



Winnebago County Parks User Group Meeting
Date of Meeting: Saturday, January 4, 2020
Time of Meeting: 9:30 A.M.
Place of Meeting: Sunnyview Exposition Center
Exposition Building South Wing
500 East Cty. Rd. Y
Oshkosh, WI 54901

PRESENT: Steve Binder, Larry Lautenschlager, Tom Konetzke, Mike Norton – Winnebago County Board Park & Rec Committee, Rob Way, Vicky Redlin, Rick Helms, Steve Herman, Dan Foley – Winnebago County Parks

User Group Representatives & Citizens: Jodi Jensem – OCVB, Craig Hetherington and Chad Arndt – PGI, Kathy Snell – City of Oshkosh, John Dougherty – Life Promotions, Stephanie Pereira de Sliva- OASD Fun Runs, Zach Bays – Disc Golf, Mee Yang – Hmong Service Center, J. Bradley – Paper Valley Horse Show, Chris Gorte – OPD, Megan Stingle – Red Rock Productions, Dana Berger - UWEX 4H, Jody Bezio and Mike Domke – WCFA, Paulette Healey – WI Futurity Horse Festival Show, Jacob Walter, Robert Walter, Ken Walter, John Kossel, Jan Kossel – Town of Oshkosh residents.

MINUTES/NOTES

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- 1.) Attendees were welcomed and the purpose of the meeting was stated; updates for promoters and programmers of the Sunnyview Expo Center and Winnebago County Community Park. Staff was introduced as well. It was stated that attendees were encouraged to not only listen to the information and updates being provided but to also ask questions of the presenters.

COMBINED TOPICS

- 1.) Cross over events – (effects programming on Com. Park) – Of note are Lifest which will coincide with Soccer Saturday again in 2020, and the two Hmong Festivals, Memorial and Labor Day which may spill over into the expo main lot for overflow parking.
- 2.) 2020 Parks Dept. Sponsors Official Notification – Pepsi Bottling Group (soft drinks), Cumulus Broadcasting (radio stations), Cornerstone Processing Solutions Inc. (ATM service) and Vines & Rushes Winery (Mascoutin Trail sponsor). Official notice was given of the above noted sponsors for 2020.
- 3.) Snell Rd. reconstruction – The project is being undertaken by the City of Oshkosh and should be approved by council on March 24, 2020 with the project starting in April 2020. It is assumed that the project will take the entire summer season to complete. The roadway up to Moser St. will be widened, curb and gutter installed along with a bike/ped path. A link to the project will be on the City of Oshkosh website with more details when the project start date gets closer. For rerouting of traffic during events users are asked to work with OPD and if/when necessary, the Sheriff's Office as well.
- 4.) Pyrotechnic Guild International (PGI) Convention August 2021 – Staff provided an outline of what the PGI event will consist of. Again, attendees were reminded to ask questions during the presentation and to express their concerns. Craig Hetherington and Chad Arndt were introduced. Rick Helms gave an overview of the areas where the event will be taking place. Dates are August 14-21, 2021. If both parties are pleased with the result the event may take place every three years after the initial year. A planning group has been convened and will be meeting every few months prior to the event (more often if needed) which includes law enforcement, emergency management and other agencies. The economic impact of this event should compare to those undertaken throughout the Midwest, which is \$5-\$7M. There are

expected to be 400 camp sites on the grounds with the remainder of the 3,000+ attendees staying in local hotels. There are 3 evening shows planned for the public to attend. These shows will begin at dusk and end at approximately 10:30 p.m.. Shooting for individual members during the conference other than public nights will begin at 5:00 p.m. and run until midnight. The individual shooting nights will not be comparable to an actual fireworks show, as they will be more intermittent. The event has its own safety team, fire prevention team, first aid and security teams to comply with ATF and other Federal and State regulations for fireworks safety. The Guild has a \$10M Lloyd's of London insurance policy and promptly pays all claims. There have been incidents where insurance payouts were necessary only once every 8 to 10 years. The safety team combs the grounds and surrounding property for any potential live rounds and disposes of them properly on a nightly basis. Other debris is picked up at the same time and removed as trash. All fireworks debris is biodegradable and usually consists of small wood sticks, cardboard and string. There is no metal debris. Anticipated prevailing winds from the WSW should push the debris field over the event grounds as well as provide sound containment onsite. Concerns were voiced regarding debris in fields damaging crops and the effects of loud noises on livestock during shooting. Notice of the schedule of events will be distributed to neighbors and the public as soon as possible after official release of such.

COMMUNITY PARK TOPICS (Initial List of Community Park Topics as shown on Agenda)

- 1.) Shelters/Water activation date
- 2.) Soccer Complex update – shelter and road lighting projects
- 3.) Rental of Soccer Shelter for Tourney/Special Event use
- 4.) Prairie Burn
- 5.) Dogs in park rule change
- 6.) Drainage issues and other possible upgrades - weather permitting
- 7.) Questions and input

