

## **Naturalist Report**

### **June 2022**

#### **Admin/Finance**

- The Finance Department has released the 2023 Budget Schedule. Non-personnel budgets are due back to the Finance Department by September 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Outagamie County will be holding budget meetings in August. I will be meeting with the County Executive and Finance Director on August 17 regarding our 2023 budget appropriations.
- The City is in the process of a Compensation Study for all staff positions. Tied to the Compensation Study, the Human Resources Director is also rolling out a new employee evaluation process. I will receive training on the new process for evaluating our staff members. The Committee has the option to learn more about the new evaluation process to continue with evaluating the Director/Naturalist position, or the Mayor can take over the annual evaluation task.
- A lot of time was spent over the past month working on the Strategic Plan. Thank you to all of the Committee Members who gave up some of their time to help with the process!

#### **Education**

- Our Bald Eagle Nest Watch program has wrapped up for the year. 26 nests were included in the Fox Valley program this year. Of those, 24 nests were considered active, meaning adults were observed with nesting behavior or laid eggs. There were only 5 nests that successfully fledged young eagles. Our 75% failure rate is drastically different from the average of 10-15% failure and higher than the state wide failure rate of 45%. It is still unknown what caused the failures, but the majority of failures occurred during the spring migration season, leading to some speculation that migratory birds that contracted avian influenza contributed to the failures.
- We participated in a new community event tied together with the Fox Firecracker 5K packet pickup. 1000 Islands, Grignon Mansion, Kaukauna Public Library and Kaukauna Community Enrichment set up family friendly activities for people stopping down at Hydro Park for their packet pickup on July 3<sup>rd</sup>. The activities were not very utilized during the event.

#### **Building & Grounds**

- We have been notified that the WI DOT grant for the level 2 charger has been put on hold until 2023 so that the state can verify that grant funds are being distributed in accordance with Federal guidelines. We will not have to reapply for the grant.
- The fund to replace the boardwalk through the same program was not granted, but we could reapply in future grant cycles. The boardwalk project is currently still included for potential ARPA Funds. Department heads will meet in the coming weeks to attempt to pare down the number and/or budget of projects to not exceed the 1.7 million available per City Council feedback.
- The project replacing the steps into the Upper Woods is scheduled to begin at the end of July.
- We have been working hard at catching up on Memorial Bench installations. 3 new benches have recently been installed. 3 additional benches are ready for installation. Once the remaining benches are installed we will evaluate the property for potential additional memorial bench locations. With an increase in costs, we also will need to evaluate the minimum donation amount for a memorial bench and/or look for a lower cost bench.