

**CITY OF OCONOMOWOC
PARKS, RECREATION AND FORESTRY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 14, 2020**

I. PARK TOUR

A. Director of Parks Craig Hoepfner led a tour of area parks to discuss projects and improvements. He was joined by city staff, Parks, Recreation and Forestry Board members, Mayor Bob Magnus, Alderman Lou Kowieski, former Alderman Tom Strey and resident Larry Halverson.

II. CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL

- A.** The meeting was called to order by President, Joe Moroni at 7:07pm in the Community Center – Upper Hall. Confirmation of appropriate meeting notice was made by Staff.
- B.** Members Present: Joe Moroni, Scott Antonneau, Jimi Hall, Katie Miller, Dan Gotzler, Matt Mulder and Charles Schellpeper. Quorum present.
- C.** Members Excused: Lauren Wittnebel
- D.** Staff Present: Craig Hoepfner – Director; Paige Brunclik – Community Outreach and Services Assistant; Bryan Spencer – Parks and Forestry Superintendent and Jennifer Froemming – Recreation Manager
Community members were also in attendance.

III. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Dave Swanson spoke on behalf of local pickleball players. He said players appreciate the pickleball courts at Westover Park. He gave a background on the sport of pickleball and its growing popularity noting it has physical and mental health benefits. He also listed several neighboring municipalities that also now have pickleball courts.

Judy Berghiefer also spoke regarding pickleball noting she understands that building new courts exclusively for pickleball is unrealistic at this time, so the group is requesting that the city retrofit existing courts to have pickleball lines. She said the amount of players at Westover Park has grown so much with many playing at varying levels they need more space to play. She said because it is so busy, some players are now going to Waukesha to play. She noted 28% of those who play in Oconomowoc are city residents. And many who travel to play here later patronize local businesses. She asked for the board to vote to add additional courts in the city.

Swanson added that Lily Road Park tennis courts are similar to Westover Park and suggested pickleball lines be added there.

Jeff Joerres commented that he appreciated the consideration of creation of Lake Access Task Force. He requested the task force makes the guidelines and rules for the public areas clear. He also said it should be made clear why lifeguards are at some beaches but not others. He said Park Street beach is small but has more activity than larger beaches like Bender Beach. Joerres requested a lifeguard be at Park Street Beach on Saturdays and Sundays for two hours during summer months.

IV. CONSIDER/ACT ON MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 2020 MEETING

K. Miller moved to approve the minutes of the August 2020 meeting; second by M. Mulder. No opposition. Motion carried.

V. ELECTION OF PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT OF PARKS & RECREATION BOARD

C. Hoepfner explained these positions are elected once a year. He opened the floor for nominations.

J. Hall nominated J.Moroni for President. Second by K.Miller. No other nominations were brought forward. S.Antonneau moved to close nominations. Second by J.Hall. J.Moroni elected president by unanimous vote.

J.Moroni nominated S.Antonneau for Vice President. Second by J.Hall. No other nominations were brought forward. J.Hall made a motion to close nominations. Second by D.Gotzler. S.Antonneau elected Vice President by unanimous vote.

VI. PARK TOUR DISCUSSION

C.Hoepfner gave a recap of the areas that were visited which included Merchant's Plat to see trees affected by Emerald Ash Borer. He noted resident and President of Greener Oconomowoc, Deb Turner, met with him recently to discuss results of two studies of the ash trees. One study was conducted by a consultant on behalf of Turner; the other was the city. He said both studies came up with the same results as to how to address the ash trees in that area. He said eight trees will be removed and 20 other trees will be treated. Public lake access areas including Park Street and Woodland Lane. C.Hoepfner noted the tour also stopped at Blain Street Park to see the recent tennis and basketball court reconstruction. They stopped to see progress at the reconstruction of the Roosevelt Park parking lot. Finally, the tour stopped to see the work done at Woodcreek Park to extend a walking path along Rosenow Creek and to visit future parks system now called the Northeast Regional Park. J.Hall said the tour was enjoyable and he thinks C.Hoepfner has done an excellent job mastering an awareness of the community and its parks. C.Hoepfner noted the Northeast Regional Park is a "clean slate" and the expanse of land could become many things. He noted money had originally been set aside for tree planting but that won't be used immediately as the shape of the park has yet to be determined. Once that is in place, then it will be time to plan places for tree plantings. S.Antonneau said the tour was an interesting experience to see the future potential in city parks. He noted that you don't realize how much extra land is available in Roosevelt Park.

