

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
CITY OF OAK CREEK PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY COMMISSION
JANUARY 10, 2019**

1. Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call

Leah Schreiber-Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. The following members were present at roll call: Alderman Guzikowski, Leah Schreiber-Johnson, Steve Bautch, Mike Theys, Anne Beyer and Adam Thiel. Heather Ryan was excused. Also present: Ted Johnson, Director of Public Works; and Peter Wagner, Zoning Administrator/Planner.

2. Approval of Minutes – November 8, 2018

Alderman Guzikowski motioned to approve the minutes of the November 8, 2018 meeting. Mr. Theys seconded. On roll call: All voted aye. Motion carried.

3. New Business

a. Ragnar Event Request

Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner provided an overview of the request for an exchange point for this event at Lake Vista Park. (See staff report for details.)

Commissioner Schreiber-Johnson asked if there would be any additional costs incurred by the City for this event such as restroom cleaning and garbage removal. Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner responded that the applicant stated that they would clean up during and after their event. Since this is just an exchange point, and not a venue where there will be food, music, or other community gathering activities, there should be minimal amount of clean up as a result of the event. They will also be providing portable restrooms.

Commissioner Beyer asked how many people are going to come through. Staff did not have that information. The exchange point has been held at the high school for the past several years and that data is not available.

Commissioner Schreiber-Johnson stated that the City should not miss the opportunity to market this event. She added that this is a great opportunity to promote the park to people from out of town. Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner stated that at the next meeting, there could be discussion on how events are approached that will be held in the park system. Commissioner Schreiber-Johnson stated that it would be reasonable to pay a small fee.

Discussion ensued on the potential for charging fees for future events and adding this topic to the next meeting agenda.

Commissioner Beyer suggested asking Kristin Craig, Tourism Director, to become involved in promoting this event.

A suggestion was made that staff look over the area after the event to make sure it was returned to its original clean state.

Alderman Guzikowski motioned that the Parks, Recreation, & Forestry Commission approve the request to stage an "exchange point" located in Lake Vista Park on Friday, May 17, 2019 from 10 a.m. until 10 p.m. Commissioner Beyer seconded. On roll call: all voted aye. Motion carried.

b. Recreation Report

Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner stated that Mary Jane Trate, Recreation Manager, was not able to be at the meeting, but provided a update on what has been going on since the last meeting in her staff report. He offered that if there are any comments/suggestions/questions, he can go back to Ms. Trate and provide that information at the next meeting.

Commissioner Schreiber-Johnson asked if the public has had any input about the new software. Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner responded that Ms. Trate did not convey any of that to him. The software changeover is more of an internal operation; the public interface on the website is still the same.

Commissioner Beyer asked if the Acorn is online. Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner responded that the Acorn is part Recreation Department activities and part all other City articles. However, the Recreation Department has been online for registrations all along. They just updated the software.

Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner stated that this item is informational only and a vote is not required.

c. Forestry Report

Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner stated that Rebecca Lane, City Forester, was not able to attend the meeting, but provided an update in her staff report on what has been going on since the last meeting. He gave a brief overview of the report. (See staff report for details.) Ms. Lane encouraged the Commission to contact her with any comments/suggestions/questions.

Alderman Guzikowski stated that he contacts Ms. Lane via email and that she is an excellent source of information.

Ted Johnson stated that Ms. Lane will be putting together an ADHOC group to help her work on the urban forestry master plan. That is actually part of the Tree City designation the City received over the last 20 years. Part of the Urban Forestry Grant will pay for some trees, but a lot of that is training. The grant received last year was used for training at the beginner,

intermediate and expert levels on chainsaw safety and tree removal. The training was very well attended by not only Oak Creek employees, but municipalities across the State. It was nice because the other municipalities offset Oak Creek's cost so Oak Creek did not have to pay anything.

This item is informational only and a vote is not required.

d. Parks Report

Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner gave an overview of the Parks report. (See staff report for details.)

Park Impact and Bikeway Fees:

Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner stated that in the 2019 budget, there is a line item of replacing the skate park at Abendschein Park. Since a brand new skate park is being put in (not repairing or partially replacing), they are allowed to use park impact fees (\$190,000.) Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner will be meeting with the City Administrator, Ted Johnson, Jeff Wendt, Kari Papelbon and possibly others to discuss how they will move forward with that. He should have more information at the March meeting. It is not known if the City will be working with the previously used contractor or send out requests for proposals for bids.

Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner stated that staff will be providing a list of potential projects to take into consideration for the next meeting. They can then ask the Common Council for approval with such things as improvements to Abendschein Park, Lake Vista Park or extending bike trails. The bike trail is part of the Parks and Open Space plan and therefore, the Commission can weigh in on what would be good places to extend the bikeway system. Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner stated he will be working with someone who is an avid bike rider and get her input as to what would be ideal. She was previously looking for some type of looping system that would go down to Oakwood and then connect Oak Leaf Trail that bisects the City. Commissioner Schreiber-Johnson suggested having a group of individuals provide their input rather than just one person.

