

**PARKS, RECREATION, AND CONSERVATION ADVISORY
COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES FOR
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2015
DPW OPERATIONS CENTER
2351 SPRINGBROOK COURT, BELOIT, WI 53511**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeff Johnson, Chad Larson, Carol Mankiewicz, Therese Oldenburg, Mark Preuschl

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sheila DeForest, City Council

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS: Brian Ramsey, Director of Parks & Leisure Services
Greg Boysen, Public Works Director
Mark Smullen, School District of Beloit

GUESTS: Mike Flesch, City Engineer
Andy Hill, Engineering Division
Jerry Murphy, Daley-Murphy-Wisch Funeral Home

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mark Preuschl at 6:40 p.m.

REVIEW OF MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 12, 2014 MEETING

Jeff Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes seconded by Carol Mankiewicz. Motion passed unanimously.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

None

OLD BUSINESS-

None

Mark Preuschl made a motion to move New Business item B up to New Business item A seconded by Mark Smullen.

NEW BUSINESS – ACTION REPORT ITEM

A. Review and consideration of the marketing strategies of the City of Beloit

Cemeteries. The City of Beloit owns and operates two separate cemeteries. Those being Eastlawn and Oakwood cemeteries. Jerry Murphy, Owner of Daley, Murphy, Wisch Funeral Home was in attendance to discuss with the commission some marketing strategies to help bring more customers to Eastlawn Cemetery. Currently we provide marketing through the city's website, two times annually through the Beloit Daily News and provide general information during the Senior Fair held at Grinnell Hall. Jerry has dealt with families that don't even know that Eastlawn Cemetery exists. He suggests that we advertise in the Beloit Shopper to let residents know that they have an affordable option for a traditional burial or cremation. Cremation rates are higher and are rising because traditional funerals aren't being held anymore and this will cause revenue to drop drastically. He suggests that we get the information out to the public and educate them by doing comparison pricing so that they know that they have a better and cheaper option with burials at Eastlawn. Floral Lawns has a sales force that is very aggressive and they are getting to the residents before we even get the chance to let people know they have other options. By then it is too late and people are already tied into contracts. Eastlawn is very affordable and unique and has all the opportunities you could ask for as well as great staff that keeps the cemetery in good shape. We have to do something to keep Eastlawn and Oakwood afloat. People have stopped burying their cremains because of the cost. Some of the problem may be from citizens visiting Floral Lawns and then being told that all cemeteries cost the same. That isn't true but they won't know they have other choices without being informed about Eastlawn. Floral Lawns staff gets to residents too soon. By the time Jerry tells them they have another option, it's too late. People really prefer to bury their loves ones so that they have a place to visit, somewhere to Brian stated that there is no funding to do that type of marketing right now however; we do have flyers in every funeral home as well as the Senior Center, Leisure Services and the city's website. May we can make our website more user friendly so that its easier for people to find the cemetery when they need it. It was also suggested to put up signage on Milwaukee Road to make it easier for people to find the cemetery when they are looking for it. Another option would be to create a scattering garden for people to come and spread their cremains out there and it could still help to bring in revenue. Whatever we can do, now is the time to do it. Therese would like to see the cemetery be sustainable over the next years to come. Brian suggested we take this into consideration a little more and bring this discussion back after revision of our budget. At this time we are going to stay where we are with marketing strategies.

B. Update(s) and review the plan for the new Bike Trail Path in Big Hill Park. Andy Hill and Mike Flesh were in attendance to speak on the plan for the new bike trail in Big Hill Park. This was reviewed January and as of now there are no funds to build off road. The main focus will be along #2 through #4 and #5 will be talked about in the future. Exhibit B was recommended so there will be no cross traffic. Cars and bikes will be able

to safely maneuver. Stop signs will be placed in various locations in order to slow down traffic. Mark Preuschl made a motion to recommend exhibit B from #4 to #2 and #2 up to the top as shown with #4 to #5 on road with existing roadway seconded by Therese Oldenburg. Motion passed unanimously.

- C. Review and consideration of removing the old swings in Big Hill Park.** The old swings at Big Hill are unsafe without a fall zone and it would be more expensive to install a fall zone than it will to just take the old swings down. Mark Preuschl made a motion to consider moving the swings seconded by Therese Oldenburg. Motion passed unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- A. Correspondence-** None
- B. Parks Report-** Attached for Committee review.
- C. Horticulture Report-** Attached for Committee review.
- D. Recreation Report:** No Report

COMMITTEE MEMBERS COMMENTS

- Therese Oldenburg- Bob Colley was in town yesterday and was the guest speaker for the Chamber of Commerce banquet and is the president of the paddle sports of US Olympics. There was conversation regarding putting in a low pier for Crew on the rock river and having a building that they could store the paddle boats with the new Beloit College facility.
- Jeff Johnson- Passed out flyers for “Mushing for Meals” and explained what it entails. Two great parks will be honored. The race starts at Horace White goes to Riverside Park and ends up back at Horace White.
- Carol Mankiewicz- Asked about ice skating at the lagoon. Brian explained that it depends on the weather conditions and that because of the current underneath the snow it has to be checked before it can be skated on, or using a plow to remove snow. This year wasn't good weather conditions for skating.
- Mark Preuschl- The storm drain is leaking on the Portland Avenue Bridge and water is pouring out.
- Mark Smullen- Inquired about what type of activities would Brian and Greg like to see school kids involved in. He would like to help the kids learn community

values. This could take place during school or on a Saturday. Brian would like time to talk with Spencer, Mark Edwards, Mark Young and Sonya to see if there is anything. Also Greg Boysen suggested kids could make trail markers for Big Hill.

ADJOURNMENT

No quarm was present to make a motion for adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50p.m.

Minutes prepared by Travia Foy.