

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, April 2, 2013

4:30 p.m., Snack Bar, Bunker Hill Golf Course

PRESENT: Bob Blocker, Chuck Harris, Paul Hoffmann, Ken Klinge, Karen Lyness, Evelyn Nadeau and David Schlueter

OTHERS PRESENT: Eric Dregne, Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque; Kate Lydon and Jim Kress

STAFF PRESENT: Marie Ware, Steve Fehsal, Dan Kroger and Eileen Trimble

MINUTES APPROVED; VOTE: It was moved by Lyness, seconded by Nadeau, to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2013, meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

INTRODUCE RECREATION DIVISION MANAGER: Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware introduced Dan Kroger the new Recreation Division Manager. He has worked the last fourteen plus years in the Glen Ellyn, Illinois Park District most recently as the facility manager of an 80,000 square foot athletic facility.

3RD GRADE READING INITIATIVE, ERIC DREGNE: Manager Ware introduced Eric Dregne of the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque who was present to talk about the 3rd Grade Reading Initiative. He is the Vice-President of Programs for Greater Dubuque Community Foundation and is the staff person for the Every Child Every Promise Committee as well as facilitator for the 3rd Grade Reading Initiative.

Eric shared "The Park and Recreation Department creates safe places and caring adults in the summer with their programs. All five of the Every Child Every Promise goals are a good fit with park and recreation, covering ages infant to 20. There are a variety of partners involved with Every Child Every Promise and the 3rd Grade Reading Initiative – Dubuque Community School District, businesses, nonprofit organizations, donors, Dubuque County Childhood Development and the City. Every Child Every Promise is one of the top goals of the City Council. The 3rd Grade Reading Initiative has 12 partners and they developed a community plan that was designed and adopted by the group and recognized by All America City and national organization as a pace setter. Dubuque will receive a *Pace Setter Award* on April 26, 2013 at a public event. The plan strives to have more children reading proficiently at third grade level. It is a proven fact that the third grade reading level predicts graduation rate. The national level right now is 74% and Dubuque is 86%. The plan focuses on **school readiness** – 3 and 4 year-old preschool, quality child care centers and development for preschool teachers and child care; **school attendance** – help schools identify chronic absence, children that are absent more than 10% of the school year; and **summer learning** – encourage park district and agencies to incorporate learning component into their programs so over the summer children maintain what they learned during the school year. The Recreation Division would be involved in the summer learning component to prevent summer learning loss by encouraging continued support and have learning built into our programs – maybe read a few things and then do an activity. The summer pilot program is a seven-week camp, June through August. St. Mark Community Center is taking the lead for the pilot and it will be staffed with AmeriCorps volunteers and certified teachers. The idea is to make sure the kids have a

learning experience all summer through reading and activities, not sit in a classroom all summer. The cost for 45 students will be approximately \$45,000 with \$20,000 coming from partnerships and \$20,000 from a donor at the Community Foundation. The pilot was kept small with 45 students to see how the program works and what does not work so changes and adjustments can be made in the future.”

Commissioner Lyness asked how the students would be chosen for the pilot program. Mr. Dregne said the interest level first and then their reading level – 2/3 would be students that needed more assistance and 1/3 would be high performing students. Commissioner Hoffmann asked why Recreation Division would be used as a portal for this program – the Library should be the portal for a reading program. He said childhood obesity is a bigger problem than illiteracy so why use our resources for reading? Mr. Dregne said the program would not be using any department funds. He thinks we can help children read and learn about health and being active and then go do an activity outside. They are asking Recreation Division to incorporate a learning component into activities, not take kids away from our programs. Commissioner Nadeau shares Mr. Hoffmann’s concern about obesity but she found some articles that show lower learning levels can lead to more obesity. Commissioner Lyness agrees with Nadeau and thinks it’s a good program to work in. Commissioner Klinge asked if this program has been tried in other cities, and if yes, how did it work there? Mr. Dregne said seven or eight years ago in Chicago school district of approximately 50,000 students, only 25% of the kids were doing organized activity after school and now 60% are. In Dubuque the LEAP program has 500+ kids signed up for after school programs. Commissioners thanked Mr. Dregne for coming.

PET
ORDINANCE
RECOMMEN-
DATIONS:

Manager Ware informed commissioners that the City Council asked the Commission to discuss possible revisions to the recommended ordinance regarding pets in parks including: a) 1-year trial period with evaluation; 2) evaluation of enforcement options; 3) shorter list of eligible parks; 4) clear definition of geography of play equipment areas; and 5) costs of waste bag dispensers, waste bags and signs.

