

DRAFT
CITY OF WAUSAU – PARK AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date/Time: April 4, 2016 at 5:15p.m. Location: Board Room, City Hall
Members Present: Gary Gisselman, Robert Mielke, Tom Neal, David Nutting, David Oberbeck (c)
Others Present: Bill Duncanson–Director, Pat Peckham, 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 7th, 2016 draft minutes. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Athletic Park Parking Lot - 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 allowing use of part of their property for Athletic Park parking. There is no cost for the agreement. Wilson-Hurd’s primary requirement is that the lot is properly maintained and kept free of litter. **Motion** by Mielke, second by Neal to renew the temporary easement agreement with Wilson-Hurd. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

JoJo’s Jungle – Progress Report and Discussion on JoJo’s Jungle Accessible Playground at Brockmeyer Park – Hoerters’ group has sought out professional landscape architectural design firms for site layout and construction plans so that they are able to look at grant opportunities. The general budget idea for equipment and installation and the fifteen percent endowment fund planned to maintain is about 2.4 million dollars for the full acre playground. Hoerter mentioned some of the offers that have come in for assistance. He said the ground breaking ceremony is anticipated to be held next spring on May 21st which would have been his son JoJo’s fifth birthday. Hoerter said they are trying to make the playground as low maintenance as possible. They would use the endowment fund for fixing equipment and replacement in the future. He discussed a unique interactive low volume water feature where children operate a pump and can change the course of water going through a labyrinth. Oberbeck said there is a lot of excitement in the community for this playground in Brockmeyer Park. He felt there has been a lot of development in the area since the park was built and the residents deserve to see this taken to the final steps. Duncanson said there is positive progress and this item will come back to Committee next month because they need to start working the City’s commitment to this project in the 2017 budget. Discussion followed on the idea of food vendors or concession stand.

Protecting Street Trees Presentation – Report and Discussion on the Recent City Sponsored Presentation on Protecting Street Trees From Road and Sidewalk Construction – Jim Kringer the “tree cop” from the City of Milwaukee gave a presentation to City staff and staff from other local municipalities on Milwaukee’s standards, guidelines and the economics of protecting their street trees. Milwaukee is more advanced and tougher on making sure their street tree investments pay off. Their curb and gutter is mostly done by machines that lay extruded concrete curb. Previously the machines required almost a foot of space behind the curb and now the machines have been redesigned so the machine goes a maximum of ¾” behind the curb. In many cases they been able to rebuild streets and not impact more than 3” behind the curb on both sides of the street combined. Milwaukee doesn’t allow any root cutting. If roots have to come out they must be chopped out by hand which has a lot less of an impact on trees. If a tree’s roots are lifting sidewalks the City will lift the sidewalk up over the roots or they will curve around the tree instead of cutting roots when the sidewalk is rebuilt. They narrow sidewalks and streets to get around trees. It’s a different model and has taken time to work in. Duncanson said part of it is being firm with the contractors and showing them that it’s being done in other places. They have proven to the street contractors that it’s cheaper to stay away from the trees. A little money has to be put into modifying the paving machines but the contractors are spending a whole lot less time in excavating, digging roots, backfilling, top soiling, and seeding. Neal asked when Wausau could put this kind of program into effect. Duncanson said that decision is more for the Department of Public Works and the CISM Committee. He mentioned that Milwaukee withholds contractors payments as a penalty for doing tree damage which requires daily inspections. Neal questioned if there was potential in cooperating with other communities to get efficiencies and savings. Oberbeck felt that a lot of

communities could benefit from this. He thought it would be helpful to hold a joint meeting with CISM Committee and that these types of guidelines should be put into the Comprehensive Plan that Wausau is reviewing. Duncanson also mentioned that in Milwaukee where there is new construction between the sidewalk and curb they don't allow any construction waste to end up in that space. Oberbeck said the City will eventually be facing the Emerald Ash Borer and should save the trees they can within the City. Duncanson said it would cost \$25 a year to treat 8000 trees against Emerald Ash Borer which is a huge annual budget. Oberbeck questioned what the value of loss in the community would be without those trees. Milwaukee is saying the value that adds to the communities by saving trees is huge. There is environmental impact as far as cooling costs, remove carbon dioxide from the air, the trees slow down rainwater going into the ground, change runoff, have wildlife value, curb appeal, real estate value, etc. Neal said the aftermath of the Dutch Elm disease was devastating. Nutting was concerned for some of the significant ash trees. Duncanson said that the City Forester has inventoried the primary key landscape trees that should be kept and treated and Council will have to make decisions in the next few years because current practice is to remove ash trees to reduce the population. They haven't discussed at what point they start preparing themselves to preserve them. Nutting said those contractors have penalties as a result of harming the infrastructure that has taken decades to achieve and that same thought process should be something the future Council considers to invest in saving that initial \$75 tree investment that is worth much more over time.

Recognition of Service – Recognition of Service to the Park and Recreation Committee by David Oberbeck – Duncanson thanked Oberbeck for his six years of service on the Park and Recreation Committee and presented him with a plaque. Other members of the Committee also thanked Oberbeck for all of his dedication to the City over the years.

Project Update

Memorial Park Pool – Remaining work includes installing concrete pool deck, pool plastering and final mechanical equipment connections. Completion is scheduled for June 1.

Schulenburg Pool – Project is out to bid. Bid opening scheduled for April 19.

Athletic Park Phase 2 – The 3rd base line improvements are substantially complete. Park Department staff are currently working on ball field re-habitation. The Woodchucks home opener is Friday, June 3rd. City Engineering is bidding out the improvements to 5th Street north of the Park to include a sidewalk to the Wilson Hurd parking lot and storm water controls.

Radtke Point Erosion Mitigation

The slope restoration, walkway and new staircase are scheduled to begin approximately May 15. An earlier start date may be possible if dry weather continues.

Wausau Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (C.O.R.P.)

A kickoff meeting with Ayres consultants was held March 22. The consultant and park staff are currently developing background data for the plan.

Future Agenda Items – JoJo's Jungle, joint meeting with CISM for trees, opening ceremony for Memorial Pool and to revisit the aspect of a permanent marker/plaques for the pools

Next Regular Meeting – Monday, May 2, 2016 at 5:15pm at Board Room, City Hall

Adjourn - Motion by Gisselman, second by Mielke to adjourn at 6:15p.m. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.