

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

4:30 p.m., Multicultural Family Center, 1157 Central Avenue

PRESENT: Bob Blocker, Robin Kennicker, Ken Klinge, Kate Lydon, Karen Lyness, Evelyn Nadeau and David Schlueter.

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

MINUTES APPROVED; VOTE: It was moved by Nadeau, seconded by Klinge, to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2014, meeting. The motion passed unanimously (4-0); Kennicker, Lydon and Lyness were not present at start of meeting.

RENEW DOCKING AGREEMENT WITH SWIFT WATER ADVENTURE TOURS; VOTE: Leisure Services Manager Ware said the docking agreement was approved last year on a trial basis. The agreement allows Swift Water access to the docking space in the Port of Dubuque Marina for fifteen minutes prior to the start of charter loading and fifteen minutes for an introduction and safety talk. Ten minutes is allowed for unloading at the end of each charter. The boat is not stored at the marina unless they wanted to pay for transient boat slot.

Commissioner Schlueter asked if there were any complaints from last season and Ms. Ware said no. Marina Manager said they worked well with him. Commissioner Nadeau asked if we should have some kind of policy where we can do up to a certain amount of this type of usage in case a lot of others would want to request the same thing. Ms. Ware told the owner last year that as our business grows, we may not be able to renew the agreement.

It was moved by Schlueter, seconded by Lyness, to recommend approval of renewal of the Docking Agreement with Swift Water Adventure Tours for another season. The motion passed unanimously.

EMERALD ASH BORER PRESENTATION BY FORESTER, STEVE PREGLER: Steve Pregler, City Forester was present to make a presentation on Emerald Ash Borer. Last month EAB was found in Black Hawk County, in Waterloo.

EAB is a devastating insect that will kill off all the Ash trees in North America. Managing EAB is a great and unavoidable expense for all communities. The larvae actually feed and tunnel beneath the bark of the tree. It is the larvae that do all the damage. Part of the problem is that the EAB is in the tree for two or three years before symptoms start showing up. Some of the symptoms are sucker growth at the base of the tree; upper crown starts dying back; Bark flecking by wood peckers can be seen; exit holes from the beetles begin to appear and bark starts splitting. The upper limbs are attacked first. The D-shaped emergent holes are made by the adult beetle. The females return to the crown of tree to feed and mature, lay eggs and eventually die. Each female lays 100 eggs in a two to three month period. Fifty-six percent of these will be female. Each year the population increases exponentially, so by the tenth year after infestation, there would be 50 trillion beetles.

The USDA has created a map showing where EAB has spread to 22 states since 2002, when it was discovered in Michigan. In 2010 the first infestation in Iowa showed up in Allamakee County. Since August of 2013, it has shown up in

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seven more counties in Iowa and three in Illinois. The closest infestation to Dubuque is 38 miles. EAB has been found fifteen miles due East of Clinton and in Rock Island.

There are some insecticides available to treat trees and will protect them as long as you inject according to the label directions. The most effective product now requires injecting the tree every third year. You drill a hole in the trunk and then inject the insecticide. The average price is \$8.00 to \$10.00 per diameter inch of tree so an 18" diameter tree would cost \$180 to treat every third year. The same tree would cost \$540 to protect for ten years. Removal of the tree instead of trying the protection method would cost approximately \$800 to \$1,200 per tree.

A 2010 street tree inventory recorded 1,271 Ash trees and 4,051 other species. The areas with high Ash tree populations would be Jackson Street (87), Washington Street (39), Elm Street (15), Graham Circle (29), St. John Drive (39) and Suzanne Drive (11). The difference between the north end and the west end of town is that the planting lawns in the north end are only 3 to 4 feet. So if all these trees were removed they would probably not be replaced. Larger planting lawns are required now for street tree plantings. Mr. Pregler estimates if all the trees were removed it would cost \$987,600 for tree removal, \$95,280 for stump removal and \$387,655 for replacement, for a total of \$1,082,880. This applies to street trees only and does not include Ash trees in parks.

The state EAB team came to Dubuque a few years ago and did a bark peeling presentation and training. Dubuque's EAB plan will likely include: • inventory Ash trees on public property; • review ordinance and possibly make some changes like requiring private tree companies to be licensed to operate in Dubuque; • educate the public with a link to a website and FAQ's; • continuing education for forestry workers; • come up with options for utilizing the wood (sell? / railroad ties? / picnic tables? / tool handles, etc); • remove unhealthy Ash trees; • preserve high value Ash trees by doing the tree trunk injections; • contracting removals because of extra help needed.

Mr. Schlueter thanked Steve for attending the meeting and making the presentation, it was very informative. Ms. Lydon asked who a citizen should call first if they find Emerald Ash Borer in their tree and Mr. Pregler said to notify him.

APPROVE
MILLER
RIVERVIEW
MANAGEMENT
AGREEMENT
WITH KEN AND
NANCY
CLAYTON; VOTE:

Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal told commissioners that the management agreement is the same as last year except Nancy Clayton's name was added so both Ken and Nancy are officially listed as managers and both would get paid. Commissioner Blocker said he has camped at Miller Riverview for a long time and he thinks Ken and Nancy Clayton do an excellent job of managing the campground – they are a good team.

