

**MINUTES
PARK COMMITTEE
Wednesday, October 12, 2016
City Hall, Room 207
4 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Aldermen David Nennig, Chris Wery, and John Vanderleest

Ald. Nicholson arrived at approximately 4:15 p.m.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Director Cramer, Dan Ditscheit, Marsha Scholes, and Ald. Steuer

Approval of the minutes of the meeting of September 14, 2016

A motion was made by Ald. Wery and seconded by Ald. Vanderleest to approve the minutes of the meeting of September 14, 2016. Motion carried.

Adoption of the Agenda

A motion was made by Ald. Vanderleest and seconded by Ald. Wery to adopt the agenda of the October 12, 2016, Park Committee meeting. Motion carried.

1. Consideration with possible action on the request by the Whitney Park Neighborhood Association to place its neighborhood sign on park property

The Department of Community & Economic Development met with the neighborhood association and reviewed potential locations for its neighborhood sign. The neighborhood association would like to place it in the northwest corner of the park near the intersection of Main and Jackson Streets. The sign and installation expenses will be paid for by the Department of Community & Economic Development. This neighborhood association will install landscaping around the sign in the spring of 2017. As with maintenance of all other neighborhood association signs, the group will be responsible to maintain the plant beds throughout the years. There are several other parks that have similar neighborhood signs. Staff has no concerns with this request.

A motion was made by Ald. Vanderleest and seconded by Ald. Wery to approve the request by the Whitney Park Neighborhood Association to place its neighborhood sign on the northwest corner of the park near the intersection of Main and Jackson Streets on park property. Motion carried.

2. Consideration with possible action on the request by Western Corridor Neighborhood Association to place its neighborhood sign on park property

This is very similar to the previous agenda item. The Western Corridor Neighborhood Association would like to place its neighborhood sign near the intersection of Oneida Street and Western Avenue. The sign will be placed on park property adjacent to the West Side Trail where the trail meets Oneida Street. Staff has no concerns with this request.

A motion was made by Ald. Wery and seconded by Ald. Vanderleest to approve the request by the Western Corridor Neighborhood Association to place its neighborhood sign on park property adjacent to the West Side Trail where the trail meets Oneida Street. Motion carried.

3. Consideration with possible action on a request by Wisconsin Public Service for a 12-foot-wide utility easement along Sitka Street in McAuliffe Park

Wisconsin Public Service approached the Parks Department and requested a 12-foot-wide easement along the north side of Sitka Street through McAuliffe Park and the adjacent greenway. They would like to install a three-phase electric line to upgrade the service to the adjacent property owner to the west. There are only a few trees within the proposed easement adjacent to the parking lot entrance to the McAuliffe Park. The proposed electric line will be bored under the existing trees within the easement. The Law Department is in the process of reviewing the proposed easement language. Park staff has no concerns with this request.

A motion was made by Ald. Vanderleest and seconded by Ald. Wery to approve the request by Wisconsin Public Service for a 12-foot-wide utility easement along Sitka Street in McAuliffe Park conditional upon Law Department review and approval of the final easement language. Motion carried.

4. Consideration with possible action on the 2017 Community Development Block Grant park proposals

On a yearly basis, the Redevelopment Authority approves \$150,000 in Community Develop Block Grant funding to go towards park projects. The funding can only be used in eligible areas within the City and must be used for neighborhood enhancements, not large community projects. Staff handed out a boundary map and a list of eligible parks.

Staff reviewed the proposed projects for these parks and is recommending that the full \$150,000 go towards the purchase of sports light fixtures for three ballfields at Beaver Dam Park. Two years ago, one ballfield was renovated. The City currently has funding to renovate and relocate two additional ballfields. There is no current funding to install sports lighting on any of the three fields. The leagues that will be playing on these fields will play into the evening hours. If the fields are not lit, they will receive very little usage. It will cost approximately \$180,000 to purchase the light fixtures. NWTC has agreed to install the poles as a school training project. Park staff will install the light fixtures and

install the underground electrical conduit. The City will likely have to hire an electrician to install the electric panel and complete the wiring. Any dollar amount over \$150,000 will be funded from City bonding.

Ald. Steuer asked if the Parks Department receives approximately the same amount of Community Development Block Grant funding each year. Staff replied that we receive a minimum of \$150,000 and sometimes additional funds if an alderperson has requested completion of a special project.

Ald. Steuer inquired about a priority list of projects that the Parks Department would compile specifying which parks and/or projects are most necessary. Staff answered that on a yearly basis a projects list is updated and distributed during the bonding process. There are currently 131 projects on the list. Staff decided to recommend using these funds for the Beaver Dam ballfields lighting because we already have the funding to renovate and relocate two ballfields, and NWTC is donating the installation of the poles. That will save the project thousands of dollars.

