

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, April 1, 2014

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

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

ABSENT: Kate Lydon

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

MINUTES APPROVED:  
VOTE: It was moved by Klinge, seconded by Nadeau, to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2014, meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

CHANGE SUMMER MEETINGS SITES: Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware asked Commissioners if they would be interested in holding the summer meetings at different department facilities. After discussion, the consensus was summer meetings would be held at locations other than Bunker Hill, possibly the following: May – Eagle Point; June – Murphy; July – Flora; August – Prescott NRC.

FACILITIES TOUR: Manager Ware reminded Commissioners that a couple years ago prior to budget time one of the monthly meetings was a combination meeting / tour of facilities. A box meal was provided and Commissioners went on a tour of some of the department facilities where capital improvement projects had just been completed, or would be starting. Since we have a couple new Commissioners Ms. Ware asked if Commissioners would be interested in taking another tour. Commissioners agreed a tour would be a good idea.

PARK DIVISION REPORT: Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal told Commissioners:

- Interviews have been completed for the **Foreman** position so hopefully individual will be hired within a couple weeks. • **Mike Horsfall**, Horticulturist is **retiring** March 28th. This is a Civil Service position so it will take three or four months to go through the process.
- **Hanging flower baskets** are growing well.
- Steve Pregler is working on **Emerald Ash Borer** information – it was found in Jasper County over the weekend.
- **Parks open** for the season on Saturday, May 3rd.
- Holiday **reservations** for Miller Riverview **campground** will be done with the lottery process again this year. The lottery will be held Saturday, April 12th at Five Flags. The ActiveNet module for camping reservations should be working later this fall so hopefully next season we will be ready for online reservations.
- **Pets in parks**: The park patrol and maintenance staff logged times where pets were seen in parks where they were not allowed, from opening day to closing day. No tickets were written, just verbal warnings and told citizen where pets were allowed. Staff will log instances again in 2014 and not issue citations unless directed otherwise. We are working for pet-related signage for the parks. Commissioner Schlueter asked if there were any problems or complaints about waste, pets not on leashes, animal bites, etc. He isn't concerned as much about

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the waste bags, but would like to see receptacles for citizens to dump their bags. He also asked about the trails and walkways where pets are allowed on leashes. Mr. Fehsal said trails are not really monitored by staff but he can get the animal bites information from Health Services Department. He did not get many complaints about problems. Commissioner Lyness asked if a reminder could be sent to the public about where pets are allowed when the news release was sent for park opening day.

• Commissioner Blocker said he had a couple people ask him why the **park patrol** would not be carrying guns and not have lights or sirens on their vehicles. Mr. Fehsal said nothing is official yet but is being studied. Police would be called for the biggest majority of incidents and patrol would be the back-up. There are a lot of other cities where park rangers do not carry guns – they can write tickets related to ordinances. Manager Ware said that if the changes do get approved, the vehicles will still have computers and radios and patrol would be able to write tickets. Staff looked at it from a safety issue, plus every time you send a potential officer to the academy it is very expensive and they are only an officer for 6 or 7 months of the year. We also hire three seasonal rangers and they wear the same uniform and use the same vehicles as the full time ranger that currently has a gun and all they have is pepper spray. Mr. Fehsal said we have a very good Police Department that we work closely with. Ms. Ware said since there is an opening now is the time to talk about possible changes.

RECREATION  
DIVISION  
REPORT:

Recreation Division Manager Dan Kroger told Commissioners:

**Golf:** The golf course opened today, two weeks earlier than 2013.

**Aquatic Center:** • Public meetings were held April 25th at 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Between the two meetings there were approximately 40 attendees. The consultant presented an overview, what the center could look like with potential amenities, no dollar amounts. People were divided into groups and had cards with a list of all kinds of amenities and revenue/expense effect and asked to mark the amenities they thought the center should have. • The Mind Mixer site was launched. It started out slow with only 9 people visiting the site the first day but then it went to over 900. Approximately 90 people were checking out the site and communicating. • Next month a couple more less formal public engagement meetings are scheduled.

**Personnel:** We are close to hiring the full time Recreation Supervisor.

**IPRA Conference:** Monday through Wednesday of next week some of the Recreation staff will be attending the state conference. You always learn new things but this year will hopefully get ideas for the fall workshop which Dubuque is hosting.

**Brochure:** The summer brochure will be coming out April 4th. It will have a new format and lots of new programs, including a Third Grade Reading section. Commissioner Nadeau asked if the Neighborhood Recreation brochure section could ever be printed in Spanish and maybe a Marshallese version.

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Commissioner Schlueter asked about **softball leagues** and Mr. Kroger said registrations are still being accepted and leagues begin the first week in May. Registration is going well and the interim supervisor did a good job.

Commissioner Klinge mentioned that he umpired a game at Veterans' Memorial for Clarke and the far field needs limestone.

MANAGER  
REPORT:

Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware told Commissioners:

■ **FY 2014 budget shortfall:** Manager Ware reminded Commissioners that there is a public hearing on Monday, April 7th to voice comments on projects recommended to be cut from the budget to help cover the budget shortfall.

■ **Prohibited activities / swimming:** The Fire Chief brought up an issue with the marina, with people wanting to swim in the same area as the boats. Currently swimming is not allowed in harbor areas but he thought it should have more detailed specific information in the prohibited activities section of the City Ordinances relating to parks.. We would also look at other areas where we have bodies of water – Bergfeld, 16th Street detention basin, 32nd Street detention basin, etc. A policy will be brought for approval at a future meeting.

OTHER  
BUSINESS:

• **Marina:** Commissioner Blocker mentioned that Dubuque Marina has a waiting list and shortage of transient boat slips so we should do some really aggressive marketing for the Port of Dubuque Marina. Maybe there are some local people that would rent for a week or ten days. Mr. Fehsal said maybe we could put some kind of brochure stand with marina fliers at the Chaplain Schmitt and Hawthorne boat ramps. Commissioner Lyness asked if there was any kind of digital sign board for the Marina in the budget.

ADJOURN;  
VOTE:

It was moved by Blocker, seconded by Lyness, that the meeting be adjourned at 5:20 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.



Chairperson

Kelli M. Keechler  
Attest

