

1 **363-032024**

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3 **RESOLUTION: Allocation of \$3,900,000 in Spirit Funds from County Government Projects Category to**
4 **Improve Outdoor Recreation in Winnebago County**

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6 **TO THE WINNEBAGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

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8 **WHEREAS**, the Winnebago County Parks System owns and operates almost 1000 acres of park land all
9 across Winnebago County; and

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11 **WHEREAS**, the residents of Winnebago County utilize the Winnebago County Parks System as a way to
12 access our natural water resource, nature preserves, regional trail systems, and the Winnebago County
13 Community Park; and

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15 **WHEREAS**, the Parks Department's goal is improve long term maintenance of the park system and
16 provide more opportunities for residents and users of our park system; and

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18 **WHEREAS**, the Parks Department proposes to make substantial improvements to over 100 acres of
19 park land and over 3 miles of recreational trail; and

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21 **WHEREAS**, these improvements will create resiliency, address current maintenance issues, reduce long
22 term maintenance, expand open space, create greater access to the water, and provide more capacity to
23 the park system; and

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25 **WHEREAS**, the improvements are proposed to span the county to provide equal opportunities to all
26 county residents.

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28 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors that
29 \$3,900,000 from the Spirit Fund's County Government Project be allocated to the Parks Department to
30 implement the Winnebago County Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) to include, but not
31 limited to, potential projects such as the Waukau Dam Repair and Improvement Project, add self-service
32 kayak rental stations to three boat landings, improvements of the WIOUWASH Trail, cosmetic and other
33 improvements to parks facilities, and expand/repair soccer, softball, rugby, and pickleball facilities at the
34 Winnebago County Community Park.

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36 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that county and parks administration are authorized to apply
37 for state, federal, private, and other funds to increase the capital authorized in this
38 allocation.

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40 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that all funds shall be released upon the recommendation of
41 the Parks Director to and approval by the Parks and Recreation Committee.

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43 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the county board shall receive an annual report from the
44 Parks Director on the status of all funds allocated under this resolution.

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Respectfully submitted by:
ARPA Strategy and Outcomes Commission
Committee Vote: 7-1 (Farrey no, Buck not voting)

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Fiscal Note: Projects could reduce the Spirit Fund by \$3.9 million.

Vote Required for Passage: **Two-Thirds of Membership**

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Approved by the Winnebago County Executive on _____.

Jonathan D. Doemel
Winnebago County Executive

County Board Report



DATE: March 19, 2024
FROM: Adam Breest, Parks Director
AGENDA ITEM: Resolution: 363-032024 Allocation of \$3,900,000 in Spirit Funds from County Government Projects Category to Improve Outdoor Recreation in Winnebago County

General Description:

The Winnebago County Parks Department has worked with the County Executive to put together a Comprehensive Spirit Fund Request that will increase resiliency and provide more opportunities for the users of the Winnebago County Parks System.

Action Requested:

Motion to recommend to the county board of supervisors a \$3,900,000 allocation to improve outdoor recreation in Winnebago County.

Procedural Steps:

Committee of Jurisdiction:	Parks & Rec (presentation)	Meeting Date:	02/13/2024
	ARPA Commission		03/06/2024
Action taken:	_____	Vote:	7-1
County Board:	_____	Meeting Date:	_____

Background:

Every five years, the Winnebago County Parks Department updates our five-year Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. This plan looks at all the capital needs for the next five years and beyond throughout the entire park system. The plan asks for public involvement in many ways including surveys, in-person public meetings, user group meetings, committee meetings, and staff input. The plan is generally required to apply for certain grants.

In 2023, we hired a consultant to help lead us through this process and update our Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. Unique to this update, we also included an updated Master Plan for the Winnebago County Community Park. Public feedback was an important part of these plan updates. I have included the public input milestones and tasks below.

