

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
October 24, 2019
Room 204, Government Center

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

Members Excused: Tom Wondolkowski.

Also Present: Linda Cadotte, Angie Harker, Russ Behlings, Jenny Van Sickle, Shelley Nelson, Danesse Langford, Tyler Masseth.

1. Approval of September 19, 2019 meeting minutes.

MOTION by Rosburg, seconded by Broussard and carried, to approve the Parks and Recreation Commission minutes of September 19, 2019.

2. Approval of October 9, 2019 special meeting minutes.

MOTION by Rosburg, seconded by Norén and carried, to approve the Special Parks and Recreation Commission minutes of October 9, 2019.

3. Recap of Superior Municipal Forest disc golf course fall season and future plans. Parks, Recreation and Forestry Director Linda Cadotte provided a recap regarding the installation of the 9-hole disc golf course in the Superior Municipal Forest and their opening event, which was a doubles tournament. She provided maps showing the current course and a proposed 18-hole course. Tyler Masseth of the Lake Superior Disc Golf Community spoke about the construction of the first nine holes and the group's hope to construct another nine, making the course a true destination for disc golf enthusiasts. Masseth indicated they estimate about 50 people visit the course per week, the doubles tournament drew about 50 people and a Sunday afternoon league has been held there as well. The installation of the concrete tee pads and signage would be the biggest expense moving forward. Masseth indicated that his group already has three hole sponsors and the group is willing to seek additional sponsors to help offset the costs. Sponsorships range from \$500 - \$1000 and are reportedly quite popular in other courses. Park Superintendent Russ Behlings spoke about the construction and maintenance of the course and indicated that 90 percent of the work this season was done by volunteers. He said that staff observe the course to be quite busy during the week. In previous meetings, concerns were raised about the potential for increased trash, however Behlings indicated that there has actually been a decrease in trash in the area as a result of people routinely parking and using the property. He also spoke about the additional maintenance and felt that it added approximately 20-30% more work for the crew. In looking at adding another 9 holes, it was noted that some of the areas are mowed already (as they are ski trails); therefore, these new holes wouldn't require a lot of additional work. New holes north of 42nd Street would need more work. Masseth indicated that if the commission were in favor of expanding the course, volunteers could start prep and tree work this fall/winter when the ground freezes up. He also stated that if an 18-hole course were approved, the group would plan to bring a tournament to the course next fall.

MOTION by Kern, seconded by Norén and carried, to approve continuing with the construction of the next nine holes of the Superior Municipal Forest disc golf course, with upgrades as presented, and proceed with pursuing sponsorships.

4. Memorial bench in Hammond Park honoring the “Park Warriors.”

Cadotte indicated that a City Councilor along with citizens (via Facebook) made a request for a bench to honor some members of the “Park Warriors” group that have passed away, with one individual being Joanie Peters, who headed up the group. Cadotte reviewed the Parks & Recreation Naming policy highlighting the following sections: “1. The Parks & Recreation Commission’s first priority will be to recommend the Tribute Tree Program as a means of recognition (it was noted that a tree was planted in Peter’s memory in Hammond Park). 2. The use of a memorial plaque, bench, or other item may be considered at the discretion of the Parks & Recreation Commission; however, they should be used sparingly. The design, cost, placement, and care of the item will be mutually agreed upon by the Parks & Recreation division and the party making the request, with the division having the final authority in any dispute.” Daneese Langford was present and spoke about her friend Joanie Peters and the great contribution Joanie made by volunteering to clean up the parks in the city. Langford is very much in favor of a bench. There was discussion about who would pay for the bench. The estimated cost would be between \$750 - \$1500 depending on the type selected. There were also questions about who the bench would be in memory of, Peters or the “Park Warriors.” Since the Councilor and those asking for the bench were not present at the meeting, the commission decided to table the item to the next meeting to get more information from those making the request.

MOTION by Kern, seconded by Rosburg and carried, to table the Memorial bench in Hammond Park honoring the “Park Warriors.”

5. Final ordinance amending City Code Sec 86-16 “smoking prohibited” (as approved at the Special Parks & Rec Commission meeting on October 9, 2019).

The final redlined draft of the recommended ordinance was distributed with the agenda packet. Councilor Ludwig was unable to attend the last two meetings where the ordinance was discussed and she voiced her disappointment with it indicating that it does not go far enough.

MOTION by Berrens Markgren, seconded by Rosburg and carried, to approve the final ordinance amending City Code Sec 86-16 “smoking prohibited.”

