

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

Date/Time: October 3, 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, Karyn Powers-Recreation Director, Mayor Robert Mielke, Elizabeth Fields-Wausau River District, Nick O'Brien-McDevco, Blake Theisen-Ayres Associates, Patrick Hoerter-JoJo's Jungle

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 29th, 2016 draft minutes with the correction that the approval of minutes was 5-0 not 3-0. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 4-0.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan – Review, Discussion and Possible Action on the Draft Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan – Blake Theisen from Ayres Associates presented the draft copy of the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. The process involved physical site assessments, public survey, public meeting, preliminary recommendations, staff meeting, and Committee presentation of the draft report. Feedback will be taken and final plan approval will be in November. A five year forecast has been given based on recommendations of where the consultants think the priorities should fall. Included in the plan are goals and objectives, demographics in the community and projections moving forward, service area maps, existing facility analysis, inventory sheet and system wide recommendations, costs and how and when to pay for it, the public survey, maps, graphics, images, and also a section on programming, revenue generation and maintenance for each of the sites,

Theisen mentioned that this plan was only for City owned parks. It did not have recommendations for County owned parks or school facilities. Theisen mentioned there is a lot of overlap but from a State definition this document has to be looked at separately. If school and County landholdings were overlaid the system would look very different. The document shows different ways to look at the system with not any one being the sole tool for recommendations. They look at the bigger picture and try to come up with the best recommendations of where to spend money. He mentioned that the highlights in the survey were improved access to restrooms, access to dog park, desire for disc golf and community gardens throughout. He said overall there was a lot of great complimentary feedback.

Nutting and Mielke arrived at 4:55pm

Theisen said when they look at priorities and how to assign money they always fix health and safety hazards first followed by upgrading facilities with deficiencies and then updating outdated facilities. As priorities change these can shift but the plan is a good working tool for staff. Theisen said that the City does not have to do everything in the next five years rather if they are looking for ways to spend some money the plan has a menu of options. This is not a mandate that the City has to do these things to meet some sort of compliance but by having this plan it gives the City the flexibility to go after grant monies. Theisen said this is the first draft and they are open to changes and additions. He asked that Committee members review the plan and give their comments to Knotek in the next two weeks.

Theisen left the meeting at 5:15pm.

JoJo's Jungle Adaptive Playground – Report and Discussion on JoJo's Jungle Design and Fundraising Progress – Patrick Hoerter said their group is still working on fundraising. A lot of the grants have six month cycles so they are waiting to hear from some of them. He mentioned they have received a \$50,000 grant recently. He said this was his first major fundraising experience so he couldn't tell if they were going to miss the mark of their groundbreaking and if they would what any alternate date would be. He wanted to reassure the Committee that they are still committed to reaching their goal and are working hard to get there. The groundbreaking date of May 21<sup>st</sup> of next year was a personal goal and was not a necessity for any other reason. Duncanson said on the City's part they are waiting to see what happens with the CIP for

the Park Departments portion of the project getting infrastructure in place to coordinate with the rest of the construction. Discussion on types of grant funding that are available for a trail between Stettin School and the Brockmeyer Park area were discussed.

400 Block Event Sign – Discussion and Possible Action on a Request by the Wausau River District to Place an Event Sign on The 400 Block – Peckham said this item was approved at CISM Committee. He believes it's a pretty significant aesthetic change to the 400 Block and needs some time for consideration because of the importance of the Block to the community and donors. Elizabeth Fields from the Wausau River District said the sign would be a backlit poster kiosk that the Wausau River District would manage. It would only be for events taking place on the 400 Block. As of right now residents, visitors, and even business owners don't always know what is happening on the 400 Block and it would be nice to have a sign there that tells people what's going on. She discussed how the idea came about and said the Dudley Foundation and the WPS Foundation have interest in funding the currently proposed sign. The sign is proposed to be directly adjacent to the concrete planter on the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Scott Street. The total height is 6 ½ feet tall and it is for a single sided sign. Concerns were raised that the sign was more for pedestrians than motorists, whether motorists would be able to even read the posters, whether a better location for pedestrians would be on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street side, whether the sign should be one sided or two sided, whether the sign was too low to the ground, whether it would be backlit or internally lit, accessibility to the sign, community or donors feedback about having a sign, if the sign fit in with the existing design philosophy for the block and downtown, electricity for the sign, maintenance of the sign, safety, and guidelines on how the sign will be managed. Most members felt the sign should be more for pedestrians than for vehicular traffic. Duncanson questioned whose sign it would be. Fields said it would be maintained by Wausau River District bought by Dudley foundation and WPS Foundation. Fields said the River District has guidelines for people that apply for overhead banners and they can use these or work with the City on mutual agreeable guidelines regarding what posters are put in the sign and for how long.

O'Brien left at 5:43 p.m.

**Motion** by Nutting, second by Neal that Committee would like to advance the concept and directs Park staff to work with the River District staff to discuss the issues and details brought up at this meeting and bring back a plan for the November meeting. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 5-0.

Hoerter, Fields, and Mayor Mielke left the meeting at 5:52 p.m.

