

DRAFT

CITY OF WAUSAU – PARK AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date/Time: October 4, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. Location: Riverside Park Shelter, 100 Sherman Street

Members Present: Tom Kilian, Lou Larson, Tom Neal, Pat Peckham (c)

Members Excused: Sarah Watson

Others Present: Jamie Polley-Director, Marcus Aumann-Assistant Director of Community Services, Katie Rosenberg-Mayor, Lindsey Lewitzke-Wausau Events, Ali Aderhoeft-Wausau Events, Pete Valiska-Wausau Events, other interested parties

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 Chairman Peckham at 4:30pm.

2. Public Comment – none brought forward

3. Approval of Minutes – September 13, 2021 – **Motion** by Neal, second by Kilian to approve the Park and Recreation Committee draft September 13, 2021 minutes. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 4-0.

4. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department 2022 Fee Schedule – Polley explained that approval of fees is recommended at this time to set the shelter rates for the following year. This allows the department to allow users to reserve shelters 12 months in advance. Staff is recommending adjustments to the fees that include a 3% increase in the shelter fees (2023), slight increase to Athletic Park, ball diamond, sports field fees and pools fees (2022). The increases proposed are to keep in line with CPI increases and the increased departmental staffing and equipment costs. **Motion** by Larson, second by Neal to approve the 2022 fee schedule for City fees. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 5-0.

5. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Cost Recovery for Wausau Area Events – Polley said staff would like direction from Committee about what is expected of the Department as far as cost recovery for all events, not just Wausau Events. The City and County are implementing Priority Based Budgeting which forces Departments to look at all costs of providing services to the community. Wausau Events has been charged differently than some other events and staff is trying to improve on its consistency with all the events. Neal discussed the criteria and some of the evaluation process that the Room Tax Commission uses when making their decisions about events. Lewitzke felt that a free event that is receiving room taxes should get charged the parks space fee plus a percentage of the overall cost of parks help and that events that are charging fees pay a little higher percentage. Aumann wanted to get more consistent across the board for old and new events and thought that was a good point about room tax dollars. Kilian wondered if a more objective scoring model could be developed that would be equitable for all groups having events. Polley thought if an event met certain criteria then a percentage of the fees could be weighted as in-kind services which could be part of the fee request. Currently the costs the Park Department has are being absorbed by the City so that's where a percentage could be done if the City is willing to absorb some of the event costs. If the City wants the Department to recover their costs then it's a different philosophical question.

Neal felt it was their policy to keep encouraging more things to happen in Wausau and he thought some of this should be questioned of the Finance and Economic Development Committees. Peckham thought that it had always been kind of understood that the City underwrote a lot of these events and he had been okay with it because it was good for the community and visitors. He has seen situations where organizers of some events have been able to find sponsors when they needed to. Lewitzke didn't believe Wausau Events could easily absorb any more costs for something like Concerts on the Square and it was very hard to find sponsors for an event that the same people come to every week than those that were more of a quality-of-life thing. Neal felt an organization that comes to the Room Tax Commission should itemize all costs of the event including those from the City Departments. Neal suggested Wausau Events bring Concerts on the Square to the Room Tax Commission. Lewitzke didn't believe that event met qualifications for Room Tax funds and they used some of those funds for marketing other events. She understood it was unrealistic to charge Wausau Events nothing for those costs while other people were charged something but if they have to absorb full costs then they cannot provide the quality and number of events. Aumann questioned if there was any value in the City or Department being recognized as a sponsor, not as the primary facilitator but as a key part of an event taking place.

Kilian commented on two bigger events that he was more concerned about the City absorbing the labor costs than some of the material costs. He thought in the private market there were ways to look at revenue concerns as they relate to costs and part of that could be put into a performance-based agreement where there would be revenue sharing opportunities for the City. If the revenue didn't hit a certain mark the cost would decrease but at least then there is a rationale for why some things are for free to some and not to others.

