

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, April 11, 2017

4:30 p.m., MFC at the Ruby Sutton Building, 1157 Central Avenue

PRESENT: Paul Hoffmann, Robin Kennicker, Richard Kirkendall, Kate Larson, Karen Lyness and Jennifer Tigges

ABSENT: Ken Klinge

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

MINUTES APPROVED; VOTE:

It was moved by Lyness, seconded by Kirkendall, to approve the minutes of the March 14, 2017 meeting. Unanimous.

ANNUAL REPORT ON INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT:

- Commissioners were sent a copy of the report in preparation for the meeting. It may be found as part of the original minutes.
- Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal reported that staff has made some aggressive changes and continues to try alternative methods of pesticide management.
- Usha Park will be added to the pesticide free park list. Pre-emergent will be sprayed in some areas soon.
- IPM Committee is working with other city departments to work with contractors that sign a form committing to using alternative options when possible when they are working on city properties.
- The Annual Report was presented to Resilient Community Advisory Commission and will now be forwarded to City Council.

PET FRIENDLY AMENITIES DISCUSSION:

Commissioners discussed having more pet friendly amenities and parks.

Visitors to Dubuque are confused about where their pets are allowed. People assume pets are allowed in all Dubuque parks because they are in other cities. The current pet park is too small for the size of the city. Some commissioners have received complaints about the park from people who said they will not go to the facility.

Commissioner Kennicker will research pet parks in other cities and report at May meeting.

DISCUSSION AND INPUT FOR CITY COUNCIL:

General consensus was to make sure that legalizing licensed pets on leashes in additional parks and updating amenities and make improvements at the current pet park including ADA curb cuts were on the recommendation list. Other possibilities to add to the list will be discussed at the next couple commission meetings before the recommendation is finalized. Commissioners will bring ideas to the May meeting and be prepared to discuss.

PARK DIVISION REPORT:

- Art Hedley, Maintenance Worker retired after 39 years of service. A request to fill the position was filed.
- An offer has been made for the Urban Forester job.
- John Miller is the new campground manager. He is the son of Jack and Mary Miller, the first managers of the area when it was known as Camp 17.
- Seasonal employees start Monday, April 17; parks open Saturday, May 6.
- Pansies have been planted at City Hall and Port of Dubuque. Other locations and hanging baskets will be placed in May.
- Trees Forever group has been very active and met several times. They have elected officers and have subcommittees. They are participating in the Days of Caring on April 28, 2017 and will be planting four trees in Washington Park for Arbor Day.
- Park Division Manager Steve Fehsal is working with Sustainable Community Coordinator Cori Burbach to create “Adopt a Spot” to engage the public to volunteer and adopt an area.

RECREATION DIVISION REPORT:

- LEAP grant was not awarded for this school year so Leisure Services partnered with Dubuque Community Schools to cover the program. The program is still covering all three middle schools but reduced programming. The Recreation programs were used more as an incentive so if students participate in a certain number of LEAP programs they earn the right to participate on one of Recreation programs (Hip Hop dance, bowling, ice skating, etc.).
- After School Program participants has increased from 1,137 in 2015 to 1,441 in 2016 and currently 1,500.
- Online registration started at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, April 3 and by Tuesday over 1,000 people had registered online. As of 2:00 p.m. today, 2,123 registrations were processed online.
- Recreation Division Manager Dan Kroger is working on an equity plan for the department including staffing and recruitment, accessibility, programming, etc.

MANAGER REPORT:

- Staff met Friday with the private citizen group doing fundraising for the Skate Park. The next step is to write specifications for consultant services to take concept plan and create specifications for actual construction.
- Contracts have been signed with the consultant for the Five Flags Assessment and Study and staff will be scheduling meetings with user groups and public to meet with the consultant.
- Contracts have been sent out for the Ham House and Five Flags tuckpointing projects. Contracts have been sent out for the Grand River Center administrative office recarpeting.
- Staff is starting to work on policies for Bee Branch.
- The White House proposed eliminating the entire Corporation for National and Community Service, and AmeriCorps is one of their programs. If that passes, it will affect not only Leisure Services but many partnership projects for the city.
- Former commissioner Dave Schlueter passed away. It is a sad loss for the community. He did great things while serving on the commission. We thank him for his service.

Manager Ware asked if commissioners had any preference for meeting locations for summer months. Mr. Hoffmann suggested the All Veterans' Memorial to meet and talk for a few minutes to open the meeting and then move to the pavilions at Miller Riverview Park for the remainder of the meeting. The May meeting will be scheduled there unless flooding at Miller Riverview prevents it.

ADJOURN; VOTE:

It was moved by Hoffmann, seconded by Larson, to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Unanimous.