

Parks & Recreation Committee Minutes

Date: December 14, 2010
Time: 8:30am
Place: J.P. Coughlin Building – Volunteer Room (Room 601)
625 East County Road Y
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901
Present: Parks Committee Members – Chair Jerry Finch, Vice Chair Tom Konetzke, Secretary Travis Swanson, Don Miller, Mike Norton (8:37am)
Also Present: Winnebago County Parks Department Rob Way, Winnebago County Parks Department Bob Lohry, County Board Chair David Albrecht (10:20am)

1. Call to Order – Meeting called to order at 8:33am by Chair Finch
2. Approval of November 16, 2010 Minutes – Chair Finch called for a motion to approve minutes. Don Miller moved to approve, Tom Konetzke seconded. Motion carried 5-0
3. Public Comments – Jerry Finch asked as who is responsible for shoveling the crosswalk at the Coughlin Building. Rob Way said there is some confusion between the Parks Department and Facilities as to who is responsible. Jerry Finch expressed that it needs to be shoveled and the Parks Department should do it, but in the event that facilities is responsible the parks department should bill facilities for the labor and hours.
4. Report on Processes Involved in Employing Stewardship Grand Funding for Acquisition of Park Properties –
 - Rob Way reported that the Stewardship grant is mainly aimed at acquisition; the county has used it in the past but not in many years.
 - Rob Way went through the guidelines of the Grant:
 - It is a 50/50 Grant meaning that the county must pay 50% of the purchase price and the grant will pay for the other 50%
 - Taking the grant obligates a dedication of the land for the use the purchase is intended for.
 - If the grant is used to purchase land for a dog park the county could not decide to build a building on the land at a later date without paying back the money received from the grant.
 - Rob Way discussed the steps involved in applying for the grant:
 - Contact property owner and discuss intent
 - Inform them that the property will be being used for a dog park
 - Inform them that we are seeking the Stewardship grant from the Wisconsin DNR
 - Perform Inspection, including surveying and making sure that the zoning is not in conflict with the intended use.
 - Obtain a title commitment report
 - Appraisal - possibly two depending on the value of the property
 - A second appraisal are generally required if the first appraisal comes back at over \$200,000

- Grant Application needs to be turned in by May 15th
 - Generally takes the Wisconsin DNR up to 4 months to process
- Tom Konetzke asked about the 50/50 grant and if that would make the property owner want to change more knowing that 50% of the out of pocket cost would be covered
- Tom Konetzke asked who is required to pay for appraisal
 - Rob Way answered that the county would be required to pay for appraisal.
- Jerry Finch asked if the county is required to pay the 50% or if we could seek community members/businesses to donate the 50% that the county would be responsible for in exchange for naming rights.
 - Rob Way answered that the money can come from any source so long as it is matched 50/50
- Mike Norton asked who we are in competition with for this grant
 - Rob Way answered that the Stewardship Grant is open for all local governments and non-profits.
 - There is about 2.5 million dollars available that governments and non-profits are competing for and typically river and lake front properties take precedence over non-waterfront properties.
- Rob Way brought a few miscellaneous items to the committees attention:
 - Governor Elect Scott Walker is planning on making changes to the state DNR that could affect us getting this grant.
 - A condition of the grant is that the property be open to hunting, trapping and fishing unless the county submits a lengthy description justifying why this property should not be open to hunting, trapping and fishing.
 - The City of Onalaska located in La Crosse County is currently going through this process of receiving this grant for a bluff side property and is required to go through this justification process to ban hunting, trapping and fishing at this property even though city ordinance already forbids it.
- Tom Konetzke asked about potential public outcry citing articles from the Appleton Post Crescent about outcry in the Town of Greenville when they were considering a dog park in their community.
- Mike Norton asked about Governor Elect Scott Walker not being favorable towards county governments and if non-profits would get preference over county governments under his administration.
- Jerry Finch mentioned that if the grant does not go through, the county would have to find more donors or delay the project until the economy is better.
 - Jerry Finch also expressed that he wants to spend little or no tax payer dollars on this project
- Rob Way said that when the time is right, any offer to buy would include a clause that the sale is contingent on being awarded the grant.
 - The county would be responsible for the appraisal and surveying (if needed) costs if we were not awarded the grant and decided to not move forward with the sale.
 - Rob Way also mentioned that we may not need to have a survey done if the land we purchase is already divided up, but we will need to have it done if we only want a portion of a parcel of land.
- Jerry Finch recommended that Rob Way continue moving forward with the Schildt Park property in the Town of Menasha. The Committee unanimously agreed.
- The committee discussed and decided to have public involvement/public hearings held in