6. Relocation of gate at 44th Avenue East (was referred back to 10/16/19 Public Works Committee from 10/01/19 Council meeting).

Cadotte recapped the history of this area indicating that most of it is not city property; however, it has long been a dumping ground that the city has cleaned up. It is also a popular area for residents to duck hunt, ice fish and access Allouez Bay for ice racing events. The Power Squadron reportedly has an agreement with BNSF granting them permission to gate off and use a specific area. Cadotte has left a number of messages with Bunge Corporation, the property owner, but connecting with them has proven to be difficult. Staff have also requested a copy of the agreement that the Power Squadron has with BNSF to determine parcels and permissions. A discussion with the property owner is needed and the City also needs to see the agreement between the Power Squadron and BNSF before proceeding. Additionally, Cadotte added that she has been contacted by the Lake Superior Ice Racing Association president Mark Androsky. He

indicates the group would be able to access Allouez Bay via the Wisconsin Point boat launch, if this issue is not resolved by the time racing starts.

MOTION by Rosburg, seconded by Kern and carried, to table the relocation of gate at 44th Avenue East.

7. Zagster hibernation November 15 – April 15.

Cadotte distributed and recapped Zagster statistics regarding rides, memberships, etc. She indicated that Zagster recommends hibernation November 15 – April 15; however, Mayor Paine has requested alternate hibernation dates of December 1 – April 1. Potential weather relating issues were discussed, i.e. the need to shovel the stations if we get snow and previous bike mechanic concerns about weather related bike damage. Some commissioners felt that a difference in two weeks on the hibernation dates was not an issue. It was also mentioned that last year's hibernation was done by gradually pulling 2 – 3 bikes at a time which meant that there were a couple of bikes at each station until the final hibernation date of November 30th.

MOTION by Kern, seconded by Broussard and carried, to approve the Zagster hibernation dates of November 15 – April 15 (Ludwig and Norén voted no).

8. Review of outdoor skating rinks.

Cadotte handed out statistics regarding the costs of maintaining the city ice rinks for the past two seasons. Behlings spoke about the extensive staff time involved in rink maintenance due to the methods/staff needed to clear hockey rinks. He also mentioned that rink work must be set aside when it snows, as the department must first clear snow from city parking lots (13 of them), paths (15) and safe routes to school. With the increase in snow clearing responsibilities, the department must look at prioritizing rinks. Cadotte shared the good news that Superior Amateur Hockey Association (SAHA) has agreed to adopt one rink this year. They are considering Pattison or Billings Park. The non-flooding of the Veteran's rink was also discussed. This is a non-staffed rink with no warming shack, near the Boys & Girls Club. This closure was recommended two years ago, but 10th district Councilor Esther Dalbec was opposed. The staff at the Boys and Girls Club at the time were not opposed to the closure citing lack of use and their preference that the area would be drier in the spring for the members to use for other sports. Cadotte confirmed with the Club that this continues to be their position. They also indicated they have a club in the Heritage Sports Center in Duluth, which has indoor ice for their use if they decide to offer skating to their members. Behlings spoke about the flooding of Veteran's rink indicating staff have to close down Catlin Avenue to flood from a hydrant across the avenue. The DTA (Duluth Transit Authority) complains about this as it disrupts their bus routes. In addition, staff do not observe many skating tracks on the rink, but rather see more snowmobile tracks. It was suggested that Wade Bowl is not far from Veteran's and there is a staffed, warming shack at that location, which offers a hockey and pleasure rink. Another item discussed by Cadotte and Behlings was making improvements to the bases of the rinks, as was done in South Superior, which makes for more efficient flooding and water savings. This is on the department's list to complete, however other projects have taken precedence this year.

MOTION by Kern, seconded by Norén and carried, to approve closing Veteran's ice rink.

9. Parks, Recreation & Forestry Director's Report.

Cadotte gave an update on pickle ball courts noting that Allouez and Central Park courts have been striped and nets have been added. Barker's Island court lines were also striped recently. Cadotte mentioned a solar garden that SWLP is considering installing near Heritage Park as they own the property along North 28th Street. She also let the commission know that the first mile of the new Wisconsin Point/Bear Creek trail is now open and has been well received.

Kern announced the meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

The next regular Parks & Recreation Commission meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 21st at 5:00 p.m

Minutes submitted to the Council Meeting of November 5, 2019.