Ald. Nennig explained how the federal government surveys the community to determine which parks are eligible for Community Development Block Grant funding and how that eligibility can change.

A motion was made by Ald. Vanderleest and seconded by Ald. Wery to approve the staff recommendation for the 2017 Community Development Block Grant proposal and forward this request to the Redevelopment Authority for approval. Motion carried.

5. Informational Only – Review of the proposed 2017 Parks, Recreation, & Forestry Department’s budget

Staff summarized the proposed 2017 preliminary budget. This is not the final proposed budget as changes may still occur as the Mayor finalizes his budget.

Our 2017 proposed budget currently shows a \$260,318 increase in expenses and an increase of \$29,113 in revenue.

The expense increases are in the areas of regular salaries and benefits, insurance, worker’s compensation insurance, and seasonal salaries. Cuts were made to operations and utility areas. Staff reviewed these costs.

Our current proposed 2017 budget includes running the existing Colburn Pool. It does not include expansion of the 4K program at the Wildlife Sanctuary.

Staff has also proposed to add one mechanic to our budget. Half of the salary and benefits would be allocated to the 101 fund, and the other half to the Bay Beach fund.

Regarding seasonal salaries, we are experiencing significant turnover and shortages and are recommending a \$1.00 increase per grade to help us attract and retain qualified workers who hopefully would not job hop to a surrounding community that pays more.

Staff reviewed the proposed fees and charges schedule. Changes occurred in the areas of cancellations of programs and facilities, park shelter rentals, pool admissions and lessons, and a cleaning fee that would be charged for users who rent areas and trash them.

This fall and winter we are going to revisit how policy and pricing relates to all of our special events and will bring these charges back to the Park Committee at a later date.

Staff reviewed the proposed equipment replacement priorities list in Parks & Forestry.

Lastly, staff reviewed some forestry operations. There are currently no dollars allocated in this budget to hire contractors to remove private trees on private property. If it is your wish to remove private trees, we will need to add dollars to the budget to pay for contractors. Staff is also working on creating an ordinance regarding private property trees as directed at a previous Park Committee meeting.

Overall, it is a responsible budget with expenses increases in salaries, benefits, and insurance, while operating and utility expenses went down and revenue went up.

Ald. Nicholson believes the cleaning fee for shelter rentals should be increased and agrees with the seasonal salary increases.

Ald. Nennig reminded that the Personnel & Finance Committees will be going over each budget beginning on November 1, 2016.

Staff mentioned that there have been many aldermanic complaints regarding the 8- to 9-year rotation of the removal and pruning of City trees. Additional Forestry Workers were not added into next year's budget. Currently staff is trying to reduce the amount of trees planted in areas, diversifying species, and is starting to look at some growth-reducing agents to address this issue.

Ald. Nennig added that the Aldermen are aware that this budget year will be tight with an overall increase staying at approximately 1.4% with all departmental budgets included.

Ald. Steuer commented on the increase in insurance costs, how that lowers available operational funds, and thereby reduces services to the community. He feels we must focus on giving funds to the Forestry Division to lessen the rotation period. Maybe we can look at funding the removal of private trees over time due to budget constraints.

A motion was made by Ald. Wery and seconded by Ald. Vanderleest to receive and place on file the report of the proposed 2017 Parks, Recreation, & Forestry Department's budget. Motion carried.

6. Director's Report

Ducks Unlimited was awarded the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation grant. It is for the construction of the wetland/waterfowl reserve at Ken Euers.

This year, 1,025 trees along streets and in parks have been taken down to stump level.

Leadership Green Bay has completed all of the fundraising to pay for the stage area at Whitney Park. Construction began on October 6, 2016.

The Haunted Chase Race will take place at Bay Beach Amusement Park and the Wildlife Sanctuary on Friday, October 21, 2016, at 6:30 p.m. We have 420 participants who preregistered for the race.

Last weekend Bay Beach Amusement Park hosted the Bellin Women's Half-Marathon, which was a great success. We will host the Green Bay Duathlon this weekend.

Cabela's hosted its annual Walleye Tournament at the Metro Boat Launch on October 8, 2016.

Our Walk for Wildlife at the Wildlife Sanctuary had a record number of 492 participants, and our Autumn Adventure sponsored by the Thursday Morning Optimist Club had record attendance as well.

The Department of Public Works and Park staff completed the final review of the Colburn Pool plans and submitted them back to GRAEF for final modifications.

The Recreation Division has received two state awards for outstanding programs within communities. There are only four of these given each year. Our Recreation Division received two of the possible four Silver Star awards this year for our LEGO Building Event and our Green Bay Parks Rx Program.

A motion was made by Ald. Vanderleest and seconded by Ald. Wery to receive and place on file the Director's Report. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Ald. Vanderleest and seconded by Ald. Nicholson to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 4:51 p.m.