Kate Lydon and Jim Kress were present and asked to be allowed to make a quick statement. Ms. **Lydon** distributed a document regarding FIDO seeking a non-profit status and they are eager to work with the City on pet related issues. She said Council Person Sutton was the only City Council member that wanted to rule out small parks with playground areas. Her group did an online poll regarding the \$90,000 Pet Park CIP funds going to Humane Society and the majority of the responders wanted the funds to be used to make the existing parks more dog friendly or for a second park downtown, not the Humane Society location. Mr. **Kress** does not agree with the Mayor’s sunset law and then expand after an evaluation period and he does not want all the other parks added after evaluation period. There are lots of kids in Eagle Point Park. Mr. Kress thinks we should stay with original ordinance and not allow pets in parks and the Mayor should not expect citizens to video infractions.

TRIAL PERIOD;
VOTE:

Commissioner Harris thinks a one-year trial with an evaluation is acceptable because it leaves the City Council an out if there are problems. Commissioner Hoffmann felt both sides could live with a trial period and have an evaluation at the first meeting in June. Commissioners Nadeau, Lyness, Blocker and Klinge said the trial period should be a year from when the ordinance change is enacted. Manager Ware told Commissioners that if they recommend a trial period, it will be helpful to have what the evaluation process will be at the end of the trial. Commissioner Schlueter said most of the input would have to come from Steve and Marie.

It was moved by Harris, seconded by Lyness to approve a one-year trial period for allowing pets in parks, to end one year from date the ordinance change is enacted. The motion passed unanimously.

The Commission agreed evaluation will be completed at that time including calls for service, complaints, costs, public and staff input.

ENFORCEMENT;
VOTE:

Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal compiled information regarding enforcement options that was included in agenda packet; copy may be found as part of the original minutes. Park Patrol, full time park employees, seasonal patrol, Police and animal control would be the current people to enforce the code. Two full time patrol officers work from 4:00 p.m. to Midnight May 1st through October 31st. Three seasonal rangers work from May 1st through October 31st but are not authorized to issue citations. Two animal control officers work 29 hours per week from 9:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Monday through Friday during summer months and 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday during winter months. Full time park employees could be authorized to issue citations but it was highly recommended by Assistant City Attorney not to authorize full time park employees. It would take fifteen to 30 minutes out of these employees regular work schedules per citation if they were authorized. Police response to animal call in park would be a Code 3 which is 30 minute response goal. It could get increased to a Code 2 or 1 if the animal was considered aggressive.

Commissioner Lyness heard a suggestion that if employee was working in the area and see an infraction they should go tell the person they must stop or leave the park. Assistant City Attorney Brumwell said the employee would have to issue tickets and she does not think all department employees should be issuing tickets because they have to ask for person's driver's license, etc.

Commissioner Blocker is not comfortable having an employee leave their job or get off a piece of equipment to go issue a ticket. Commissioner Schlueter liked the idea of a warning and not an immediate ticket, and see where we are at the end of a trial period. It needs to be kept as simple as possible and quit adding pieces because it's getting so complicated. Let's try to keep children safe and have certain areas off limits. Commissioner Nadeau said we should make it so seasonal patrol would be able to write tickets.

Manager Fehsal said if we have a no tolerance policy, what about nonresidents who just visit the park with dog and don't know about the ban. Currently a fine could be up to \$750. Commissioner Blocker does not like a no tolerance policy. Commissioner Schlueter thought it should be left up to the person writing the ticket to use discretion; Commissioner Lyness agreed.

It was moved by Schlueter, seconded by Harris, to have Police, Animal Control and Seasonal and Full Time Park Patrol be in charge of enforcing the ordinance and use their own discretion as to whether to issue a citation or not. The motion passed 6-1 with Blocker, Harris, Klinge, Lyness, Nadeau and Schlueter voting yes; Hoffmann voting no.

The Commission agreed that they were not interested in a no tolerance enforcement policy. They feel enforcement officials should have the responsibility and discretion to ticket as they do in all other situations. They expressed concern for visitors and tourists.

