

DRAFT
CITY OF WAUSAU – PARK AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date/Time: August 29, 2016 at 4:30p.m. Location: Board Room, City Hall
Members Present: Joe Gehin, Gary Gisselman, Tom Neal, David Nutting, Pat Peckham (c)
Others Present: Bill Duncanson-Director, Peter Knotek-Asst. Director, John Chmiel – southeast side citizen, Zach Hagenbucher – WSAU Radio

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 Peckham at 4:30 p.m.

Public comments – none brought forward.

Approval of Minutes – **Motion** by Neal, second by Gehin to approve the Park and Recreation Committee August 11th, 2016 draft minutes with the correction that in the item for Lower Eau Claire River Water Trail the word “Shawn” be added in front of the first “Osterbrink” that includes his title. Also under the Emerald Ash Borer item where the sentence says “he understands how important an ash tree can be to a person but as a professional...” that the word “he” be replaced with the word “Peterson”. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 3-0.

2017 Budget – Discussion and Possible Action on the Initial 2017 Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department Budget – Duncanson discussed the first draft budget. He said it is a \$79,919.00 or 3% requested increase in 2017 over the 2016 modified budget. Under personnel services, increases include wages, the new labor position, and health insurance. Duncanson mentioned that the Department is anticipating lower water costs in 2017. This does not include the 400 Block which is under its own budget but the water costs should be lower there because of fountain usage adjustments. Duncanson noted that a Wausau West High School computer class is looking to see if further adjustments are possible. Duncanson said the Department is anticipating increased electrical usage costs. There is an increase for sewage services because of the requirement for ADA accessible porta-potties. There is a reduction in lab and medical supplies mostly because less pool chemicals are being used in the new pools which aren’t leaking water as they used to. Duncanson said that revenues are staying pretty much the same. There are no new recreation programs other than having all three pools running again. A short discussion followed about the 400 Block revenue and expenses. Duncanson discussed the supplemental budget requests. The first request of \$150,000 is for City ash street tree treatment and \$50,000 for removal of ash trees because of the Emerald Ash Borer. Duncanson mentioned that Madison is recovering a portion of their urban forestry expenses with a special fund that is levied based on front footage. This may be something the Wausau City Council might want to consider. Duncanson does not know if the \$150,000 will be needed in 2017 because the borer may not be in Wausau by then but the Department would like the \$50,000 so it can start the ash street tree removal process. Peckham felt holding the funds in a contingency fund somewhere would be appropriate so that it is ready as soon as it is needed. The second request is for the Maintenance Supervisor position which is 50% City funded that the Committee had previously approved on March 7, 2016. The third request is for deferred maintenance projects which are needed facility maintenance projects that exceed routine funding. Some of the maintenance projects were discussed in detail for the Committee. The fourth supplemental request is for Schulenburg Pool seasonal positions because with the added facilities at the reconstructed pool there are additional staffing needs.

Alexander Park – Discussion and Possible Action on Approving the Permanent Display of an A7 Corsair Fighter Jet in Alexander Park – John Chmiel said he was representing the southeast side neighborhood as a citizen. He said the Park and Recreation Committee had previously approved working with the neighborhood group in re-theming the park to an airport theme. This item is for getting the jet that is currently located at the VFW on River Drive approved to be placed in Alexander Park as one of the attractions in the park. The VFW is concerned about whether the City is interested in the airplane being in the park and this is part of the process to show that the City is committed to it. The next steps would be to take this item to the Planning Committee and then to City Council. Neal said he supports this item because the jet in its current location is low to the ground surrounded by a chain link fence which is not very attractive. The new location will put it up in the air creating more drama and will also put it in the area of an airport, all of which is a vast improvement. Chmiel said the neighborhood’s intention is for this not to be a tax burden. They anticipate that private funding will help move the airplane from its current location to the park and part of that funding will pay for refinishing the plane. There is ongoing maintenance that would have to be done every ten years. As a worst case scenario, if there is no outside funding, the Airport Committee has approved that they would carry over \$1500 a year from the operating budget annually for ten

years to pay for that maintenance. The neighborhood group intends to pursue grants and has organized an annual 5K race which they intend to hold annually to help fund this project and other future projects. The neighborhood is trying to put this park together and will help pay for it but when it becomes the City's possession they feel the City should ultimately be responsible for its maintenance. Gisselman questioned any ties to Wausau's aviation, park or neighborhood history. Chmiel said he believes that aviation history in general should be honored not necessarily local aviation history. He felt this will be an attention getter along with other features which will get people into the park to use it. Chmiel said there would be a plaque on the support structure of the airplane. **Motion** by Neal, second by Gehin to approve the transfer of the A7 Corsair Fighter Jet to City ownership. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Chmiel left the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Park Based Music Venues - Discussion and Possible Action on Assessing the Needs for Music Venues in Wausau Parks – Neal said he is part of a citizen advisory committee that is aimed at young adults discussing cultural and recreational infrastructure, activities and support the City can offer. They are meeting tonight for the first time and will be discussing venues for impromptu musical gatherings. He will report back on ideas from the meeting to this Committee. Duncanson said that part of the east riverfront development might have potential. Neal thought the group was interested in having some kind of shelter so Oak Island or over by the former VFW building might be possibilities.

Neal left the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

JoJo's Jungle Adaptive Playground – Report and Discussion on the JoJo's Jungle Adaptive Playground Project - Knotek said that the group continues to work on it and make progress. The group is still looking to do groundbreaking in May of 2017. Gehin thought he had heard the fundraising had slowed and the timeline may have changed. Knotek said that hadn't been expressed to the Department. Peckham mentioned there was discussion when ranking CIP projects if the project would be ready in 2017 and he stressed that the City will be receiving two million dollars in a donation and they should come through for that.

Boat Launch Fees – Report and Discussion on Boat Launch Fee Applicability to Watercraft that are not Launched from a Trailer on the Launch Ramp – Peckham had seen a thread on Facebook with questions about City fees. Some people felt that the boat launch permit fee should be waived for non-motorized craft. Duncanson said the intent is for people that carry their kayaks/canoes in the back of a pickup truck and toss it in the water to not pay the fees. However, in reviewing the Departments FAQ's on its website it says if they use the boat launch ramp in any manner to gain access to the water a daily permit or annual sticker is required so that could cloud the question. The idea is that they are not backing the trailer down the launch because building and maintaining the boat launch ramps is a major cost. Also the vehicles with trailers require wider and longer areas of paving which is an additional expense. If someone parks in a regular spot and takes their kayak off the top of their car and walks on the ramp and puts it in the water there would be no fee. That is the intent so the language needs to be clarified. If they put the kayak on a trailer and use a trailer spot and back the trailer into the water they should pay the fee. Duncanson noted the dedicated kayak/canoe launch has no fee. He said that staff could work on the signage so it would be clearer.

Project Update

Schulenburg Pool – Bath house foundations are complete. Floor slabs to be poured next week. Pool plumbing and forming of pool walls is on-going.

Sylvan Hill Bike Park – Three proposals were received, evaluations were completed on Monday, August 29th. Design/Build contractor will be selected this week.

Wausau Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan – Work continues on the C.O.R.P. with the City's consultant Ayres Associates. An on-line survey will be available to residents until mid-September with an open house style public meeting on September 22nd. Ayres Associates will meet with the Park and Recreation Committee after the results of the survey and public meeting are compiled.

Future Agenda Items – East Riverfront Trail update

Next Regular Meeting – Monday, October 3, 2016 at 4:30 p.m. in the Board Room, City Hall

Adjourn - **Motion** by Gehin, second by Nutting to adjourn at 6:00 p.m. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 4-0.