

MINUTES
PARKS, RECREATION AND CONSERVATION ADVISORY
COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2011
DPW OPERATIONS CENTER
2351 SPRINGBROOK COURT, БЕLOIT, WI

MEMBERS PRESENT: Roger Christiansen, Steve Ferger, Tia Johnson, Anna Kokity, Matt Parish, Mark Preuschl, Mike Ramsden

MEMBERS ABSENT: Marty Densch, Pete Marino, Twinkle Patel, Dave Botts

STAFF: Brian Ramsey

GUESTS: Danielle Clifton, Anita B. Williams, Marge Fizzell, Rick Dexter

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called by Vice Chair Kokity at 6:30 p.m.

REVIEW OF MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 10, 2010 MEETING

Correction on page two (2) under Old Business “Anna” is misspelled. A motion was made by Mike Ramsden and seconded by Mark Preuschl to approve the minutes from the November 10, 2010 meeting with correction. Motion passed unanimously.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Anita Williams questioned why the minutes of the Parks, Recreation and Conservation Advisory Committee were not on the City of Beloit website. Brian Ramsey will find out what can be done to correct this matter. Roger Christiansen stated that he invited the Horace White Park Committee to the meeting and asked if we could move to New Business in consideration of their time. A motion was made by Roger and seconded by Tia to move to New Business. Motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion regarding the status of the Horace White Park Committee.

Brian Ramsey presented the Background of the Committee and the Staff Recommendation. Roger noted that there have been many changes to the Master Plan since the formation of the Committee, including the original contractor, Mayo Corporation, going out of business. He recommends that the Committee be put on standby until funds are available in the future. Anita agreed, stating that there is a need to continue to monitor the work at the park. Marge would like to see a continuation of dialogue between current members of the Committee and any future ones. Brian believes the Committee has done an admirable job and he is proud of the work done on the Master Plan. He has been in on-going communication with the Committee regarding any issues they have. Tia raised a question regarding the responsibility of the contractor if the grass seed does not take. Brian stated that we will work with the contractor to mitigate problems and issues that arise and pointed out that it is the job of the Parks & Recreation Department to maintain landscaping thereafter.

Roger voiced concerns that there was no lighting in the park after 12 a.m.; the flag has no lighting when park lights are off, and park lighting is also street lighting. Anita confirmed Roger's concerns and added that Bushnell and Park were dark. Brian stated that lighting outside of the park is an Engineering issue and has been brought to their attention. All new lights added to City parks are placed on timers because they are cost efficient. Tia asked if the Horace White Park Committee could be on standby. Brian said that the Committee members would have to be available if issues arise. Mike Ramsden feel the Committee should be put on standby and re-evaluated in six (6) months. Brian and Anna suggest that the Parks & Recreation Commission move to suspend the Horace White Park Committee. Mike had an issue with the wording, i.e. suspend vs. standby. A motion was made by Mike and seconded by Steve to place the Horace White Park Committee on standby and re-evaluate its status in six (6) months at the July meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Rock River Trail advocating for creating a Primitive Camping Site at Big Hill Park.

Brian Ramsey presented the Background, Budget & Financial Impact, and Staff Recommendation. Steve stated that he is in favor of the proposal. This proposal was made 20 years ago, but the City would not allow camping because Big Hill Park was donated land with specific uses. When Big Hill Park was donated to the City, the conveyance would not permit camping. Mike Ramsden is an avid canoer and believes this is a bad idea for Big Hill for several reasons. The river is too wide, there is too much development on both sides of the river, and no portage around the dams. If the site goes in, it will become a hang-out for kids and have an adverse affect on the park. He recommends a Rock County camp site at Happy

Hollow. Discussion was held on past ventures to establish camping in Big Hill Park and/or Preservation Park. Steve feels we need to determine if development of camp sites is permitted before we continue discussion. Brian indicated that there was no information in the historical file regarding this restriction, but he would look into it further to see if there is any information downtown with the City Clerk or the Legal Department. Brian will follow up on the issue. No further action!

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Correspondence

Brian Ramsey presented the Correspondence Report. There was discussion about the synthetic turf used at Turtle Island. Steve Ferger asked if rubberized mulch was considered; Brian says it is not cost effective, but it is less costly to maintain according to Roger. Brian indicated that Beloit 2020 has agreed to pay \$20,000 of the estimated \$24,000 cost for installing the turf.

B. Recreation Report

Brian Ramsey presented the Recreation Report.

C. Parks Report

Brian Ramsey presented the Parks Report.

D. Special Projects

Brian Ramsey presented the Special Projects Report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Dog Park Committee

Mike Ramsden stated that the Committee evaluated 13 sites and rated each location on a variety of criteria. The location has been narrowed down to Leeson Park–eastside (at the corner of Willowbrook & Springbrook Ct.), Leeson Park-upper level, and Telfer Park north of Pohlman Field. Concern was expressed about the Telfer Park location being in a residential area. Steve asked if the Leeson Park locations would be accessible without going through the park. The Dog Park Committee is looking at the cost to develop the location, i.e., fencing, pavement for parking, water access, etc. Roger noted that the Janesville Dog Park is in a residential area and feels this is a benefit because the residents police the area. The Dog Park Committee will do a cost study and report to the Parks & Recreation Commission.

OLD BUSINESS

None

COMMITTEE MEMBERS COMMENTS

- Mark Preuschl informed us that the Parks, Recreation and Conservation Advisory Commission agenda is on the City website and in the City Manager's Report.
- Roger Christiansen thanked Brian Ramsey and the Committee for comments made to the Horace White Park Committee; they are a very concerned neighborhood group. He appreciates Steve Ferger's presence on the Committee and feels his background is very beneficial to the Committee. It is important for the City and contractors to communicate with city golfers about what is going on with the golf course/pond project.
- Steve feels that the situation at the golf course is very "worrisome" to many people in the community and we have lost lots of members to other communities. Contractors have not adhered to the timeline for completion; this will severely affect revenue for the golf course. Brian responded by indicating that there are reasonable concerns regarding the golf course/pond project and he continues to attend weekly construction update meetings. The City anticipates the project to be completed as indicated in the timeline, but are creating contingency plans and marketing strategies if it isn't. Concerns will be shared with the Engineering Department who is managing the project.
- Tia Johnson is concerned and very disappointed to hear about details regarding the golf course. She asked if the city could close off Grand Avenue Bridge for vendors during Farmers Market. She was informed that this was under the control of the Downtown Beloit Association.
- Mike Ramsden believes that cross-country skiing off Greenway Trail is very good.
- Anna Kokity asked if events for canoeing and kayaking could be planned along the Rock River Trailway. She also stated that lights in all city parks are not on as long as they used to be.
- Matt Parish – No comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Mark Preuschl made a motion for adjournment, seconded by Tia Johnson. Motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Matilda Purifoy.