CONSIDERATION
OF ADDITIONAL
AREAS; VOTE:

Commissioner Harris did not think we should change/shorten the list of parks – only Council Person Sutton requested it. He did not think it was a good idea to make the ordinance more patchwork and more complicated because it would be more confusing and harder to enforce and educate the public. Commissioner Schlueter asked why it was suggested to add Allison-Henderson as a no pet park. Mr. Harris said it was because it was looked at as one big park and there are always lots of children's programs held in that park. Commissioner Blocker was opposed to adding Allison-Henderson; Commissioner Lyness thought list should stay as first recommendation; Commissioner Schlueter said if we added Allison-Henderson and that would make the Council pass the ordinance, let's add it; Commissioner Nadeau said adding Allison-Henderson would let the Council know we understood their concerns. Commissioner Hoffmann wants tennis courts added to the "no pets" list.

It was moved by Schlueter, seconded by Lyness, to add Allison-Henderson Park, tennis courts, basketball courts and skate parks to the present proposed no pets list. The motion passed 6-1 with Harris, Hoffmann, Klinge, Lyness, Nadeau and Schlueter voting yes; Blocker voting no.

GEOGRAPHIC
BOUNDARY;
VOTE:

The Council asked for a clear definition of playground areas so Division Manager Fehsal provided maps of all city parks that contain play equipment with three choices of distance by feet. Some play equipment areas have mulch and some are hard surface. Commissioner Harris liked the 10' range because if you used the 25' range it would take up a lot of the park itself in the smaller parks; Commissioner Nadeau favored the shorter distance because of the smaller parks; Commissioner Schlueter thought the 10' cushion was good.

It was moved by Harris, seconded by Nadeau, to define the geographic area to be 10' from the border of mulch or hard surface play equipment or play area. The motion passed unanimously.

COSTS AND
SIGNAGE; VOTE:

Commissioner Blocker asked how the department would define the costs for signage, waste bags etc. Ms. Ware said most major cities do not provide bags except in their actual pet parks and signage costs would depend on which size and the number purchased but remember that if after a year evaluation the ordinance would be changed back, the signs would be no good. The number of signs needed would be dependent on each park – entry sign and how many were placed inside the park. Mr. Fehsal brought sign samples – standard size \$15; bigger \$40; and largest would be \$60. A larger sign could add other things on the sign like sustainability symbols, park hours, etc.

Commissioner Harris asked if signs could be cleaned off and re-used; Commissioner Nadeau asked if we used the largest sign and after a year we had to change back, could you cover up that part of the sign. Commissioner Schlueter doesn't want a ton of signs because it will take away from the aesthetic beauty. Commissioner Lyness asked if there was a waste dispenser on the Riverwalk and Ms. Ware said yes on the southern part near Maus Park. Mr. Fehsal said there are currently 13 waste bag dispensers placed in park or trail areas. Commissioner Schlueter recommended seeing how the first year goes before spending a lot of money on dispensers and bags; don't add any new ones at this time.

Commissioner Nadeau suggested placing a larger sign in the main entrance to the parks including the 10' rule around playground areas instead of placing lots of signs at playground areas. Commissioner Lyness suggested having signs placed that are appropriate to the size of the park. Commissioner Schlueter would like one large sign placed in the corner of the park at ones like Washington and Jackson. Commissioner Lyness suggested that information sheets could be handed out to participants in any programs that included pets as another way to educate the public.

It was moved by Nadeau, seconded by Lyness, not to provide waste bag dispensers or bags in any areas not currently provided and to place less signs but larger informational and rules signs (\$60 size) at entrance to parks. Signs placed in parks would be appropriate to size of park. The motion passed unanimously.

The Commission agreed that responsible pet owners will bring bags and pick up after their own pets. Staff will work on total costs based on this motion.

PORT OF
DUBUQUE
MARINA
UPDATE:

Manager Ware told Commissioners that the Engineering Department issued an RFP for management of the Marina a year ago and received one proposal – management fee of \$30,000 and all expenses/revenue would be the city's. Over 40 companies downloaded the RFP but only one turned in a proposal (Dubuque River Rides). Engineering asked a few of the companies why they did not turn in proposal and they said the business has no history and it's a transient marina so there would be no guaranteed slip rental by the month or year. They talked to some management type companies to consult with and they would require

anything from \$30,000 to \$100,000 for their expertise. Consultants advised that it would be word of mouth that promotes the business and it would probably take three years to make a profit because you would need to build up clientele.

The target opening date is June 1st. Manager Ware reported Leisure Services put out an RFP for specific marina expertise to give us the expertise. The City Council will be receiving the RFP's at the next City Council meeting and will determine if the City will run the marina with consultant's expertise.