2017 Budget – Discussion and Possible Action on the Current Status of the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Departments Initial 2017 Budget – Duncanson said they had presented the base budget and supplemental items to the Mayor and Finance Director. Since then there have been a couple minor changes one is based on a couple requests having to do specifically for extending the flower basket program to the 300 block of 4<sup>th</sup> St. Another one is a request that the City do roping on lights in the new 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Business District. He anticipates a request coming for flower baskets in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue area. In the past staff has reviewed all the baskets and figured how many baskets they could do utilizing one water truck that starts at 5:00 a.m. in the morning and can get out of the business district before it really fills up with traffic. There is very little room for expanding the program without increasing equipment and staff. Another item is that the initial budget turned in had an estimated 5% increase in health and dental premiums. That has been negotiated further and turned into a 2 ½ % decrease. Peckham clarified that the Department could do a couple of additional baskets on 4<sup>th</sup> Street but going over to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue neighborhood would require additional equipment and time. Duncanson agreed and also mentioned that there will be additional irrigation needs for the east Riverfront development that will add to future hand watering needs. Discussion followed on ideas of leasing, purchasing or contracting the equipment and labor. Duncanson wondered if there was something they could do to get some recovery from the downtown business people for this service.

Small Format Performance Venues - Discussion and Possible Action on the Concept of Creating More Performance Venues in Wausau – Neal mentioned the purpose of the group is to find ways to encourage and facilitate amenities and infrastructure that would help nurture a culture in town that appeals to young adults. The young professionals are very interested in quality of life and want to live in towns where there are more outlets for their energy, cultural pursuits and recreation. They would like to find out how to make it easier for grass roots ideas to come to fruition. He has talked to the Mayor and there is a plan to make an announcement dedicating 2017 to local music and arts. One of the ideas is to have smaller scale performance venues in public spaces that are readily available, easily manageable, and quick to reserve. He understands that there are plans for a jazz series behind the library in the plaza area. That will require some sort of a stage and electricity. He would like to find out what the City can do to make sure there is a performance stage in that spot for

next year available for people to reserve for their impromptu events. Where young bands can have jam sessions and invite their friends. Duncanson said the Park Department did not have a stage available but Neal could check with the Department of Public Works. Staff felt the portable stage the City has would be too high. Duncanson said there are commercial stage risers that can be bought and are made for that use so that would take care of the liability. He said power could be possible depending on the need. Neal felt lighting was secondary to sound and did not like the idea of investing in and protecting lights. Nutting felt the music should stop at a certain time out of consideration for people living in the area. Neal said they could do some sound checks and it would just be people bringing in their own small amplifiers. Neal said the young adult group could meet with City staff at some point to deal with specific details of raising money, who owns the stage, and where it's housed in the off season. Duncanson said if there was a tourism angle they could look at room tax dollars.

Gisselman left the meeting at 6:24 p.m.

Peckham thought there were a number of sites being evaluated. Neal said the library plaza area was the priority venue for 2017 as their first step. They have an ultimate hope to put a permanent stage on Oak Island. It would have ample green space, restroom facilities, shelters, dumpster, and power. Duncanson said it would just have to work with other shelter reservations in the area. Discussion on electrical access at some of these sites followed.

Online Park Reservations - Discussion and Possible Action on Creating an Online Park Reservation Calendar – Neal questioned if there was electronic calendars for park reservations. Duncanson discussed the current online reservation system and the shelters, campsites and lessons that can currently be reserved. The Fairground buildings and other complex events cannot be reserved online. There is a five day lead time for online reservations but if people stop in the office or call, it is only a one day lead time. Duncanson said the Department has major events listed on the County website also. Duncanson noted that the 400 Block has power for people to plug in and play. For small venues he can see having them be reservable, but if they are not reserved and are just on a first come first serve basis then the City just has to decide that it's okay to provide power at no cost.

Summer Recreation Program Report – Report and Discussion on Summer Recreation Program Outcomes – Karyn Powers, Recreation Superintendent discussed the summer recreation programs. She said it rained 45 out of 90 days in the summer which affected the repeat tennis lesson customers not returning and probably the pool numbers as well. Powers discussed how the attendance numbers at the pools are now captured electronically on the cash registers whereas before it was just done by head counts. Powers said there still is a great partnership between the Park Department and the Wausau School district Community Connections Program on the Playground Program.

#### Project Update

Schulenburg Pool – The pool shell is 50% complete, scheduled to be completed by the end of October. Masonry work has begun on the bath house and should be completed by the end of October or sooner.

Playgrounds – New play equipment was installed at 10<sup>th</sup> Street Park and Sylvan Hill Park.

Longfellow Tot Lot – Staff is working with Community Development in the design and construction administration of the new tot lot. Proposals for playground equipment are due October 4<sup>th</sup>.

Sylvan Hill Bike Park – The design/build contract for the new bicycle facilities at Sylvan Hill Park have been awarded to Progressive Trail Design of Bentonville, AR. Scheduled completion is the spring of 2017.

Future Agenda Items – update on library stage idea, 400 Block event sign

Next Regular Meeting – Monday, November 7, 2016 at 4:30 p.m. in the Board Room, City Hall

Adjourn - **Motion** by Neal, second by Gehin to adjourn at 6:52 p.m. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Vote reflected as 4-0.