



Minutes

Park & Rec Meeting

Oelwein Family Aquatic Center

– Moved to City Hall because of bad weather

Monday May 19th, 2025 - 5:15 PM

Park and Recreation

www.oelweinparks.org

Call to Order: 5:14pm

Roll Call: Cantrell, Bouska, Gearhart, Johnson, Jorgensen, Meska, Stasi

Attending: Cantrell, Johnson, Jorgensen, Meska, Stasi

Absent: Bouska, Gearhart

Approval of Minutes:

- Consideration of a motion approving the minutes of the March 17th, 2025, meeting:

Motion: Stasi

2nd: Jorgensen

Aye: All

Nay: None

Citizen Comments:

Arch Placement:

Jake Blitsch, Jon Latham and Wink Hamilton talked about an arbor that they already had Hamilton construct before talking with the board for approval of this project. Blitsch proposed securing a steel circular arbor that he estimated at 1000 pounds over the trail in the wooded area on the south side of Platt Park. Hamilton stated that it would take heavy equipment to get the structure into place, and they would stake it down. Dimensions were not known but a picture was provided with Hamilton standing in the arbor. Johnson voiced his concerns about locating the structure over a trail due to safety concerns with bicyclists passing through at a fast pace and placing a fixed structure over the trail was not recommended. Johnson recommended placing it at Woodlawn as part of another project over a sidewalk and Blitsch said he had no interest in placing it at Woodlawn. Blitsch stated the city needs to invest money in paving the roads at Woodlawn. Board members talked about other locations where this project could be located. The board recommended to the council that they would like this arbor to be placed over a sidewalk at Woodlawn, Redgate or Platt Park if it is to proceed.

Consideration of a motion approving the arch presented by Jake Blitsch:

Motion: No vote

2nd:

Aye:

Nay:

Parks / Cemetery Updates:

Johnson stated this past two months Beatty and Johnson finished up a bunch of tree trimming in Appreciation Park downtown. Some of the trees were near and around light poles so this will help brighten the area up in the nighttime as well. All this tree trimming is in anticipation of RAGBRAI this summer. Justin and Johnson continued into the parking lot trees that we could get to as we will need people to move their cars out of the way for the remainder of the trees. Justin went around multiple times this spring checking that drainage areas are clear of debris.

Beatty and Johnson made the transition to remove snow removal equipment for summer implements. Justin took the broom around and swept all the trails and skate park this week. Johnson attended a RAGBRAI meeting in Des Moines with all the other overnight communities. On Thursday, Johnson attended a continuing education class that was centered on repairing Stenner pumps which we utilize at the aquatic center for acid injections. Beatty passed his pesticide applicator license for spraying this month and has

been spraying. Johnson finished their grant proposal to the foundation to complete ball diamond improvements, signage and new drags. Johnson stated that he learned last week that they received the grant proposal for the diamond improvements for \$17,000. Johnson stated that they have taken the box plane around a couple of times and smoothed out roads and parking lots.

Johnson attended a certification class in Cedar Rapids for the new chlorinator system that was installed at the aquatic center this year. Justin fixed the bike in Levin Park that was pulled down and reinforced it. Two memorial benches were installed this week as we poured the foundations last fall. The first bench is for the Lau family that was placed along the NW trail on 6th Street and the second is near the playground equipment on the north side of Wings Park in remembrance of members of the class of 1981. Kim is busy trying to recruit guards for the aquatic facility for this season and is lining up resources for different activities for this summer.

We are making final preparations as we will bring back the seasonal employees for the park and cemetery crew on in early April. Johnson stated there were some ruts left at the cemetery that were left by a contractor and were not city employees as the employees asked the contractor to stay out of the ditch. Concrete foundations at Woodlawn have been poured this past week and funeral homes notified.

Justin has been blowing leaves away from fence lines, shelters and playground equipment. Final CEU classes have been wrapped up for the season. The baskets for the downtown hanging flowers were replaced by Manske's Corner Market as the new plastic baskets will work much better than the cocoa lined baskets they had. Beatty has been busy trimming trees at various locations as he is working on the complex trees.