- Neenah/Menasha in the evening so that the public may have more opportunity to attend.
 - Rob Way is going to continue speaking with other parks directors and report back to the committee.
5. Preference for Inclusion of the Community Park Tennis Court Rehab Project for 2011 Bonding Consideration –
- Rob Way stated that it would be appropriate to share with the county executive the opinion of where the Parks Committee stands on the idea of restoring the tennis courts. He then showed examples of the materials used to the committee.
 - Jerry Finch called for a consensus of the Committee
 - Travis Swanson expressed support saying that the Community Park should be maintained as a park where the community can participate in recreation and it should not become the park of “used to be”
 - Don Miller expressed support saying that if we do not move forward, then we should tear out the current tennis courts as they are becoming an eyesore
 - Mike Norton expressed support reiterating what Don Miller said
 - Tom Konetzke expressed his support
 - Jerry Finch expressed support only if the project does not cause other cuts within the parks department as we saw in the recently passed budget.
6. Report on Coordinated Effort with Oshkosh Youth Soccer Club to Limit Turf Damage Occurring on Soccer Fields Undergoing Repairs –
- Rob Way gave us an update in regards to the Oshkosh Youth Soccer Club (OYSC). He stated that the fields at Community Park are currently over used. The OYSC has contributed to maintenance costs in the past, however that does not stop other groups from using the fields that been taken out of commission as they are undergoing rehab. The OYSC is requesting that we pursue a joint effort in trying to enforce a “restricted play” policy on these fields that are undergoing rehab.
 - The Committee discussed enforcement of this policy and possible ways to keep other people off the fields (Signage with fines or fences).
 - Mike Norton expressed concern that the City of Oshkosh would collect the money from the citations instead of Winnebago County.
 - Travis Swanson said it makes sense because the City of Oshkosh is paying for the enforcement and Winnebago County is utilizing their police force
 - Mike Norton responded saying that it could lead to selective enforcement.
 - Rob Way expressed concern with snow fence saying it would not be cost effective and should be left to signage and enforcement by the City of Oshkosh police department.
7. Parks Director’s Updates: Rob Way told us that the Osh-o-Nee boat landing is currently out of commission as the repair project is getting underway and that he would save his other updates for the next meeting.
8. Committee Chair Updates – Jerry Finch told us the buoy 100 was in the news again. It was mentioned that it should be lit, however the committee decided that the buoy will not be lit.
9. Committee Member’s Updates –

- Tom Konetzke: Was also contacted by the media regarding buoy 100
- Mike Norton: Asked about the meeting with the other parks directors and about possibly using a boat landing as a skating rink similar to Millers Bay in the City of Oshkosh
 - Rob Way responded saying the waters are too deep and unsafe for skaters at each of the county owned boat landings.
- Don Miller: Asked about who would get precedence on the tennis/basketball courts once they are completed
 - Rob Way responded saying that the policy would remain “first come, first serve”
- Travis Swanson: Announced that he will be absent from the January parks meeting because of a 3 week trip to Australia.

10. Future Agenda Items – N.R.P.A Conference Report

11. Next Meeting Date – 01/11/2011 at 8:30am – Coughlin Center in Oshkosh

12. Adjournment – Tom Konetzke motioned to adjourn, Don Miller Seconded. Motion carried 5-0.
Meeting adjourned at 10:30am

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