

**CITY OF WOODSTOCK  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

August 12, 2014  
City Council Chambers

**A. Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Woodstock Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Mike McCleary on Tuesday, August 12, 2014.

**B. Roll Call**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** Steve Erwin, Chairman Mike McCleary, Laurel Sheahan

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:** Nic Kearfott

**STAFF PRESENT:** Parks Supervisor Ernie Nelson, Public Works Director Paul Ruscko, Recreation Director Dave Zinnen

**OTHERS PRESENT:** City Clerk Dianne Mitchell

**C. FLOOR DISCUSSION:**

1. Public comments User Groups – no comments
2. Commission Member comments for any item not on the agenda – no comments

**D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by L. Sheahan, second by Chairman McCleary to accept the March 11, 2014 Woodstock Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes as presented. Ayes: S. Erwin, L. Sheahan, M. McCleary. Nays: None. Absentees: N. Kearfott. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

**C. Transmittals:** The following items have been transmitted to the Commission for information and there is no discussion expected or action recommended.

1. Recreation Department Report for July 2014

D. Zinnen stated that Carrie Filetti had organized the triathlon the last three years but advised she was no longer interested in doing it. He reported that the Rec Department had planned on doing the kids' triathlon, but there was interest in seeing the adult continuing. He stated that they were able to get both events organized and had around 160 people which was pretty good considering they got into late and had to work on the Summer in the Park event as well. He complemented his staff for getting it organized and taking on the Summer in the Park. He stated that next year they will hopefully get closer to 100 kids and 125 adults participating in the triathlon.

In response to Chairman McCleary's question regarding the boilers at the pool, D. Zinnen advised that the boilers are 4 and 5 years old and noted that they have been replaced. He advised that he met with Will Smith today and advised that they are going to try to get the guys from Rockford out there at the end of the season. He stated that the boilers are maintained and reviewed how they are maintained. He reported that between the aquatic center and the rec center they are into hundreds of thousands of dollars spent on HVAC and boilers. He stated that W. Smith thinks they will need to put in another \$6,000. Chairman McCleary asked about a warranty and D. Zinnen advised that they are one year. He stated that it is frustrating because they are sinking a lot of money into things that are behind the scenes that nobody sees. Chairman McCleary questioned what the problem now and D. Zinnen advised that he doesn't know.

P. Ruscko referenced wearable parts and stated that if the impeller goes out water isn't circulating and the components are getting hotter than they should and/or you aren't moving the water therefore you aren't getting the heating you would expect. He stated that they have worked through some of the service technical concerns they had and advised that they are with a new

provider who seems to be closely tied to the manufacturer's rep. He reported that it is a company out of Rockford that specializes in boiler operation and maintenance.

## 2. Parks Division Report for July 2014

E. Nelson reported that this time of the year field use slows down so they are able to focus efforts on detail work. He stated that they have been working at Raintree Park for the disc golf course noting that they are due to receive the Raintree Park equipment tomorrow or Thursday and will schedule the install. He stated that will meet with Jeff Kaufman for a final walk through of the Raintree Park disc golf course. E. Nelson reported that they have been working on Peace Park as well as a couple other projects.

Chairman McCleary referenced the disc golf course project progress and questioned why it was removed from the agenda. He asked if it is the same group that originally presented it. S. Erwin stated that Jeff Kaufman came in a couple of years ago and then asked if he got funding. D. Zinnen stated that the Frisbee golf people wanted to do a course by Emricson Park but it fell through and then advised that the Ultimate Frisbee Group is a bunch of high school and college kids that play in the park. He stated that they have been trying to go out there later at night when softball is done and they have had problems with the police department shooing them off. He stated that they have asked to be recognized as a user group so they can reserve the field through the Rec Department. He reported that they didn't get their documentation in on time.

S. Erwin referenced the disc golf course at Raintree and asked if J. Kaufman came up with the fundraising. P. Ruscko advised it is a significant portion from Mr. Kaufmann and a minor portion from the City's parks operating budget. He stated that it will be owned and maintained by the City with the expectation of Mr. Kaufman continuing to do fundraising if he wants to supplement signage and wants the vision to go further. He stated that the City isn't envisioning taking it any further than getting the course set up and maintaining the course and park.