Valiska spoke about how the City has always supported their organization and they understand there are costs but creating community through events has always been one of the thought processes and if they are charged more that reduces the benefit that they can provide to grow the event. Businesses are still struggling to provide sponsorships. They can bring all items to the Room Tax Commission but that will be asking for more money to pay for things that have been provided in support of them having events in Wausau to bring people to the community.

Polley said the Department is willing to do whatever the City wants and will provide the services to make everything successful. She just wanted Committee to be aware of the City subsidizing this organization while others are all mostly paying for their fees. Because Wausau Events needs to do their budget she suggests they continue with past practices for 2022. In the meantime staff will learn if the City is willing to continue to absorb costs beyond the facility fee and will research to see if more can be done to offset these event costs not just for parks but also for other City Departments. All of the charges need to be figured out and then what the City is willing to support for any event and where that offset might come from. They will then have a 2023 policy not only for Wausau Events but other organizations that might come forward with similar larger events. Kilian objected and thought the same should be done for every group. **Motion** by Neal, second by Larson to follow the Park Directors suggestion for supporting past practice and providing the same services for Wausau Events in 2022 while working on a 2023 policy for all events. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 3-1 with Kilian as the dissenting vote.

6. Educational Items

A. Park Update - Memorial Benches: Staff is preparing sites and forms for memorial bench installations in several city and county park locations. Water Systems: Winterization procedures are underway for facilities/areas that are currently done for the season. I.e. Pools, sports facilities, restrooms and irrigation systems. Sylvan Tubing Hill Snowmaking Water System: Staff is preparing materials and performing site work for installation of an upgraded booster pump system in the mechanical building. ADA Study Barrier Corrections: Staff continues on corrections for ADA guidelines. Small correction levels include small plumbing fixes, fixture and grab bar relocations in restrooms, tree path obstructions, adding ADA approved picnic tables, etc. Routine Operations/Programs: Mowing Operations; seasonal staff is almost gone; routes are combined for coverage. Urban forestry program; stump grinding, tree trimming, removals. Building and structure maintenance. Shelter reservations and Special Events; Equipment maintenance and repair, Restroom Maintenance

B. Riverside Park Testing Update – Kilian felt they were finally moving towards the finish line and approaching a positive outcome. He said in the provided document under Section 7 the Conclusion and Recommendation two sentences read “based on these results REI recommends remedial actions be taken to address unsaturated soil contamination exceeding the WAC Chapter NR720 direct contact RCLs. Prior to the development of a Remedial Action Options Report, the WDNR will need to determine what standards the TEQ values will be compared as this will significantly affect the area of remediation.” Kilian said that indicated that they want to know what remedial actions will be taken to address the exceedances of Wisconsin regulatory standards that were found in certain areas of the park. The DNR has really good standards for RCL's which are either below the limit or not so it's very easy to identify. TEQ's are more of a toxicological value and Wisconsin typically doesn't use TEQ values to address dioxin and furon contamination so he thought they should follow State standards. He said almost all contamination in Wisconsin is addressed through Wisconsin regulatory standards which he believes are both reasonable and protective. After discussion it was decided Polley would let Public Works Director Lindman know and he could let REI know what the Committee is thinking and that the item will be put on the November meeting agenda as an actionable item.

Neal left the meeting at 5:40pm

C. EAB Update – Polley mentioned that the State website “datcpservices.wisconsin.gov/eab/index.jsp” has a lot of information and maps of where the Emerald Ash Borer is in all the Counties in the State and when it was detected. The beetle is here in Wausau but is not hugely widespread. The State has a lot of resources to help mitigate it and there are some

grants available for some Emerald Ash Borer management that the Department will be looking into but it isn't too that point yet here. Staff is following the same practices as some of the surrounding areas.

7. Future Agenda Items – Kayak Launch Update

8. Next Meeting Date – Monday, November 1st at 4:30pm the regular meeting at Council Chambers, City Hall

9. Adjournment – **Motion** by Larson, second by Kilian to adjourn at 5:45pm. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 4-0.