VII. CONSIDER/ACT ON FORMATION OF LAKE ACCESS TASK FORCE

C.Hoepfner made a suggestion to the board, that over the next three months this group would meet to go over different topics relating to the use of the many parks' access points to the lakes. He also noted public input should be part of these meetings. He suggested keeping the task force small recommending J. Hall chair the taskforce. He also said aldermen Lou Kowieski and Matt Mulder would be on the taskforce along with two residents they would select. Staff Jennifer Froemming and Bryan Spencer could also meet with the taskforce to offer insight and advice. However, he would like the taskforce to drive decisions.

M.Mulder motioned to form the taskforce. C.Schellpeper seconded to open discussion.

M.Mulder said he thinks it's a great idea as there has been a lot of frustration over the lack of clarity on guidelines and regulations on public access points to the lakes. D.Gotzler said he is in full support of the taskforce and agreed it would be great to have community input. C.Schellpeper asked if lake access was part of the Parks and Open Space plan work being done. C.Hoepfner said it is and also runs parallel to updating the plan. C.Schellpeper said he thinks the taskforce idea is a duplicative effort and could bog things down and does not support it. J.Hall said many park owned lake access spots are on dead end streets and unfamiliar to officials. He said these areas need to be inventoried to see whether they are safe or a liability. He said the decision would still be with the board and their recommendations would be made faster than work done in the Park and Open Space Plan.

C.Hoepfner added the task force's work would be more of cleaning up current guidelines and ordinances rather than changing them. K.Miller said she fully supports the initiative and thinks the taskforce should be composed of residents and nonresidents of lake areas. She is also interested to get input from the people using the lake access points. S.Antonneau said the timeline of the taskforce could help get the word out regarding guidelines and help alleviate some of the problems

we had this summer. He also agrees in getting outside input. J.Moroni said it's important to get community input especially from the people whose properties adjoin the public access points. The motion passed 7-1 with C.Schellpeper voting no.

VIII. PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLAN DISCUSSION

C.Hoepfner shared information included in the agenda packet regarding updates or improvements to five designated community parks as part of the plan. He explained staff can list many things but it is important to get public input during the process. He said the finalization of the plan would culminate with a public open house. He said an updated plan is helpful when seeking funding from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. He is requesting feedback from the board on the items presented in the packet. D.Gotzler asked if input should be based on wants vs. needs. J.Moroni noted the priorities listed for Champion Field were good. M.Mulder noted that during Common Council capital project discussions it was noted what would be done at Champion Fields serves a small amount of community participants while the Northeast Regional Park would serve more people or the idea of adding a dog park. He said the board should balance priorities. S.Antonneau suggested the idea of partnering with a local group to help build new facilities such as a new concession stand at Champion Field. K.Miller suggested the items could be categorized into repairs vs. improvements to help make decisions on what to include or prioritize.

IX. DEPARTMENT REPORTS FOR JULY 2020

A. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – CRAIG HOEPPNER

Street Trees
Capital Projects
Fulltime Parks Position

B. PARKS AND FORESTRY SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Written report included in packet.

C. RECREATION MANAGER'S REPORT

Written report included in packet.

D. COMMUNITY CENTER RENTAL REPORT

Written report included in packet.

X. CONSIDER/ACT ON JULY 2020 VOUCHERS

K.Miller moved to approve vouchers from August 2020; second by M.Mulder. No opposition. Motion carried.

XI. COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBER

None

XII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THIS BODY

None

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

M.Mulder moved to adjourn; second by S.Antonneau. No opposition. Motion carried. The meeting ended at 8:42 p.m.