TOUR
DUBUQUE
REQUEST TO
USE TRIKKE'S
ON TRAILS;
VOTE:

Lou Broughton of Tour Dubuque has requested the ability to use the city trails and certain parks for tours using Trikkies (a single person motorized electric vehicle). The vehicles are 4' long, 2' wide and 4' high, weighing 50 pounds each. They were doing tours along the Riverwalk until they were informed by Public Works employees that there is a rule of no motorized vehicles. The three main tours he does are along the River Walk, by the lock and dam and A.Y. McDonald Park, and the Trolley Line Trail up into Eagle Point Park and onto park road because these three are the most scenic.

Manager Ware said Tour Dubuque sells Trikkies, and it would have to be determined if personal Trikkies would be allowed too. The City risk management (ICAP) would not recommend allowing. If it would be an individual, they would have to buy a motorcycle license. Ms. Ware said she needed some input or reaction from the commission on how they feel.

Commissioners Nadeau, Klinge and Lyness generally felt allowing him permission would open the door for too much including mopeds, etc and that is a concern even though Mr. Broughton made an investment and the tourism is good for the City. Commissioner Schlueter asked with the current ordinance says – no sidewalk but street is okay. Commissioner Harris said the issue will be the individual that wants the same permission but he could see loosening the restrictions a little. Commissioner Lyness asked if we could allow permission for a one-year trial period and restrict certain areas.

Nadeau prefers not to have motorized vehicles on trails; Schlueter said the City Council will have the final say; Blocker said other cities allow and don't have an issue or they would have stopped allowing usage; Klinge said the ordinance is already in place to not have motorized vehicles.

It was moved by Nadeau, seconded by Klinge, to recommend not permitting motorized vehicles (Trikkies) on trails. The motion passed 4-2, with Harris, Klinge, Nadeau and Schlueter voting yes; Blocker and Lyness voting no.

PARK DIVISION
REPORT:

Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal updated commissioners:

- parks open for the season May 4th;
- long term seasonal will begin work April 15th;
- renovation has begun on the interior of the Miller Riverview campground rest room building;
- tables and chairs have been set out in the downtown area;
- Greenhouse staff was working on hanging baskets last week and they have about 50 out of 300 ready to go;
- interviews have been completed for the Assistant Horticulturalist.

RECREATION
DIVISION
REPORT:

Recreation Division Manager Dan Kroger updated commissioners:

- There was a new chlorine system used at Sutton Pool last year that was very successful so the same system is going to be added to Flora this year.
- Division Manager Kroger is working with **golf** staff to focus on retaining season pass holders and then reaching out to new customers; ATM machine has been placed at Bunker Hill; working on utilizing the snack bar more in the winter.
- Alumni tournament had 46 teams this year and all went well.
- After school basketball and open gym programs have been completed.
- Interviews are scheduled for the Golf Technician position.
- We are looking at revamping the fall brochure from cover to cover and use as a marketing tool. It has been the same for thirty years so we want to refresh it.
- Staff from Recreation and Park Divisions are meeting to work on some collaborative programs.
- In late summer or fall we will hire the replacement for the open full time Recreation Program Supervisor position.

MANAGER
REPORT:

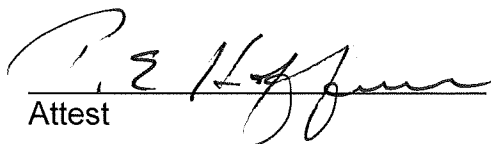
Indoor Aquatic Center: Manager Ware reported that 9 responses to the request for proposals were received. The joint committee chose four firms to interview and those were scheduled the second week in April. The committee will be recommending a firm to the Park and Recreation Commission, City Council and School Board. The committee hopes to have the study done by the end of August.

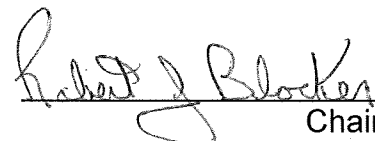
OTHER
BUSINESS:

- Commissioner Klinge asked if we had a projected opening date for the **golf** course – Manager Kroger said hopefully the front nine would open at the end of the week.
- Manager Ware **thanked Commissioners** for all their help and attendance with all the very long meetings and all the communications they had received.

ADJOURN;
VOTE:

It was moved by Schlueter seconded by Lyness, that the meeting be adjourned at 6:58 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.


Attest


Chairperson

