

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

July 25, 2019

Room 204, Government Center

Members Present: Keith Kern, Gene Rosburg, Brittany Berrens Markgren, Elizabeth Norén, Ruth Ludwig, Jemal Broussard, Tom Wondolkowski

Also Present: Linda Cadotte, Angie Harker, Russ Behlings, Brent Fennessey, Shelley Nelson, Shawna Anderson, Charmaine Swan, Pat McKone

1. Approval of June 27, 2019 meeting minutes

MOTION by Rosburg, seconded by Norén, and carried to approve Parks and Recreation Commission minutes of June 27, 2019.

2. IMBA Standards

Park Superintendent Russ Behlings gave an overview of the IMBA (International Mountain Biking Association) Trail Standards and passed around the IMBA trail building book. Behlings indicated this is a great resource and is favored over the U.S. Forest Service trail standards and could be used as a guide for maintenance of current and new trails.

MOTION by Kern, seconded by Rosberg, and carried to approve adopting IMBA trail standards for City trails.

3. Buskering locations

Cadotte reviewed the buskering policy which limits the activity to the Barker's Island boardwalk near the Lake Superior NERR building. She has recently received a request to allow buskering in other areas. The department has received only two buskering requests over the past four years. After discussion, commissioners recommended adding two more sites where buskering would be permitted: Barker's Island Beach and Center City Park, with the stipulation that buskering would not be allowed at any of the sites if there were a festival/other event/park reservation at the site (due to concerns about potential user conflicts). The group was not in favor of opening up all parks to buskering at this time. The commission indicated the department may update the policy and application form and move forward with the changes.

MOTION by Kern, seconded by Ludwig, and carried to approve three sites for buskering: Center City Park, Barker's Island Beach and the existing site, the Barker's Island boardwalk behind the NERR, with no buskering permitted when there are festivals/other events/park reservations at these sites.

4. Wisconsin Point boat launch – consider launch fee

Cadotte indicated there will be two improved launches on Wisconsin Point when the access/improvement project is finished, a boat launch with a concrete pad (no dock) and a rustic paddle launch. She explained that since there will now be amenities at the boat launch i.e. restrooms nearby, trash, recycling and parking, the commission could recommend adding the Wisconsin Point launch to our list of sites that require a boat launch pass. Behlings noted that he has observed mostly duck hunters using this launch. It was mentioned that it could be difficult to enforce the launch pass requirement, as oftentimes people with smaller boats put them in the

back of their truck versus using a boat trailer (which is how enforcement determines if someone has launched a boat). Ultimately, commissioners felt that since amenities would now be available, charging a launch fee seems appropriate.

MOTION by Ludwig, seconded by Norén, and carried to add the Wisconsin Point boat launch to the list of launches that require a boat launch fee.

5. “Smoke Free” Parks

Councilor Brent Fennessey referred this item to the commission. He indicated that many public areas are now smoke free and our city parks, which are geared towards children/youth, are not. He also mentioned that there is cigarette butt litter in the parks as receptacles are not provided. Fennessey suggested an ordinance prohibiting or limiting smoking in all city parks. Charmaine Swan and Pat McKone of the American Lung Association were present and materials from their organization were distributed including a draft outdoor recreational area tobacco free policy. Swan indicated that 16 municipalities in the State have smoke-free laws and per data from the American Non-Smokers Rights Association, approximately six have blanket policy smoke free parks. There was a lengthy discussion, which included questions about enforcement, exempting parks that hold special events (such as Barker’s Island Festival Park), allowing smoking so many feet from playgrounds, prohibiting vaping and chewing tobacco, etc. One suggestion was that all park property be designated smoke free, including all parks, ballfields, trails, the municipal forest and Wisconsin Point. Some commissioners were in favor of enacting a smoke free ordinance, while others voiced opposition to a blanket ordinance. Commissioners agreed that more discussion is imperative and should be sought prior to moving forward.

MOTION by Kern, seconded by Ludwig, and carried to hold in committee the issue of “Smoke Free” Parks until the next meeting.

6. Parks, Recreation & Forestry Director’s Report

Cadotte provided an update on the following:

- Park swings: New adult to adult and adult to child facing swings will be installed soon in Central, Allouez, Billings and Benny Peterson Parks.
- Millennium Trail mountain bike trails: Park staff met with Henry Campbell and walked and flagged the trail, along with the City’s Environmental Regulatory Coordinator Darienne McNamara and Steve LaValley of the Wisconsin DNR, who recommended boardwalk over wetlands. The 116 feet of boardwalk would cost an estimated \$5500 in lumber. In addition, within the next two weeks the DNR will be sending a letter confirming that no permitting will be needed to move forward. It is not anticipated that this would be received in time for Campbell to start the project before he leaves town for college however. Behlings estimates it would take a crew of six roughly 30 hours (based on IMBA standards) to complete this trail by hand, not including the boardwalk. The commission was supportive of Campbell picking the project up again next spring.
- Playground surfacing update: To bring playgrounds into safety compliance, engineered wood fiber (EWF) is being installed in place of sand at Bear Creek, Allouez, Gouge, Benny Peterson, Jack Ennis, Hammond, Heritage and Central Parks. One complaint was received about the sand being removed as the caller indicated her children like to play in the sand. Harborview Park will be resurfaced with rubber mulch after some painting is completed there.

- Zagster Bike Share: Staff was unable to log in to the Zagster website due to technical difficulties, therefore Cadotte will share screenshots of the statistics with the commission when the meeting minutes are distributed.
- Bear Creek Trail: Behlings indicated that the gravel has been installed and we are waiting on lumber for the boardwalks. Cadotte indicated that the CDBG grant has been submitted for improvements to Bear Creek Park as discussed at the last meeting.

Kern announced the meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

The next Parks & Recreation Commission meeting will be held Thursday, August 22nd at 5:00 p.m.

Minutes submitted to the Council Meeting of August 20, 2019.