- August 1 – Public Informational Meeting #1

- August through September – Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Public Survey Available to the Public – 548 Responses
- August 29 – Consultants, Park Staff, and the Parks Committee had a full-day planning meeting and walkthrough of the Community Park
- September 18 – User Group Meeting for Community Park – Soccer Clubs, Rugby Clubs, Pickleball Users, Disc Golf Users, Dog Park Friends Group, Trail Groups, and the Oshkosh Recreation Department were all invited.
- September 28 – User Group Meeting for Winnebago County Recreational Trails
- September 28 – User Group Meeting for Winnebago County Boat Landings
- October – Community Park Master Plan Survey Available to the Public – 290 Responses
- December 5 – Final Public Input Meeting Scheduled

The final Community Park Master Plan and Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan passed the Parks Committee in February and will be sent to the Winnebago County Board in March for final approval.

The projects included in our spirit fund request are priority projects from previous Capital Improvement Plans or user/public-identified projects.

When staff put together the requests for the Comprehensive Spirit Fund request, we focused on two goals and three measurable objectives for each goal.

- **GOAL #1 – Long Term Maintenance**
 1. *Create resiliency* by addressing the cost of future maintenance.
 2. *Address current maintenance* issues throughout our park system that require one-time costs.
 3. *Reduce long-term maintenance* to save staff time and personnel time with future maintenance tasks.
- **GOAL #2 – Provide More Opportunities for Residents and Users of the Park System**
 1. Provide *open space* for the residents of Winnebago County to enjoy the natural environment, take part in physical activity, and access the water system.
 2. Provide *water access* to as many residents in Winnebago County as possible.
 3. Provide *more capacity* for the user groups utilizing the Winnebago County Park System.

The Comprehensive Spirit Fund Request includes capital investments and improvements for six park properties, four towns/cities, and multiple user groups. The list of projects is included below. Engineering costs have already been funded for the Waukau Dam and engineering costs will not be needed for the self-service kayak rental stations.

PROJECT GOAL – ACCOMPLISHMENTS

	Waukau	WIOUWASH	Kayak	Shelter/Playground	Rugby	Soccer	Additional Soccer	Pickleball
Create Resiliency	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Address Maint	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Reduce Long Term Maint	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Open Space	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Water Access	X	X	X					
More Capacity	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Comprehensive Spirit Fund Request		
Waukau Dam	Park improvements and	
Nature Preserve	enhancements	\$751,815
WIOUWASH Trail	Pave the trail from UW-O to	
Paving	Lake Butte des Morts Drive	\$500,000
	Install three self-service	
Boat Landing Self-	kayak rental stations at	
Service Kayak	Eureka, Asylum and	
Rental Stations	Grundman	\$40,000
Winnebago	Replace playground #3 and	
County	construct new	
Community Park	shelter/concession stand	\$1,000,000
Winnebago	Build third and fourth rugby	
County	fields and remove south	
Community Park	softball field	\$250,000
Winnebago		
County	Repair, till, grade, and seed	
Community Park	four existing soccer fields	\$360,000
Winnebago	Add additional soccer field	
County	with irrigation in soccer	
Community Park	complex	\$250,000
	Add eight pickleball courts	
Winnebago	north of the existing	
County	basketball and tennis	
Community Park	courts.	\$400,000
	WIOUWASH TRAIL and	
Engineering Costs	Community Park	\$276,000
TOTAL		
REQUEST		\$3,827,815

The Spirit Fund Requirements match our goals and objectives. I have provided justification below for the Spirit Fund requirements within the grant application.

- **Legacy** – Many of the projects we included are larger capital projects that will last for multiple generations. Most of our projects are within land that Winnebago County has owned since the 1960s or earlier. The projects affect many users throughout the County and the County will continue to maintain our properties for many more generations.
- **One-time-funds** – Most of our projects are large capital, one-time investments. When we add additional soccer and rugby fields, they will be there for

generations to come. The WIOUWASH Trail system will be used by all in the County and even by tourism.

- **Geographic Assortment of Funds** – We are requesting projects in the Town of Rushford, Town of Vinland, Town of Oshkosh, and City of Oshkosh. Our goal was to spread out our funding as much as possible while still addressing the needs of the community.
- **Enhancing Funding Opportunities** – The Waukau Dam has received a grant from the WI DNR. The Spirit Funds will allow this project to move forward. The Grundman Boat Landing has a new ADA Kayak Launch due to a large grant. The kayak rental station will enhance the use of this new launch that was provided by two large grants. Multiple clubs have expressed interest in funding for more improvements if the Spirit Funds are approved. As an example, the Rugby Club would like to fundraise for bleachers, lights, and more amenities to enhance the brand-new fields that we would be constructing.

