

## **PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY COMMISSION**

### **MINUTES**

Monday, August 19, 2024

#### **1. Call to order**

The Watertown Parks, Recreation & Forestry Commission met in person on August 19, 2024. The meeting was called to order by Brian Konz. Members present: Brian Konz, Julie Chapman, Ald. Jonathan Lampe, Jennifer Clayton, Emily Lessner, Brad Clark. Not present: Kyle Krueger. Also present: Emily McFarland, Kristine Butteris, Andrea Draeger, Jarrod Folkman, Stephanie Juhl, Ali Nicholson, and many members of the public.

#### **2. Review and approval of minutes:**

Brad Clark motioned to approve the July 15, 2024 Parks Recreation and Forestry minutes as written. Jennifer Clayton, seconded. Motion carried.

#### **3. Review and approval of financial reports**

Emily Lessner motioned to approve the June 2024 financial reports. Brad Clark seconded. Motion carried.

#### **4. Citizens to be heard**

There were none.

#### **5. Business**

##### **A. Review and take potential action: Inclusive Park update and communication materials**

Mayor Emily McFarland announced the beginning of the fundraising campaign for the inclusive park and will proceed with additional formal processes for approval and financial aspects. She presented renderings and video and will be available on the city website under the park, recreation, and forestry department tab. A grant received from the Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation for Parkitecture plans. Timeline – fundraising August-December, bid in January, approvals and contracts in February-March, contract signed in April and preconstruction meetings, and construction through next fall. There will also be an option to donate on website. The renderings include a complete renovation of the former playground area near the volleyball courts and shelter at Riverside Park to include new restrooms and 1/3 mile walking path. She described additional amenities and features of the park as well including inclusivity, completely fenced in, etc. A fundraising committee has been established. Questions and comments included: the potential to include another storybook trail along the walking path, a communication board in the sensory-friendly area, incorporating brail, incorporating metal in addition to plastic slides due to concerns for people living with hearing loss, and the plan for maintenance costs in the future – which will be included in the city budget. Emily Lessner motioned to approve proceeding with fundraising efforts for the inclusive park. Jennifer Clayton seconded. Motion carried.

##### **B. Review and take possible action: rental fee reduction for Dodge County Republican Party**

Ald. Jonathan Lampe motioned to table the decision until more information is available. Brad Clark seconded. Motion carried.

##### **C. Review and take possible action: invoice waiver for Kluz rental**

The Kluz family rented the lower and dance floor pavilion on July 20, 2024. Staff found tables were not returned to their original location after the rental, and the renter was billed according to the fee schedule for staff time for a total of \$200. The renter was in attendance and indicated they did not move tables during their rental. There was found to not be ample proof of a violation.

Julie Chapman motioned to waive their invoice. Emily Lessner seconded. Motion carried.

**D. Review and take action: smoking in parks ordinance**

The Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department along with the Health Department are seeking review and a recommendation for Common Council to approve the revised smoking ordinance 410- 56(A). It is requested this ordinance have one adjustment made to the proposed revision where 50 feet will be struck and replaced with 25 feet. According to UW Population Health Sciences, July 2019, secondhand smoke is detected at 23 feet from the source and irritation levels begin at 13 feet from the source. It is recommended to extend to 25 feet. Among all the health concerns with smoking, Parks is also affected by the remnants of a cigarette. It takes approximately 10 years for cigarette butts to begin breaking down. Ald. Jonathan Lampe motioned to approve the revised recommended ordinance. Julie Chapman seconded. Motion carried.

Brad Clark motioned to amend the previous revision to the original request and keep the 50 feet perimeter. Emily Lessner seconded. Motion carried.

**E. Review and take action: Heron View signage**

Sustain Jefferson has been maintaining the Heron View parkland area on the corner of Concord Ave and Oconomowoc Ave and would like information posted. They will be supplying the signage and put in the existing kiosk. Julie Chapman motioned to approve the posting of the sign. Jennifer Clayton seconded. Motion carried.

**F. Review and take action: 2025 fee schedule**

The updated fee schedule includes clarification of field prep, Kart Park rental, field rental, and concession in park permit fees. More changes will need to be made with recommendations for non-profit rates to be included. Jennifer Clayton motioned to table this item until the September meeting. Brad Clark seconded. Motion carried.

**G. Review and take action: 2025 facility use contracts**

Jennifer Clayton motioned to table this item until the September meeting. Brad Clark seconded. Motion carried.

**6. Director's Report:**

**A. Parks Updates**

The Riverside restrooms are nearing completion. The Riverfest event went well and will be billed according to the resolution and special event specifications. The park shop is getting a blacktopped yard.

**B. Forestry**

The team will be applying for two forestry grants for catastrophic event and Arbor Day Foundation.

**C. Aquatics**

The aquatic center closed yesterday for the season. The filtration system will be upgraded within the next month with Carico Aquatics.

**D. Programming - recreation**

We are rolling out of summer programming and into fall. We are also working with day camp and Kart Park staff for evaluation and feedback; no major issues or incidents occurred. Adult softball, volleyball, basketball, several youth programs will be starting for the fall and working to get staff hired and oriented.

**E. Programming – town square**

Food truck Mondays and Thursday night markets continue. We are evaluating the impact and attendances for next year. The YMCA summer events, Share the Love, are continuing and there are three concerts left for the season. Battle of the badges will occur next Sunday.

**F. Programming – senior & enrichment**

Senior Citizen Day was celebrated on August 21. The next upcoming events are Veteran's Day and Holiday Party. We are engaging new catering, entertainment, and sponsorship opportunities. The annual rummage sale and other fundraisers are being planned. Enrichment – family bingos will be planned for school breaks, and fall fitness and other classes are being planned.

**G. Programming – aquatics**

Attendance at the aquatic center was estimated at 22,000. The flick n float event had 200 people and may plan for the year-end bash every year. Will be working to offer prereq classes this fall for new lifeguards. Fall swim lesson classes are nearly full.

**7. Adjournment – Next meeting date September 16, 2024**

Brian Konz motioned to adjourn the meeting. Brad Clark seconded. Motion carried.