In response to Chairman, E. Nelson advised that it is eighteen holes. E. Nelson advised that the City had to remove vegetation in the area and he understands it that they will use City equipment to do the holes and install baskets. He advised that Mr. Kaufman is in the process of putting the baskets together and the City will put them in the ground.

Chairman McCleary stated that Woodstock Girls Softball and Woodstock Little League were doing work at Bates Park and Merryman Park and he questioned if the work was done. Tim Oman with Woodstock Little League stated that all the scoreboards are installed and were used all summer. He stated that they have been a phenomenal addition to the parks and there have been no issues with them. He advised that Roskie was installed with electricity donated by B&Z Electrical so it is permanently wired in. He reported that Merryman 5, 6 and Don Peasley Field are solar panels. He advised that they are looking at updating the scoreboard at Sullivan Field for next year. He believes most of the lip work is being finished at the end of this season.

S. Erwin reported that in October/November at Emricson, Woodstock High School hosts the regional cross country championships and Woodstock North hosts the sectional cross country. He believes it is a first time in thirty years that Woodstock will host the sectional. E. Nelson advised that he did not know but made a note.

S. Erwin stated that in the past there was some closing off of streets. D. Zinnen stated that they have had quite a few large cross country meets and they come up with a parking plan. He stated that once they get the dates they only allow Thunder football and cross country. He stated that they lock out everything else noting that they can't lock out Thunder football because it is the only place they can play.

L. Sheahan asked if they can work in conjunction with the community service officer because there used to be a problem with out of town people getting tickets. D. Zinnen advised that they put up signs everywhere not to park on the grass.

D. Zinnen stated that it would be helpful if Thunder could play those days games on one of the high school fields and get out of Emricson which would give them pretty much the entire park. He stated that it is hard for them not to play any Thunder football games on Saturday. He advised that if on those Saturday where we have big cross country meets those games could be played either at Woodstock High or Woodstock North. S. Erwin stated that would be an ideal situation and asked if there is an option to play the games later in the day. D. Zinnen stated that some of the big cross country meets get done around 11 a.m. but one of them doesn't get done until 1 pm. S. Erwin stated that the sectional will probably be 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. D. Zinnen stated that generally football comes in after 11 a.m.

L. Sheahan questioned if they could use Creekside or Northwood football fields. S. Erwin stated that it is actually is the first weekend of play-offs for high school football so it could be a concern for the high school. D. Zinnen advised that he will look into the middle school fields.

#### **D. Old Business**

1. None

#### **E. New Business**

1. Children's Peace Park & Labyrinth – Dick Tracy Way Park

E. Nelson stated that crews began excavating at the beginning of August. He reported that it is a peace sign noting that the center will be concrete and the outside circle will be brick. He reported that they have ordered a drinking fountain to go there with the ability to give a dog a drink as well.

S. Erwin questioned if Peace Park is a subsidiary of Dick Tracy Park. P. Ruscko advised that it is a space within a park. In response to Chairman McCleary, P. Ruscko stated that it is D200 Challenge Corps and McHenry County Community Foundation Grant so multiple organizations are donating time for true installation. He advised that the Bull Valley Garden Club took the lead on the project and partnered with the City, D200 Challenge Corps and the McHenry County Community Foundation to pull funding together. He reported that the City is doing some manpower to get the paths laid out and the foundation but D200 Challenge Corps, the Bull Valley Garden Club and other donors are going to be assembling the majority of it. He noted that the City will own and maintain it, but D200 Challenge Corps will help plant and lay bricks.

Chairman McCleary questioned if it was presented to the City Council and P. Ruscko affirmed. Chairman McCleary stated that it bypassed the Commission. P. Ruscko stated that he can't speak to the process but noted that a few of the pieces were conceptual in nature until the McHenry County Community Foundation grant was obtained. He stated that he is summarizing what he read or was told, noting that he wasn't the lead on the project.

L. Sheahan advised that they have had issues in the past where things that should have come before the Commission just appeared or were approved without coming past them. P. Ruscko stated that he can't speak for the past but can speak moving forward. Chairman question was about the process. P. Ruscko advised that he doesn't know the details but noted that he can look into it.