The Winnebago County Parks System is an important asset that the residents of Winnebago County value. They show this through the use of the facilities. The WIOUWASH Trail averages 10,000-20,000 users on the trail every year. The Winnebago County Boat Landings that have car counters average 15,000 to 25,000 cars per year. We are turning away users at the soccer complex within the Winnebago County Community Park because the fields are full, or the fields need additional maintenance and need to be closed. The surveys indicated that many residents want to see the playgrounds at Community Park improved. Residents say they do not come to our playgrounds because they are not safe or do not have as many amenities. We only have two pickleball courts that are shared by both tennis and pickleball users. The rugby club has a waitlist for its tournaments that bring in teams from all over Wisconsin and even surrounding states.

The Winnebago County Parks Department is also going to include Capital Improvement Plan requests for the parking lots at Community Park and to remodel the three other park shelters. This is truly a comprehensive plan that is going to change the outlook of the parks for the Winnebago County community for years to come.

Policy Discussion:

Our parks systems has needs beyond these dollar amounts. As such, as a way to grow and expand the fund, we are seeking an allocation similar to Land & Water Conservation.

Using the costs of the projects above, we came up with a \$3.9 million allocation. The resolution would not put shovels in the ground on the projects unless the Parks & Recreation Committee releases the funds after additional funding opportunities have been exhausted.

For example, the Waukau Dam project has received nearly 50% funding (an additional \$751,000) from a state stewardship grant. That project will be released by the committee.

The federal government recently released the RAISE Grant Funding Opportunity, which in previous years has funded bike and pedestrian paths. By using these funds as a match, the county can get more project and improvements.

By having the allocation approved, the county can guarantee in other grant applications that we have matching funds available. Other funding opportunities are available through the federal Inflation Reduction Act, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and through the state. Having this approved allocation available over the next two fiscal years will allow quick and immediate application.

Staff encourages the commission to pass the allocation so that we have the authority to apply for grants and other funding options and to get more for our dollars.

Committee Discussion and Recommendation:

Parks Committee

Parks Director, Adam Breest gave an overview of the Spirit Fund Request. Major goals include increasing resiliency and providing more opportunities for the users of the Winnebago County Parks System. The project list includes Waukau Dam Nature Preserve, WIOUWASH Trail Paving, Boat Landing self-service kayak launches, Winnebago County Community Park improvements.

A few committee members voiced concern about some of the projects in the Spirit Fund and how it can/cannot be changed in the future once it's approved by the Spirit Fund Committee.

There was discussion on the pickleball courts. Some committee members agreed with this project being included and others thought that the pickleball club should help fundraise for a portion of the project.

ARPA Commission

Parks Director Adam Breest presented his Parks Department Comprehensive Spirit Fund Request with a slideshow.

Mr. Farrey made a motion to remove the \$500,000 for Wiawoush trail. Motion did not advance due to a lack of a second.

Mr. Belter asked how else this would be funded. Mr. Breest stated that a lot of these projects would be done through fundraising or borrowing by the county taxpayers. Mr. Doemel thanked Mr. Breest for his work on this. He highlighted a lot of matching opportunities to expand the capital. He understands the concerns by giving the city of Oshkosh the Wiawoush trail. He supports the trail because of the legacy costs. He also said that if this is approved it would support a dedication to Paul and Pam DeLap and that the playground included in the project would be an all-inclusive playground. Mr. Galloway asked if we have had conversations with the city. Mr. Doemel informed Mr. Galloway that there have been conversations with the City. Mr. Breest explained the jurisdictional responsibilities of the loop. Mr. Farrey contended that the City agreed to take the Wiawoush Trail when the bridge was created. Mr. Breest said that it was the County who had been asking the City to take the trail. Mr. Doemel pointed out that

regardless of the jurisdictional transfer, the County is responsible to pave the trail.

Motion by Jon Doemel, seconded by Tom Belter to recommend the county board approve a resolution titled Resolution: Allocation of \$3,900,000 in Spirit Funds from County Government Projects Category to Improve Outdoor Recreation in Winnebago County. Passed. Yes 7, No 1 (Farrey), Abstained 0

Attachments:

None