It was moved by Lyness, seconded by Klinge, to approve renewal of the Management Agreement for Camping at Miller Riverview Park with Ken and Nancy Clayton. The motion passed unanimously.

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DATE CHANGE
FOR APRIL
MEETING:

Ms. Ware told commissioners that the managers would be attending the Iowa Park and Recreation Association state conference April 7th through 9th so she would like to change the April meeting to the first or third Tuesday instead of the regular second Tuesday (April 8th) if commissioners were agreeable. After discussion, general consensus was that more commissioners would be available the first Tuesday so April meeting will be Tuesday, April 1st.

PARK DIVISION
REPORT:

Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal updated commissioners:

- Mr. Fehsal thanked commissioners for listening to Mr. Pregler's **presentation** on the **Emerald Ash Borer**. It is information they should be aware of. Staff will be getting an inventory of all the other Ash trees in the park system.
- **Snow** is melting so hopefully staff will be able to work on other projects.
- Things are gearing up in the **Greenhouse** to get ready for the upcoming season.
- Department has been approved to move forward with filling the vacant **Foreman** position even though the city is in a hiring freeze.
- **Park Ranger** position could possibly be changing and will no longer be considered a law enforcement officer, nor will the person carry a gun, and lights and sirens will be removed from vehicles. The person will be sort of a ranger / maintenance person but will still be able to write some tickets and assist Police Department with traffic control when needed.

RECREATION
DIVISION
REPORT:

Recreation Division Manager Dan Kroger updated commissioners:

Golf: • Staff is concerned that the freezing and thawing of the ground and shifting of the irrigation could be a problem. The rain has frozen and made sheets of ice on top of the greens and then snow on top of that, so concerned about possible damage to greens. • Pass sales are going well and this year membership includes being automatically added to IPGA golf handicap system.

• **Program Supervisor Position:** Phone interviews were conducted and we are now in the second round of interviews, in person; hope to have a recommendation in the next week.

• **Brochure:** currently the working with a printer on the 56-page Summer brochure.

• **Lighted boat parade:** Mr. Kroger and Marina Manager Ben Alden are working together on the first annual Lighted Boat Parade to be held August 2nd. It is an evening event sort of like a Venetian parade in Chicago.

• **Boat reservation software:** Staff was hoping to work with ActiveNet for online boat reservations but their reservation software module won't be ready until possibly next year.

• **Easter Egg Hunt:** Department is partnering with Mystique Community Ice Center to hold a free Easter egg hunt on Saturday, April 5th. A staff member will be wearing an Easter bunny suit and skating. After the hunt, ice skates will be available free of charge for a public skate period.

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MANAGER
REPORT:

Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware updated commissioners:

■ **FY 2014 budget shortfall:** Manager Ware told Commissioners that gambling/DRA revenues were down and people were shopping/spending less due to winter weather so sales tax revenues were also down. All Department Managers were asked to look at CIP projects that could possibly be delayed or moved to a different year, were completed but had funds left over or could be totally dropped. They also had to look at operating budgets and see if any travel / education / overtime / equipment type funds could be frozen to make funds available to help cover shortfall. The City is under a hiring freeze for FT staff unless it was a serious need that could be justified to fill vacancy. Leisure Services was approved to move forward with filling the vacant Foreman and Recreation Program Supervisor positions. Our equipment budgets were not cut. The City Council will take action at the April 21st meeting to decide where the cuts will be. It will not be an easy decision, no matter what. Projects cut out of FY 2014 because of the budget shortfall, cannot come back into the five-year budget until FY 2016 or later.

Commissioner Schlueter asked if the **aquatic center** was still on the list. Ms. Ware said yes. Some of the committee members traveled and learned a lot about budget / staff / acres needed / partnerships, etc.

■ **Bee Branch:** Review meetings are happening for Upper Bee Branch (from railroad tracks to Comiskey Center). Ms. Ware showed Commissioners some of the early plans for Upper Bee Branch.

OTHER
BUSINESS:

• **3 Mini Parks:** Commissioner Nadeau asked if funding for development of the three mini parks was cut because of the FY 2014 budget shortfall. Ms. Ware said those funds are on the list of projects to be cut.

• **Pets in parks:** Commissioner Lydon asked if we could bring back the issue of allowing pets in parks again on next agenda since second pet park funds are on the chopping block. Ms. Ware said final decisions on actual cuts would not be made by the Council until later in April so they may want to wait until then. Commissioner Schlueter asked if enough time had passed for a good test of the effects of what was already changed on the ordinance. Mr. Fehsal said from approximately June to end of season last year, any time employees saw pets in parks they logged the information. After discussion, the general consensus was to wait until May meeting and see what action City Council took on FY 2014 cuts.

ADJOURN;
VOTE:

It was moved by Klinge, seconded by Blocker, that the meeting be adjourned at 6:05 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.



Attest



Chairperson