In response to S. Erwin, P. Ruscko advised that it is a path unlike a maze because you will always get out. He stated that the whole point of the Peace Park is a place of mediation. He noted that it is geared towards younger children. L. Sheahan asked if it will be completed by their parks tour. P. Ruscko advised that it will not, and noted that it will be continued into next year. S. Erwin would

like to include it on their tour.

## 2. Park Donation

P. Ruscko reported that there is a resident who has partnered with former mayor Allan Cornue to get a countless amount of large diameter oak trees and the resident would like to continue to provide that to the parks system. He stated that the resident has already provided 5-10 which the City used at Merryman because there is no shade. He stated that the donation the resident is talking about now is upwards of a hundred trees and we need to decide where we want them. He advised that oak trees can only being dug at certain times to increase their chance of surviving. He stated that working with Mr. Cornue getting the large diameter in caliper oak trees, both parties are willing but it is a significant commitment by Park Staff and resources and will need attention for a year or two. He stated that space is finite and where you put a tree is where you can no longer put a field or other amenity. He asked the Commission for their thoughts on making that kind of commitment level for parks resources.

Chairman McCleary asked if the City still has an arborist on Staff and P. Ruscko stated that they have a certified arborist on staff as well as a new street superintendent who is a certified arborist. Chairman McCleary stated that the big thing is the placement of the trees for the soil type and determining enough areas that are suitable. S. Erwin questioned if it would be in phases. P. Ruscko stated that even starting this fall there is no way that they can take all of them. He advised that both the resident and Mr. Cornue want a sense of what they are shooting for because at some point you can't move an oak tree anymore. S. Erwin asked if the City has the equipment needed and P. Ruscko said no and stated that the resident is paying for Mr. Corneau who has the equipment to move the oak trees and Mr. Corneau is providing the oak trees at a low to no cost to the resident.

L. Sheahan asked if this type of tree could be put over by the Prairie Ridge Park or Dick Tracy. P. Ruscko said potentially but stated that oak trees are called legacy trees because they are slow growing type of tree. S. Erwin suggested the dog park and P. Ruscko advised that the Village of Bull Valley is happy to partner so it is something we could partner on.

Chairman McCleary stated that it is an excellent idea noting that the arborist would have to test the soil and location. P. Ruscko stated that it would use our certified arborist's professional opinion and noted that he wanted to make sure the Commission didn't have any concerns. The group discussed the City's tree removal and replacement efforts. Chairman McCleary stated that it sounds like a win-win situation. S. Erwin stated that the city is losing trees so let's get some replacements.

## 3. Avalanche Baseball Organization- New User Group Request

D. Zinnen stated that Avalanche was previously part of Little League as an offshoot where teams were playing Little League as well as playing a travel style program. He reported that this coming year Avalanche broke off to start its own program. He wants to make sure they are recognized as a new user group even though they have been around for two years. He advised that it isn't going to really impact field availability.

Tim Oman, 5411 Swanson, Woodstock, reported that two years ago they started a joint venture with Woodstock Little League and Avalanche baseball to allow some of the higher level kids to get a few more games in and give them a little more opportunity. He advised that they focused totally on the D200 and Woodstock kids. He reported that they discovered this past year that they did a pretty healthy schedule at the 12-year old age level. He stated that it worked out okay but it was stressful for everyone concerned so in conjunction with the Little League board, the Avalanche board decided that it was in their best interest to let the Little League kids play Little League and have the Avalanche kids go full-time Avalanche but have the boards work in conjunction. He advised that their goal is not to create a travel organization like Pro-Player where they are pulling

kids from all over the county. He stated that their goal is to be a 90-95%+ D200 program. He advised that they have partnered with the high schools to become a true feeder program. We want to have these kids to get instructions as a very young age so they already have the skills.

T. Oman advised that the number of WLL games will drop down because some of the kids that played WLL will now play Avalanche. He stated that they did host with WLL last year Woodstock Summer Slam at Emricson, Merryman and some high school fields. He reported that they had 42 teams in 2 ½ days with 7 teams come from out of town and stay in town for the weekend so it brought revenue into the city. He reported that they want to host it again next year. He noted that in addition Avalanche will work closely with WLL to continue maintaining the fields. He stated that Avalanche is a D200 program and they want it to stay that way.