The question was raised as to if the County would be working on the bike trail. Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner responded that the County is doing an extension from Drexel Avenue, just east of Abendschein Park going southeast diagonal, following the ATC wires all the way down to Ryan Road. However, there are some City parks making connectivity. He further explained that the central part of the City is very close to biking opportunities, but the southwest corners and parts of the southeast are connected to the south to Caledonia, but there is a gap between Lake Vista Park, South Milwaukee and the Oak Creek Parkway. The goal is to minimize bikes being on road as much as possible. Ideally, the bikes should be off the road as much as possible or at least have a dedicated lane. Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner stated that he can work with the City's traffic engineer, Matt Sullivan, to see what it will take to have dedicated bikes lanes. Right now there are some scattered throughout the City. He has received a request from a resident on Oakwood Road who wanted a connection because Oakwood Road is such a high speed east/west road and it is narrow. Riding a bike from the subdivision to the trail can be very dangerous. There are no plans for reconstructing Oakwood Road at this point and to do it separate project is very difficult because there are

floodplain and wetland areas on one side and a deep ditch on the other. Commissioner Schreiber-Johnson stated that she would be all for hosting some kind of bike enthusiast listening session for suggestions and recommendations. She stated that she would not be able to make an informed decision without soliciting comments from the part of the community that actually participates in these activities. She suggested visiting bike shops to get prospective participants for input. Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner stated he has a contact that is an avid bike enthusiast and she has agreed to contact Milwaukee County for extending the bike trail that goes through Lake Vista, through Bender Park and have it go further south through Bender Park all the way down to Oakwood Road.

Abendschein Park Master Plan Update

Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner stated that since this plan update was approved by the Common Council on December 18, 2018, staff can proceed with planning projects that are within the framework on the master plan update. Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner stated that the process will start sometime in May, 2019 and then time can be spent over the summer giving staff direction. There will be a break between the September meeting and that will hopefully allow enough time to build the rationale behind the recommendations. The recommendations can then be brought into the annual budget discussions and then so that it can go into the 2020 cycle. Hopefully, between impact fees and regular general budget funding, we can move forward with whatever project goes well.

Commissioner Schreiber-Johnson asked how the review of proposed projects will be handled. Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner responded that he is hoping to lay out bikeways, projects, talk about Chapters 2 and 3 of the Park and Open Space Plan, and touch upon goals and objectives, because that will be the City's guiding principle. Commissioner Beyer asked if the Common Council will decide what will be worked on first in the plan. Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner responded no, the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Commission will make recommendations and that will be taken before Common Council. Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner stated that it is important to review the other chapters of the Parks and Open Space Plan to refresh memories about what was considered important goals and objectives in 2013; are they applicable today and what was planned recently with Abendschein Park and move forward from there. All of 2019 is going to be a lot of review, evaluation and making recommendations. This will be a continuous process instead of just one marathon meeting.

Commissioner Beyer asked if the City has a team of people that look into grant options. Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner responded no. However, there are some City staff members who are familiar with the grant process and have contacts.

Park and Open Space Plan Update

Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner explained that due to staff deadlines and early exit of the Community Development Planning intern, he was not able to devote time to an update to Chapter 2 of the Park and Open Space Plan. Chapters 2 and 3 will be updated for discussion at the March, 2019 meeting.

Parks and Forestry Equipment and Labor Costs

Ted Johnson gave an overview of the Equipment and Labor costs pie chart. (See staff report and attachment for more information.)

A question was raised about the equipment used for ditching purposes. Mr. Johnson responded yes, they have a Caterpillar with a ditching bucket on it, which is used for cleaning out ditches and any of the culverts, especially installing culverts for new homes.

Mr. Johnson briefly described the mowing operations of the Street Division of the Department of Public Works.

The question was raised as to why the parks, athletic field maintenance and game preparation does get paid for by the School District. Zoning Administrator/Planner Wagner stated that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the school district and the City is still ongoing. A hard deadline has not been set, so the old agreement is still in place. However, the City Administrator and School District are in talks right now about this matter. Mr. Johnson added that some of these expenses are through the Recreation Department. These are not all high school costs. They do have them broken down as they are tracked very closely so that the City Administrator has the actual costs for what is spent on School District game preparation. In years past, it was always a trade-off that the City uses areas of the school (classrooms) in exchange for the City doing the work for them, however, it has gotten out of balance over the last few years. Commissioner Schreiber-Johnson stated that Deerfield Elementary was slated to become a priority gymnasium. The City would be able to get first dibs on using it without necessarily paying a fee, but that would be part of the MOU.

Discussion ensued on understanding the information provided in the pie chart for the Street Division equipment and labor costs with brief explanations by Mr. Johnson. Commissioner Schreiber-Johnson asked to see what this same chart looked like at this time last year. Mr. Johnson responded that he could do that, but explained that there are factors that can alter the numbers from last year such as wages, amount of snow, etc.

This item is informational only and a vote is not required.

4. Adjournment

Ms. Beyer motioned to adjourn. Mr. Thiel seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

Prepared By:



Peter Wagner, AICP
Zoning Administrator/Planner

Respectfully Submitted,



Michael Theys
OCPRF Secretary