of durables.

Motion by Mielke, second by Neal to accept staff recommendation for the fee schedule. Neal felt that shelter fees should increase by \$10 to \$12 instead of by a dollar or two to reflect the price of doing business. Mielke agreed that people are getting a good deal already. Duncanson clarified that entrance fees for Sylvan Tubing Hill and pools have not increased in the past four or five years but Committee has raised shelter fees fairly regularly. Small increases are more acceptable than waiting four to five years and doing a large increase. Several years ago the Department got aggressive on fee increases and saw reductions of use in facilities. The shelter's increase reflects closely to wages and basic materials increases. Gisselman said they should see if use has gone down otherwise they could round everything up to the next ten dollars. Duncanson said that shelter use has increased because they have been the less expensive alternative during the recession. Oberbeck would like to set a policy on percentage of increase so they don't have to go through every line item. It would be more understandable to the public that program costs and facility maintenance are increasing. Nutting questioned what some of the surrounding Cities do. Duncanson said Wausau's playground and pool rates tend to be cheaper than most communities. Wausau has a long history of heavily subsidizing facilities and it's basically youth oriented. Oberbeck said that is the policy that should be discussed, affordable recreation in the summer. All parks are not meant to make money. Gisselman felt they should consider bringing the prices at Kaiser Pool down. Other Committee members felt the new prices were very affordable. Duncanson mentioned that there already is a scholarship program with discounted rates. Duncanson said that swimming passes are going up over 30% because there won't be any old pools in operation. Oberbeck asked if he knew the percentages. Duncanson said the rates here are based on what Committee set for Kaiser Pool for this year and it is a higher value. Duncanson said shelters are at 3 ½ percent. Gisselman said the policy could be discussed at a future meeting. Neal said the agenda summary says there was a time when things were kind of constant and now things are on the uptick and being adjusting accordingly and he would like to make sure they are adjusted to a level that reflects addressing needs as they are growing. Duncanson said his guess is 3½ percent is the minimum they should do and they may be able to get by with a little bit more. Neal said they should go to four percent. Duncanson said they always round numbers and include sales tax so they aren't dealing with change. Oberbeck said they should see where this year falls and revisit the item as far as policy. Neal asked if Mielke would **amend** his motion to reflect upping the percentage from 3 ½ to 4 percent and round numbers. Mielke agreed. Neal seconded the amendment. The amended motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Park Ordinance Revision – Discussion and Possible Action on Amending the Schedule of Cash Deposits for Section 19.21 – Duncanson said this is a housekeeping item from when the Committee and Council recently revised this ordinance. Unfortunately, the necessary associated change in the Schedule of Cash Deposits was not included so a fine amount has not yet been established. **Motion** by Gisselman, second by Neal to approve amending the Schedule of Cash Deposits for Section 19.21. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Project Update

Kaiser Pool – Kaiser Pool opened July 1st. There was good representation by the Committee. Use of the new facility is very high, the pool staff is doing a good job with the startup of a new facility and acclimating the public with how to safely use the new features.

Memorial Pool – Bids were opened June 2nd. Contract 1 (bath house) was awarded to Altmann Construction in the amount of \$1,194,000. Contract 2 (pool) was awarded to Badger Swim Pools in the amount of \$1,016,000. Contract 3 (pool slides) was awarded to Altmann Construction in the amount of \$271,800. Total award was \$2,481,800.

Future Agenda Items – street trees and overall design of streets working with DPW and Engineering, facilitate a presentation with Milwaukee County

Next Regular Meeting – Monday, August 3, 2015 at 5:15pm at Board Room, City Hall.

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