S. Erwin stated that WLL is 9-12 year olds. T. Oman stated that it is 7/8, 9/10, 11/12/13, 13/14, 15/16 and 17/18. He advised that they don't always fill the teams at those age levels and typically by the time you get up to 14+ it may be one team. He noted that the WLL teams at those age levels are recreational teams not highly competitive high school teams.

Chairman McCleary questioned if they will be a separate entity and T. Oman affirmed noting that they do have some of the same guys on both boards. He stated that WLL is a great organization and what they are trying to do is give kids at every level of baseball the opportunity to play in Woodstock. In response to S. Erwin, T. Oman stated that Avalanche will start at 9 years old and advised that they are encouraging all the younger kids to do WLL their first two years. He stated that Avalanche has 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13; five different levels. He advised that they are creating a program where the 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be encouraged to play Avalanche and the high school coaches will be a part of the practices so they can create a feeder program.

S. Erwin questioned if a kid in the spring that wants to play baseball tries out for Avalanche first, makes it or doesn't make it and then goes to WLL if he doesn't make it. T. Oman affirmed and noted that try-outs are right now and reviewed their upcoming schedule. S. Erwin questioned if kids who don't make the team try out for WLL and T. Oman advised that WLL is no cut. T. Oman stated they strongly encourage them to play WLL.

Chairman McCleary asked if the other user groups notified and D. Zinnen affirmed and stated that the only group that would be involved is WLL and they have already come to an agreement. Chairman McCleary stated that even though they have played games for two years does it mean as a new user they go on the bottom of the list for the other traveling teams. D. Zinnen stated that there aren't any more travel teams in Woodstock. L. Sheahan asked if WLL would still get priority as a no cut organization and D. Zinnen affirmed.

S. Erwin questioned if they are planning on having the seasons overlap. T. Oman affirmed stating that baseball season is still the same, but Avalanche will start earlier and last longer. He advised that most of the Avalanche games are travel tournaments and they are planning on having one tournament that they host. He stated that most of the weekends they will play outside tournaments with one or two weeknight's games per age level and it is every other week they are in Woodstock because they will be travelling to other towns.

Chairman McCleary questioned how the City assesses the fees. D. Zinnen advised that they will be well over the 60% requirement so they will be charged as a resident. L. Sheahan questioned if someone outside the D200 boundaries wanted to try out for Avalanche. T. Oman advised that they can try-out and noted that they have set a policy that their primary goal is to fill the teams with D200 kids but if it ends up where they have to fill a team and there are kids from other towns that want to play it has to be presented and approved by the board. He advised that will be the

exception not the norm.

Motion by S. Erwin, second by L. Sheahan to approve Avalanche Baseball Organization as a City user group. Ayes: S. Erwin, L. Sheahan, M. McCleary. Nays: None. Absentees: N. Kearfott. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

#### **F. Future Agenda Items**

1. Tentative agenda items identified by Administration
  - a. Ryders Woods Improvements (dependent upon grant approval)

P. Ruscko advised that the grant was not approved. He reported that a side benefit of the McHenry County Community Grant for the Peace Park is that they identified with the City that this unique feature has a lack of parking so they have modified the scope of their grant to allow for the installation of a gravel parking lot from Dick Tracy Park. He stated that it is a good stepping stone for allowing access to Ryders Woods. He stated that there are ongoing maintenance tasks being completed by the Land Conservancy of McHenry County.
  - b. Park Tour & Meeting With User Groups- Sep

D. Zinnen stated that with E. Nelson being new he assumes the tour will be lengthier so he asked if they could start at 5:00 p.m. The group felt they could start at that time.

D. Zinnen left Chambers at 7:46 PM.
2. Requested by Commission: Any member may suggest an item to be considered by the Commission at a future meeting, but must be approved by a majority of the Commission to be included as a future agenda item.
  - a.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by S. Erwin, second by L. Sheahan to adjourn the regular meeting of the Woodstock Parks and Recreation Commission. Ayes: S. Erwin, L. Sheahan, M. McCleary. Nays: None. Absentees: N. Kearfott. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dianne Mitchell - City Clerk