Johnson stated that the United Way - Day of Caring went great once again this year that took place on May 9th. Johnson stated that many companies donated time and resources to make this day a success. Johnson worked with Tim Rivera and Joe Bouska to line up projects and volunteers for the day. Johnson stated that there were several painting projects that were funded by the Diamond Vogel grant that they received with a value of \$400. Johnson stated that they spread a bunch of mulch at Wings Park, planted lilies downtown, trimmed trees at City Park, cleaned at the aquatic center. Johnson stated that the tree board planted five trees at Chrysler Park to replace the trees removed two years ago from the sewer project that went through. Johnson stated that he and Joe Bouska raised \$1,100 from local businesses to purchase enough yellow safety topper to place on diamond two at Wings Park. Johnson stated that he is hopeful that they can finish with diamond one next year. Johnson stated that they put up all shade structures with the bucket truck this past month at depot park and the pool. Johnson stated that the employees have been busy at the cemetery with various tasks and had to conduct another disinterment of an infant. Johnson stated that empty lots are getting less but there are still ongoing issues with neighbors dumping stuff on the lots that takes up department time to clean up. Johnson stated that they were awarded a grant from the Delta Dental Foundation in the amount of \$6,814.99 for a new drinking fountain and bottle filling station for the sports complex. Johnson stated that they will be looking for donations to buy concrete for the concrete pad to place this fountain on that will be located between diamonds A & B. Johnson stated that this past Saturday at Woodlawn they put up all the flags along the roads. Johnson stated that it was rather cool and breezy, but the volunteers did a great job once again. Johnson stated that the campground host, Linda Bickle, is back again this year and doing good with keeping up the facility.

Aquatics Update:

Johnson stated that pool manager Kim is doing an excellent job getting everything prepared for the upcoming season. Johnson stated that the employees have been super busy working on getting the aquatic facility ready for the upcoming season. Johnson stated that hours upon hours of power spraying need to occur every year to make the facility look its best. Johnson stated that a new addition to the facility was a wall that was placed in the storage room to give the concessions area some more room for food preparation. Johnson stated that the chlorinator was updated this year

as the new one will utilize chlorine more efficiently. Johnson stated that the pool cleaner has been working overtime with the windy conditions this spring. Johnson stated that tiki hut looks great as it was refurbished this winter with a new gloss paint job as the structure was rather beat up when it was purchased as it had been a floor model in its previous life.

Tree Board Update:

Johnson stated that he went out with tree board members and trimmed up more trees that we have planted in the past couple of years in street boulevards. This is a great project to train these trees, so they have a main central trunk and create a stronger tree in the long run and will count towards the Growth Award through the arbor day foundation. This past month the chestnut tree whips arrived right on time. Our dedicated tree board members came in on Tuesday to help plant them in containers where they will stay for a few years until they are big enough to plant in their destination. A few of us with the tree board participated in a tree keeper course through the DNR as an interactive way to refresh proper tree planting and maintenance practices. The course continues for three weeks, in which the board is showing its true dedication to this organization. The tree board received its hardware this past month for its "tree city" designation from the arbor day foundation, this was the 24th year for the city. The board was also awarded the Growth Award which is given to communities that add extra programming to their curriculum that demonstrates the extra effort put into tree education and promotion. Johnson stated that Trees Forever representative Bri Hull attended the united way day of caring.

Trails Updates:

Johnson stated that they are waiting for bids to complete the segment two trail project this month. Johnson stated that the easement from the railroad was need and they finally had the agreement signed this spring. Johnson stated that this project is funded by the Charitable Foundation, a \$100,000 REAP grant the trail committee received and a private donation from the Betty Tribon Estate in the amount of \$83,737.18 that will go towards purchasing the bridge in Woodlawn.

RAGBRAI:

Johnson has stated that he and Bouska have met with charters with RAGBRAI as we went out and scouted areas with them and the RAGBRAI committee last week. Johnson has been working on collecting information on RAGBRAI camping locations. This information is placed on an interactive google map that will be available for everyone to view once we get closer to the event that he showed the board. Johnson stated that they have three campgrounds for the event, Platt Park, the main campground is located at the high school /jr. high area, and the Wings Park area. Johnson stated that they are always looking for volunteers for all areas for this huge event. Johnson stated that they are hoping to sell extra concessions and have riders utilize their shower facilities. Johnson stated that they will be up in the morning to offer coffee and snacks to purchase before they take off for the next town. Johnson stated that they will be offering meals that night as they have been offering meals at the concession stand and applied for a grant through Kwik Star to help buy products for that day.

Board Member Updates:

Board members talked about the youth sports program and asked about participation and the direction of the program. Johnson stated he would reach out to Oakes and ask him to attend the next meeting.

Adjournment: 6:22pm

Next Meeting: June 2025