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- 1.) Shelter reservations started the 1st business day in January 2020 and long-standing non-profit groups get first pick of dates.
- 2.) The sport of rugby and this may translate into another organization starting utilize the rugby facility and possibly taking more dates in the park. Some discussion was held about further development of field space to the west of the present field.
- 3.) Disc golf numbers remain solid and mention was made of Parks adjusting some of the fairways not only to accommodate the added rugby field space but to also create a more 'intriguing' course for users. In order to do so it will be necessary to expand some areas of the course and some holes may have to be moved to better utilize the park.
- 4.) 3x3 soccer tournament will be back and it is scheduled for August 15th, 2020
- 5.) First dates shelters can be used, restroom-wise, is May 9th or 10th but that could change with good weather.
- 6.) Hopefully the soccer shelter restrooms will be ready for use shortly after mid-April. A reminder was made that the Soc. Shelter is available to non-profit groups for tournament purposes. Such as non-profits. The Parks Department will have final say on other groups using the shelter.
- 7.) The light pole project is almost done. There was some discussion on having the lights left on late into the evening during the winter even though the south end of the park is closed for vehicle traffic. The neighbor from the adjacent North Park Estates states that many folks use the walking paths and roads to run and walk depending on the weather and snow on the trail and road. The Parks Director questioned whether the minimal amount of people who would choose to engage in running/walking activities on that end of the park during winter would not warrant having the County support the cost of having the lights left on from 4 p.m. – 11 p.m. each night during the winter. Having the lights left-on would also defeat the reasons for having them shut-off during the winter in the first place. Besides the significant reduction in electrical costs brought about by turning-off the south lights, it was also considered a prudent action to take in consideration of dark sky protection efforts.
- 8.) The annual prairie burn may happen or may not happen in the Community Park this year. If it does it will be on the portion of the park to the north of the pavilion. The Parks Director is working with the DNR to see if it might not be more worthwhile to conduct a burn in the Coughlin Natural Area to the east and defer burning in the park until 2021. The disc golf rep. stated they would like to see the berms cut more often. The Parks Director followed-up by indicating that in 2021 there is a possibility of the department acquiring a tractor with a specialized attachment

specifically designed for the cutting of tall grass and woody plants. It would also work well for ditch clearing.

- 9.) The Parks Director went on to mention the change in the Community Park ordinance that now will allow for leashed dogs on the Shared Use Path with the exception of the Natural Way area. He handed out a copy of the ordinance to everyone. Some discussion was held about dogs being present in the Soccer Complex during tournaments. It is up to the director or promotor of the event to decide if they will allow dogs on leash on the south portion of the Shared Use Path during their event(s). It was also pointed-out that the group holding the event is responsible for signing the path at both ends of the Soccer Complex if they intend not to have dogs present during their event. Disc golf rep, stated most courses allow dogs to go along with the player.
- 10.) Drainage issues are a work in progress. It was acknowledged that this past year brought with it a host of problems with water on the soccer fields and softball fields. High water tables made it hard to work on the drainage issues as the attempts made at installing tile proved to be futile. This summer the department will resume its efforts at placing tile in key areas of the park.
- 11.) There was some discussion about when the soccer fields are open for play or practice. The OYSC rep indicated that the correct signage continued to be posted on all the fields that did not allow for play or practice. Signs are put up when the fields are too wet or undergoing maintenance work. Otherwise open to the public unless a game or practice is scheduled for a field.
- 12.) The Parks Director explained the process by which the new piece of playground equipment had been acquired for area near the Natural Way area at Shelter #2. He added that future additions to the playground will be purchased through grants as they become available along with public fundraising and donations.

No other items were discussed. Rob thanked everyone for coming and having good input on issues.

Notes by Parks Caretaker Steve Herman

EXPO TOPICS

- 1.) The new Master Plan was discussed in depth. Chase Rettler went over data from the just completed User Group Survey a handout of which was also provided. He also presented a Powerpoint presentation of the entire Master Plan with special emphasis on the first two phases of development which are being presented to the County Board on Tuesday January 7, 2020. The presentation will be available on the county web site as part of the meeting minutes/notes. The presentation consisted of an overview of the current facilities with the issues being experienced by users. The goals of the plan were expressed as well, to accommodate growing and new large scale events safely and accessibly. Rick Helms provided two options for a new barn which will be entered into the plan, probably as a third phase. Questions and comments were taken and a good discussion ensued.
- 2.) Upcoming events – New this year and next – the WI Futurity Horse Festival will take place in September Paulette Healey introduced herself as the show chair for the event, and Steve Lenz was introduced as a potential promoter of stadium events. Staff is working with 4 other horse shows on potential dates. There are 2 additional craft fairs coming in 2020 as well as the Fox Cities Golf Expo in February. John Dougherty reported that Lifest has a number of big name artists returning in 2020 and they expect to have even larger attendance this year.
- 3.) We bought the farm, now what? Development of added property to the east was discussed as part of the Master Plan discussion. The Community Garden will be moving to this parcel as well in 2020.
- 4.) Scheduled maintenance for 2020 & 2021– roofs, gravel lot construction/expansion, drainage issue corrections, berm removal. There is a contract being let for repair of the leaking roofs throughout the grounds. The expansion of gravel lots #4 and #2 are included in the request for funding for 2020-2021 going to the County Board as part of the capital improvements program. There are plans to remove the berm between the Flyer's Field area and the acreage to the north as well.
- 5.) Questions and input – Of note the ditch between the backstage area and the Kossel farm fields are in need of dredging and the area north of the BMX berm is also retaining water.

ADJOURNMENT

Expo portion of meeting adjourned 11:15 a.m. Park portion of the meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m..