

Parks & Recreation Committee Minutes

Date: April 7, 2011
Time: 6:30PM
Place: Town of Menasha Municipal Building (Assembly Room)
200 Municipal Drive
Neenah, Wisconsin
Present: Parks Committee Members – Chair Jerry Finch, Vice Chair Tom Konetzke, Secretary Travis Swanson, Don Miller, Mike Norton
Also Present: Winnebago County Parks Director Rob Way, City of Neenah Parks Director Eileen McCoy, City of Menasha Parks Director Brian Tungate, Town of Menasha Parks Director Michael Kading and audience (see sign-in sheet available at Parks Department Office)

1. Call to Order – Meeting called to order at 6:39pm by Chair Finch
2. Welcome and Introductions – Finch introduced members of the parks committee and the municipal parks directors.
3. Explanation of Committee’s Inquiry into the Public Sentiment for Establishing a Dog Exercise area in the northern section of Winnebago County – Way gave explanation that one of the main reasons the parks department has been looking into building a dog park in the northern part of the county is because usage at the current dog park is very high and it is becoming overly crowded, especially in the winter months since the Outagamie County dog park closes in the winter. The question of “proximity” was also a factor that Way brought into his narrative as there is no dog park in the Town of Menasha, City of Menasha or City of Neenah. Establishment of such a facility would provide residents from Northern Winnebago County more opportunity to utilize the park and the services it would offer. He closed by saying that the existing Best Friends Dog Park is the highest used portion of Community Park in Oshkosh.
4. Detailing of Meeting Format and Survey – Way explained that each person will have the opportunity to come up to the podium, speak their name and address, then they will be given 2 minutes to speak. It was also mentioned that the time limit would be strictly enforced due to the number of people in attendance.
5. Subject Background – Way gave a history of what the committee has been doing since this idea was first floated in 2000. He stated that many areas were looked at, but ended up not working out for various reasons. McCoy said she receives many request per year for a dog park and believes that a regional approach is best, which is what the City of Neenah has looked into. Tungate stated that the City of Menasha has looked individually and has come close to establishing a park, but it fell through. Kading stated that the Town of Menasha has looked, but agrees with McCoy that the approach should be taken regionally instead of individually.
6. Public Input –
 - Finch started by reading an email expressing support for a north county dog park
 - Dale McNamee
 - 1390 Wippletree Lane – Town of Menasha

- Expressed support for park
- Said he would like to see a noise barrier, away from wildlife and at least 200 yards away from residences.
- Michelle Kennedy
 - 708 Stillwell Avenue – City of Oshkosh
 - Expressed support for a park
 - Stated that the current park is overused and a second park would relieve traffic
 - Said we should address issues at the current park and apply them to the new one.
- David Longsine
 - 1350 Glenview Drive – Town of Menasha
 - Expressed support for a park
 - Would love to see the park in the northern part of Winnebago County.
- Bruce Walbrun
 - 344 Oak Street – City of Menasha
 - Expressed support for a park
 - Would like to see woodchips and water source at both parks.
- Kim Charniak
 - 1324 Alex Street – Town of Menasha
 - Expressed support for a park
 - Stated that dog parks allow both canines and people to socialize and meet friends.
- Linda Ahles
 - 2516 Bishops Lane – City of Neenah
 - Expressed support for a park
 - Stated that she used the current park and would suggest a better dump station set-up at the new park and the existing park.
- Betsy Ellenberger
 - 1150 Glenayre Drive – City of Neenah
 - Expressed support for a park
 - Uses current park. Said she would also like to see a water source and that the current park has some drainage issues as it has been very wet lately.
- Michelle Rost
 - 888 Shady Lane – Town of Menasha
 - Expressed support for a park
 - Stated that people will come help with clean up like they do in Oshkosh
 - Does not want to see park turned into advertisement area.
- Sara Otto
 - 1417 Monroe Street – City of Oshkosh
 - Expressed support for a park
 - Mentioned that Madison charges for usage and we could consider the same for up keep of a new park.
- Gary Baumann
 - 1612 Oakview Drive – Town of Menasha
 - Expressed concern for a park
 - Worried about parks in residential areas, dropping in residential yards not

being cleaned up and concerned about the cost to the taxpayers.

- Nancy Barker
 - 506 Keyes Street – City of Menasha
 - Expressed support for a park
 - Mentioned that some areas use licensing fees to help pay for dog parks and that is something that we could potentially look into in Winnebago County.
- Donna Beckly
 - 2189 Hillington Drive – Town of Menasha
 - Expressed support for a park
 - Asked why it has taken 11 years and still no results, also mentioned that we should have pocket parks (small dog parks in residential areas) like they do in the La Crosse area.
- Becky Wright
 - 461 Shreve Lane – Town of Menasha
 - Expressed support for a park
 - Said that there is not a lot of public land in the Fox Valley area and this would be a very welcomed addition.
- Mary-Alice Kramer
 - 1408 West Spencer Street – City of Appleton
 - Would like to know what can be done about people using existing private land to exercise dogs and if the property owner would be liable for a dog related injury on such property as a result of unauthorized use.
- Jamie Gloede
 - 3513 County Rd GG – Town of Vinland
 - Expressed support for a park
 - On board of directors for the Neenah Animal Shelter. Stated that dog parks allow much needed physical activity of dogs.
- Katie Weedman
 - 1219 Honeysuckle Lane – City of Neenah
 - Expressed support for a park
 - Said that a second park would help relieve traffic at the Oshkosh park. Stated that under exercised dogs are noisy dogs. With proper exercise dogs are likely to not bark as often.
- Barb Gilligan
 - 2009 Sunset Street – City of Madison
 - Expressed support for park
 - Helped start dog parks in Dane County. Worked as a vet. Stated that we need a small dog area and a large dog area, medium dog area is not needed in a dog park.
 - Reminded us that dog owners are tax payers too, and 40% of people own a dog and are unable to use parks in their community that their taxes pay for.
 - Also suggested pocket dog parks in neighborhoods.
 - Suggested some rule changes in current park such as changing “Aggressive Dogs must be on leash” to “no aggressive dogs allowed”
- Lee Combes

- 1426 Silverwood Lane – Town of Menasha
 - Expressed support for a park.
 - Katie Coons
 - 552 Silverwood Lane – Town of Menasha
 - Expressed support for a park
 - Holly
 - 2321 Grantwood Lane – City of Neenah
 - Expressed support for a park.
 - David Longsine
 - 1350 Glenview Drive – Town of Menasha
 - Expressed support for a park.
7. Wrap Up – Way thanked everyone for attending and for input. Swanson asked municipal parks directors if dogs are allowed in municipal parks, since the City of Oshkosh does not. All three said that yes they do allow dogs in parks if they are on leashes. Jerry Finch also thanked everyone for attending and informed them about the regular monthly Parks & Recreation Committee meeting on the following Tuesday, April 12th during which an action item would be brought up regarding the question of whether or not to continue pursuing the establishment of a north county dog park.
8. Adjournment – 8:54pm Konetzke motioned for adjournment and Swanson seconded. Passed 5-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Travis R. Swanson
Secretary, Parks & Recreation Committee