

## **PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

DATE & TIME: August 15, 2016 @ 1:30 p.m.  
PLACE: JP Coughlin Center  
Parks Department Conference Rm.  
625 E. Cty. Rd. Y  
Oshkosh WI 54901

PRESENT: Parks Committee – Jerry Finch, Mike Norton, Tom Konetzke, Larry Lautenschlager, Steve Binder.

ALSO PRESENT: Rob Way, Tom McInnis, Vicky Redlin – Winnebago County Parks Dept., Bill Roh and Guy Hegg – Winnebago County Board Supervisors.

1. Call to order – Chairman Finch called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m..
2. Approval of Minutes from July 18, 2016 – Chairman Finch called for a motion to approve the July 18, 2016 meeting minutes. Larry Lautenschlager moved to approve the message. Mike Norton seconded. Motion carried 5-0.
3. Public Comment Relevant to Items on the Agenda – none
4. Comments Delivered to the Committee Regarding Status of LiFest – Rob began by pointing out details in the document distributed to the committee members for this meeting that showed the totals provided by Life Promotions for attendance and camping units sold over the years. The data that was provided shows a steady 6% growth which Life Promotions expects to continue for the foreseeable future. The data also illustrates the need to accommodate more camping space. Although placing a permanent stage in the south end of the Expo main parking lot was initially seen as a means to help eliminate a significant annual cost for LiFest, it would do nothing to alleviate the pressing need to free up more camping space for the event. With Impact Motorsport's rejection of the County's final offer, it created the potential for the grandstand venue to be near absent any type of programming beginning in 2017. Moving the proposed stage from the Expo main parking lot into the grandstand venue would help fill that void and with the level 5+ acre spectator area that would also be developed in front of the grandstands, it would create a substantial opportunity for usage by a wide array of promotional interests. Rob went on to state that Parks staff had worked closely with LiFest to make more efficient use of all available camping space in 2016. However, in anticipation of the 6% growth, another 2.1 acres is being made ready for camping in 2017 with an additional 2.2 acres expected to be prepared for 2018. Pending further investigation of another 2.5 acres of undeveloped field on the east side of the grounds that may/may not be able to be reconditioned for use, it is a certainty that within the next two-to-three years there will be no remaining Expo property left to develop for camping. As applied in 2017, a 6% growth rate requires 143 new camp sites and each 2 acre parcel only provides enough space for approximately 130 new spots. These areas are for primitive camping with no electricity or water furnished. If the permanent stage is put in the main parking lot where the current temporary stage is set up, there will be no net gain of space. Similarly, placing the stage in any of the fields that are currently used for camping will not open up new lands. Since the clay surface within the racetrack and pit areas cannot be reliably used, those areas are unavailable during LiFest's programming. If the permanent stage were to be placed inside the grandstand/racetrack complex and not in the main parking lot where the temporary stage regularly goes, it would free up the main parking lot and the vast amount of space it constitutes. The open area that would become available in the main parking lot would then be dedicated towards accommodating the projected 6% camping growth rate for another 3 – 4 years. Further, by reconditioning the clay surface that encompasses the pit area, LiFest camping needs would be met for an additional 4 years. With the combination of fields, the parking lot and the pit area combined, the camping needs for LiFest would be secure for 10+ years. Given that status, it becomes reasonable for Life Promotions to consider investing in a permanent stage in the grandstand venue and taking on the sizeable expense of building it. Jerry Finch noted that the Oshkosh Convention and Visitor's Bureau calculated the economic impact of LiFest in 2016 at \$5.3 million. A large amount of these visitors are from outside of the area. Rob reiterated that use of the various open field areas for locating the permanent stage was discussed with Life Promotions however these areas are currently used for camping and would not solve the space shortage problem; it would only shift

the stage location. These areas also have no infrastructure as the grandstand area does and would require a much larger investment with no gain in available space for camping. Guy Hegg commented that relative to the little cost associated with the County's hosting of the LiFest event, the local gains are significant and of great benefit to the community.

## 5. CLOSED SESSION

The presiding officer of the Parks & Recreation Committee at this point in the meeting shall entertain a motion of convene in closed session pursuant to the exemption provided in Section 19.85 (1)(e), Stats. for the purpose of deliberating or negotiating the purchase of public property and for conducting other specified public business, in that competitive bargaining reasons required closed session.

At the conclusion of the session, the presiding officer of the committee shall entertain a motion to reconvene in open session. Tom Konetzke moved to go into closed session. Steve Binder seconded. Roll – Jerry Finch – aye, Tom Konetzke – aye, Mike Norton – aye, Larry Lautenschlager – aye, Steve Binder – aye. Carried 5-0. Entered into closed session at 1:55 p.m..

