

DRAFT

CITY OF WAUSAU – PARK AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date/Time: February 7, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. Location: Council Chambers, City Hall

Members Present: Tom Kilian, Lou Larson, Tom Neal, Pat Peckham (c)-(via webex), Sarah Watson

Others Present: Jamie Polley-Director, Bill Bertram-President Wausau/Marathon County Parks and Recreation Foundation

1. In accordance with Chapter 19, Wisc. Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and sent to the Daily Herald in the proper manner. A quorum was present and the meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Kilian at 4:30pm.

2. Public Comment – none brought forward

3. Approval of Minutes – February 7, 2022 – **Motion** by Neal, second by Larson to approve the Park and Recreation Committee draft December 6, 2021 minutes. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 5-0.

4. Discussion and Possible Action Supporting the Great Pinery Heritage Waterway Project by the Wausau/Marathon County Parks and Recreation Foundation – Bill Bertram, President of the Wausau and Marathon County Park and Recreation Foundation spoke about a Foundation project to create historical and mapping signage at landings along a river trail within Marathon County and branding it the Great Pinery Heritage Waterway. It would include the Wisconsin River, Rib River and lower Eau Claire River. The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission would do the mapping and it would be promoted on the Central Wisconsin Visitor's website. Bertram discussed statistics regarding paddling, tourism and the economic benefit to the area. Funding would come from grants and Foundations, and it is hoped a maintenance fund would be created with any residual funds. Bertram described some of the landings along the trail. Questions were answered and members voiced support. This item had recently been approved by the Park Commission who had directed Polley to write a letter of support which will assist the Park Foundation in applying for additional funding options. Polley said the department already has landings that it maintains and will be the project owner. If there are improvements they just have to make sure they have the staff to maintain them. The department supports the project as long as a maintenance fund comes with it for repair and replacement of signs. **Motion** by Peckham, second by Neal that Polley write a letter from the County and City to support the signage being installed at existing boat launches. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 5-0

5. Discussion on Kayak Launches within the City – Kilian explained there had been some interest on potential opportunities to replicate the handicapped accessible kayak launch by Riverlife Park in other areas. Polley said the Lake Wausau Association has brought forth a proposal to put the same launch at DC Everest Park, which is a County park. Staff has to assess what that means because it currently takes the one by Riverlife Park in and out each year which is a big task and something the Association is requesting the Department do at DC Everest Park as well. There are different options of launches and if more are wanted along the river it would be a matter of identifying where and then getting the funding for them either through CIP or grant funding. Polley said that Bertram had asked her to identify current launches and determine what improvements could potentially be made on those. A couple of places that could potentially be developed include some county owned property in Rib Mountain and in Brokaw. Memorial and Oak Island Parks could also be locations for launches as well. New landings and docks were put in at Gilbert and Scholfield Parks.

6. Discussion and Possible Action Determining Park Dedication Requirement for Alexander Davis Preliminary Plat – Kilian requested the item be pulled as there had been some updates to the material and he wanted time for himself and the public to be able to review it. Some of his concerns related to public space language being changed on the plat.

Polley said the changes Kilian was referring to on the plat she received today did not pertain to the item in front of them tonight, it would pertain to other Committees. The area in the corner that said it was dedicated to the public was updated and labeled as an outlot. That is the only change she saw that was brought forward. It's being brought to Committee today because there is a city code that requires any subdivision coming forward to pay park dedication either in the form of land, or cash or combination thereof. She noted that on the original and updated preliminary plat there is no indication of park land. The area that says dedicated to the public, that is public right-of-way not park land. Her recommendation is to require the park dedication fees because of the proximity of this development to the riverfront as well as the 400 Block. Polley described the process that the preliminary plat follows and said it eventually goes to City Council so they have time as City Council members to look at all aspects of it. This Committee makes their recommendation regarding park land and/or fees and then it goes through to other Committees as they continue work on this development. Polley said action was needed

tonight because CISM would be reviewing the whole development in two days and putting conditions in place for the developer. It would then go to City Council and would not be coming back to this Committee. If Committee doesn't make a recommendation it would move forward with just staff recommendation. Kilian wanted his concern noted that usually he would not support having changed information but if Polley felt it would be better to keep the item on the agenda he would not pull it. **Motion** by Neal, second by Watson to support staff recommendation to accept park fees in lieu of park land for the Alexander Davis Preliminary Plat. Kilian supported Polley's work and recommendation but because of uncertainties he still had, he would be voting no tonight. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 4-1 with Kilian as the dissenting vote.

7. Discussion Regarding the Parks, Recreation & Forestry Departments 2021 Year in Review and the 2022 Work Plan – Polley gave highlights on department work in 2021 which included: County forestry timbersale management, pickleball tournament, secured a sponsorship with People's State Bank for the Sports Complex, replaced playgrounds, implemented a new recreation software program, management of emerald ash borer, hosted a 100+1 anniversary celebration event, worked on and received grants, vegetation management at Barker-Stewart Island with goats, maintained City and County parks, opened dog park, increased swimming lessons, held events with the Mayor. Upcoming work in 2022 include working on the westside master plan, sustainability plan for the Department, updating the City Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, replacing playgrounds, steps and wall repair work at Stewart Park, replacing listening devices at the 400 Block, installing new drinking fountains, replacing the Athletic Park scoreboard, finishing the dog park, expanding recreational programs.

8. Educational Items

A. Park Update – Riverside Park: Shelter upgrades – Kitchen cabinets, countertop, fixtures, flooring. Restroom flooring. The work being done is in response to the ADA updates needed in our system. Sylvan Hill Park: The one tow line that was inoperable has been repaired. Limited available seasonal staff to work the hill has led to full-time staff filling vacant shifts to serve customers. We have been receiving positive feedback on the condition of the cross-country ski trails. Urban Forestry: Emerald Ash Borer has been confirmed in three additional boulevard ash trees in NE Wausau. It is suspected the insects were introduced by a resident through infected ash firewood. Trees have been ordered for spring planting. An RFP for tree and stump removal will go out shortly. Routine Operations/Programs: Snow/ice removal, building and structure maintenance, shelter reservations and special events, equipment maintenance and repair.

B. Riverside Park Remediation Update – On January 11, 2022, the Finance Committee and City Council approved funding for REI to complete a Remedial Action Options Report (ROAR). Polley explained that Public Works Director Lindman had stated that the WDNR has concluded the Site Investigation Report (SIR) is complete and the testing that has been done is sufficient to determine the extent of the contamination. The next step in the process is for a Remedial Action Options Report (RAOR) to be completed and submitted to the DNR for their review. Then bid specifications will be prepared to propose to City Council about how the area will be remediated.

C. Conditions of Former Rosemurgy Site Adjacent to Two Hearts Dog Park – Polley explained she was asked to bring back a condition report on this site which is adjacent to the Two Hearts Dog Park because there was someone interested in buying it and donating it to the City. She noted there are some major issues with cleanup on the property that have been going on since 2018 and the DNR is pursuing compliance with the owner regarding it. The DNR advises against anyone purchasing it until it has been cleaned up and approved by the DNR that it has been cleaned up and remediated.

9. Future Agenda Items – formal request to DNR that the former Rosemurgy site is cleaned up as soon as possible, update on special dog park Committee status

10. Next Meeting Date – Monday, March 7, 2022 at 4:30pm the regular meeting at Council Chambers, City Hall.

11. Adjournment – **Motion** by Watson, second by Larson to adjourn at 5:45pm. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 5-0.