

THE PARK & REC COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, February 21st, 2024 @ 6:00 P.M.
CITY HALL IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

1.) Vice-Chairman Diane Motiff brought the February meeting to order @ 6:02 p.m.

2.) Roll Call: Bob LeBreck, Theresa LeMay, Diane Motiff, and Lori Stenstrup

EXCUSED: Sue Anderson; Also Present: Director of Park, Rec., and Forestry John Bostedt; and residents Dee Donlevy, Jack Karbon, and Casey Sowle

3.) **LeBreck called motion for approval of Agenda; Stenstrup witnessed the second. (4 Ayes)**

4.) **Approval of Park & Rec Meeting Minutes from January 24th, 2024 was placed in motion by Stenstrup with a LeBreck second approval. (4 Ayes)**

5.) Public Input: **Sowle** spoke of the City Park volunteers who remove rocks from its Bay waters. Director Bostedt addressed the limitation of staff, volunteer ability, and endless shift of Bay waters. He directed limitations of the DNR. LeBreck stated that public volunteers can remove the rocks in the waters by hand and place them on the shoreline. **Karbon** has been working with youth desire to create Wiffle Ball practice and team competition. If efforts fall into place, there will be a schedule of area teams coming to The City of Oconto and stimulating fun and revenue here. Any monies gained by the local activity will be returned to the City as the activity would be considered a non-profit. Competition games would be scheduled at the Holtwood Sporting Complex.

6.) Correspondence: Live Harbor Cam Views: Jan. 18th – Feb 6th – 6,315 views Motiff read a “thank you” from the Wittkopf family regarding compliments to the City Park and Rec. Director and crew upkeep of their honorary disc golf area @ Holtwood.

7.) **Discussion/Recommendation/Action on the Following:**

a.) Parks & Recreation

i. Bird City – (Motus Wildlife Tracking System / motus.org) (Possible (2) monitors or director), 2024 renewal application– We are looking @ connecting the Motus system to our wireless WIFI. This would possibly be a great draw and interfere with those using the wireless: however, it was suggested. Time will tell: conversion back is not complicated. We may have a new director! Bostedt has been keeping up our status for a few years, sounding VandenHeuvel. Both will work with the new director throughout the next year thus we will be able to keep our status. The search has been long in coming.

ii. Copper Culture Museum — Again the Candlelight walk brought compliments to park upkeep. Good news came from the DNR who has attained a Grant. The bathrooms will have an update... windows, and shingle damage as well.

iii. Prioritizing park projects on handout list— Intentions have not changed. We want a quote on the playground equipment and will install it in 2 phases.

iv. 2024 Parks Employees— We are in need of a working foreman (full time with benefits) and 2 labor workers part time: these will be advertised with other Park openings.

v. Maintenance on properties & equipment for parks, campground & harbor/(snow plowing/salting as needed) continue.

vi. Parks fundraising— We did not have it in place for the Candlelight Walk but may in 2025.

vii. 2024 Candlelight Walk— The event is increasing in attendees who walk the trail more than once. We are now in our 15th year. We had 173 walkers: a remarkable thanks to 17 volunteers for setup and 10 volunteers for cleanup of 550 bags set. The Fire Dept. had 9 volunteers alone. Good advertising, too!

viii. 2024 Pavilion Rentals— 48 as of January 2nd.

ix. Tree City Recertification has been approved for another year.

x. 2024 Movies in the Park will remain on the agenda for the March meeting.

b.) Ageson Pool property remains on the agenda as it is presently used as a storage area and may be reclaimed for activity.

c.) Holtwood Campground

i. Seasonal Sites 2024— Two opened up.

ii. 2024 Monthly Campsites – (9)(1 month or longer)

iii. Manager’s Monthly Report is not applicable until the season begins.

iv. 2024 Campground Reservations— 71 as of January 8th.

v. Guidelines for Winter Wonderland— The area is expected to be de-decorated in the Feb. weeks ahead: early March at the latest. Motiff requested this be on the official City Calendar yearly.

vi. 2024 Campground Employees— Advertising will include a Holtwood Manager and secretary position as it has been reported that we will not have their return.

vii. Updating brochure & paperwork for campground— As cost factor, price changes have been updated, especially for wood, newly 2 & 4 person tubes, and golf carts. Rules will be replaced on the walls. We will again encourage area residents and tourists to make use of the rentable transportation and “play” equipment out there.

d.) City Park/City Park Campground

i. 2024 Reservations— Eight.

ii. Playground equipment— Bostedt has been requesting and waiting more than a year for 2 established quotes: after his most recent request he has found another company who already measured last week and will access the 2-phase project, with quotes. Thereafter will be application for Grants. Also, the Breakwater and City Docks money need not be used to build a life jacket stand as several are being built at the OF High School via a County Grant: one has been gifted to Oconto. Bostedt, with the Committees agreement, will check it out before acceptance.

e.) Holtwood Sporting Complex

i. Holtwood Fields Project— We continue to wait here: we want to see the project *professional* as Oconto has one of the top 5 Sport complexes in the State. This will take the right excavating and grade of base-soil build up. Once satisfied with the process a motion needs to be made to the City Council who will balance City money with a Grant.

ii. Potential New Dock for Launch Area— Director Bostedt described the state-of-the-art dock and launch: the quote is coming. A DNR Grant is to be had, County help, and with Harbor support... as it is to Harbor benefit. We are safety conscious.

8.) Parks Update:

a.) City Docks – Theresa LeMay + Bostedt reported that the Truck Pull schedule is being finalized. Meantime, organizers have observed the need to purchase new wood and bolts to update the bleachers and will donate them.

b.) City Park & Campground – Diane Motiff + Safety tape is up.

c.) Copper Culture – Lori Stenstrup Note 7. ii. +

d.) Freedom Park – All + Christmas cleanup has been accomplished.

e.) Holtwood Park – Sue Anderson + See 7. e.

f.) Sharp Park – Bob LeBreck We continue to work on the buckthorn Grant writing with 2 new suggested writers: unfortunately, the first Grant writer never started.

g.) Bond Park – Diane Motiff +

9.) Park Special Events: An update on 2024 Park and Rec. events are calendared and will be distributed via a handout at the March meeting.

10.) LeBreck motioned to accept the resignation of the Foreman of the Parks Department; Stenstrup called second. (M/C)

We learned that he has been working there for 9 1/2 years and has now accepted to continue serving the City in its Street Dept.

11.) **The Park and Rec. Committee called the vote by LeBreck at 7:22 p.m. to convene into Closed Session pursuant to notice duly given and as allowed by Wis. Stats. 19.85(1)(c) for the consideration of employment for the following items: Hire of/Discussion on chosen candidate for Parks Foreman. Stenstrup issued a second. (M/C)**

12.) **Via a motion of Stenstrup the Park and Rec. Committee called the vote to reconvene into Open Session at 7:40 p.m. pursuant to notice duly given and as allowed by Wis. Stat. 19.85(2) for discussion/recommendation from Closed Session. LeMay called the second motion. (M/C)**

13.) ***Action/Discussion on matters from Closed Session* led to LeBreck calling a motion to hire the discussed candidate for Parks Foreman. LeMay voiced a second. (M/C)**

14.) ***Next Meeting Date/Time:*** Wednesday, March 13 @ 6 p.m.

Agenda Items: City Park: rock pick up AND equipment cleanup.

City Calendar notice to the above

15.) **LeBreck summoned adjournment @ 7:48 p.m. Motiff witnessed second. (4 Ayes)**

Minutes submitted by
Susan K. Seidl