Mike Norton moved to exit closed session. Tom Konetzke seconded. Roll – Jerry Finch – aye, Tom Konetzke – aye, Mike Norton – aye, Larry Lautenschlager – aye, Steve Binder – aye. Carried 5-0. Exit closed session 2:45 p.m..

6. Discussion on Exploring Options for Involvement in Development of a Go Ape Park – Mike Norton explained that he saw this idea at the NECO conference and would like to see staff investigate the possibility of putting a zip line in a parks location to generate revenue. Will also check out if this vendor is at the WPRC conference.
7. Overview of Navigational Aids Program – Rob provided an overview of the program. There are a total of 123 buoys that Winnebago County maintains through a contract with Radtke Contractors. They range in type from channel markers to the nun buoys and are spread throughout each of the lakes in the Winnebago pool. With the exception of the Village of Winneconne and Oshkosh, the Parks Department maintains the navigation aids system for the remaining municipalities within the county. There are also a few land based navigation lights at launch sites as well; these are taken care of in-house. The Menasha channel, where there are upwards of 26 nun buoys on station, is the most challenging area in the system from both an operational and administrative standpoint. A Cruise the Lake brochure, put out by the OCVB, was provided for each committee member.
8. Discussion of WPRC Conference- November 1-4 is the same as the County Board budget hearings. Committee members and staff will have to adjust their attendance accordingly.
9. Director's Updates: Hmong Festival & ATV Use in Snell Road Landfill Rec Park Development – the Labor Day Hmong Fall Festival is back this year. The Memorial Day festival had problems with parking so a solution is being worked on for next month's event which may include parking and a shuttle from the Expo main parking lot. There will also be considerable barrier tape and other mechanisms used to keep people from driving and parking on the shared use path and other areas in the park where the landscaping is new. The lights that we had planned to put in at the south end of the park along the roadway may have to be contracted instead of put in using parks staff and the County electrician. Similar to what Parks would have had to go through, the Maintenance Department has been required to get a permit from the city of Oshkosh to replace their lighting at the facilities building parking lot. The County electrician would have to be permitted as a licensed contractor with the City and State for \$600/state permit and an additional \$300/city permit, otherwise a contractor must be hired and the estimated cost for installing the lights along the roadway in the south end of the park by a contractor is \$180,000.00 which will somehow have to be budgeted, but may not be included in a budget until 2018. The fixtures and poles have arrived and are being stored at the parks workshop. A committee member requested information regarding allowing ATV's usage at the landfill/nature area and that request was forwarded on to Solid Waste. ATV's will not be allowed access into landfill areas. The question was then raised as to whether access would be allowed into areas that did not include landfill cover.

10. Committee Chairman's Updates: Chairman Finch attended the County Fair and received good comments from those attending. He did observe a political sign with a curse word displayed at a vendor booth. He complained to the Fair Board chairman regarding the sign and believes that a policy should be in place regarding the placement of such signage. Staff will check with the Fair to see if they have any such policy in place.
11. Committee Member's Updates: Tom Konetzke – none. Mike Norton – concerned about the limited ingress and egress points for this year's Fair. Also said the main concert on Saturday night of the Fair was better attended than previously mentioned with the middle section of the grandstand full. He also attended the ADVOCAP picnic at the park pavilion and commented that Don Klemmer is an invaluable employee. He also noted the compliments on Facebook regarding the park, attended the Outdoor Sports Show and participated in the trap shooting event there. He would like staff to investigate providing an area for high schools to use for their trap shooting programs and report the findings at the September or October meeting. Larry Lautenschlager – the Fair was good this year. He and Mike attended NACO conference and got some ideas. Steve Binder – noted that the park landscaping is looking very nice.
12. Staff Updates: Outdoor Sports Festival, Natural Way Progress – Vicky is here but on vacation. Tom reported that the grass planting in the park is taking place and the current use of 'weeds' is for a cover crop which will be dealt with in the spring. The new rules signs are up at both entrance to the park and will be landscaped around. There is also a new sign up at Waukau Dam. There is a water main leak at the Expo that was discovered after the Fair and a contractor along with the County plumber are working on getting it fixed before the weekend. The Natural Way plantings for Monarch and pollinators is coming in nicely and there are multiple butterflies and pollinators in the garden.
13. Next Meeting Date and Future Agenda Items: - August 29 at 1:30 p.m., if necessary. Next regular meeting September 19 at 1:30 p.m..
14. Adjournment – Chairman Finch called for a motion to adjourn. Tom Konetzke moved to adjourn. Mike Norton seconded. Motion carried 5-0. Meeting adjourned 4:00 p.m..

Respectfully Submitted,  
Vicky Redlin  
Program Manager  
Winnebago County Parks/Sunnyview Expo Center