

PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, October 14, 2008
6:00 p.m.

- 1) Call to order by President Curt Stepanek.
- 2) Roll Call: Members Present: Curt Stepanek, Carmen Muenich, Audrey Stowell, Dale Berg, and Dennis Doughty. Absent: Lisa Bjork.
Staff present: Dick Hebert and Bill Faherty.
- 3) Approval of September 9, 2008, Minutes: **Motion by Dennis Doughty, seconded by Carmen Stepanek, all present voting aye, to approve minutes of the September 9, 2008, meeting.**
- 4) Personal Appearances: None. Bill Faherty has received an e-mail from Ruth Richter's grandson. He was in town for Oktoberfest and drove through Irvine Park. He is very pleased with the improvements made recently.
Jason Anderson arrives at this time.
- 5) Discuss/Consider moving Parks & Rec office from 21 E Grand. Dale Berg read about the Council's decision to move the Parks & Rec building to the City Hall by December 1 in the newspaper and expressed his disappointment in the lack of communication by the Council. Jason Anderson of Committee 4 offered background and indicated that their focus was strictly in terms of the building and he realized too late that the Park Board hadn't been specifically included or invited to the meeting. Their purpose was to find a location at the lowest cost terms but with enough space. He indicated that initially the thought was that the building would be sold. Then, it switched to terms of donating the building. The timing came up because of the desire to keep the maintenance costs of the building out of this next budget. Bill Faherty indicated he has seen some proposals, but it is his understanding that a definite plan has not been decided on. He indicated depending upon when he gets a definite plan in hand, the timing might be a problem because of getting Christmas Village ready and other things taking place in November. If it happens quickly and without any currently unknown complications, it shouldn't be a problem. Carmen Muenich asks when the transition of the building is to take place. This is unknown. Jason indicates that December 1 is an arbitrary date and could be changed if it needed to be. The plan is that the administrator will meet with Committee 4 with a proposal that can be presented and approved by the Council next Tuesday. Dick Hebert questioned whether the moving expenses had to be approved before being incurred. Both Dennis Doughty and Jason Anderson indicated that it was their understanding that the expenses would come from the budgeted \$50,000. Dick also asked whether the fact that the Parks & Rec office has different hours than City Hall was going to be an issue. Dennis did not think it would be. After discussion, **Motion by Carmen Muenich, seconded by Dennis Doughty, all present voting aye, to support the move of the Parks & Rec Office to City Hall, to find out the date of the transition of the building, and that some consideration be given to being flexible with the moving date if the Parks & Rec staff has concerns about meeting the date.**

- 6) Discuss / consider developing a dog park in Chippewa Falls. This was placed on the agenda at the suggestion of Brian Flynn. There have not been any specific requests for a dog park, although it's something we could look at. It would be beneficial for such a project to have civic involvement. In looking at currently owned land, Bill Faherty suggested that the retention pond on the south side might be a suitable site. It is currently fenced. It would not be mowed. Believed it should be fairly low cost to convert to a dog park and maintenance costs would also be low. Discuss bringing this up at next council meeting and ask press to request that citizens contact their alderman regarding it. Jason asks that Bill provide him with a map of location.

Dale Berg leaves during this discussion.

Motion by Curt Stepanek, seconded by Dennis Doughty, all present voting aye, to refer the concept of developing dog park to Council in order to determine the level of support.

- 7) 2009 Budget.

a. Reservation changes for Irvine Park shelters. Discussion concerning the current reservation rates for the Irvine Park shelter. **Motion by Carmen Muenich, seconded by Audrey Stowell, all present voting aye, to increase the rates of both the Main Pavilion and Activity buildings by \$25.00 and to raise the rates of the remaining shelters by \$10.00 each effective January 1, 2009.**

b. Rental Fees for Casper Park facilities. The current policy is to charge for the use of the fields for tournaments. Bill Faherty is proposing that at this time he contact the other groups and leagues that use the fields and ask for their support not only in terms of donation of money but also in terms of donation of time and services. Discussion regarding putting donation boxes there and renting the pavilion once it's built. There was a lot of community support to build the facility and a reminder that there are ongoing maintenance costs as well as additional upgrades and revisions that need to be done will hopefully bring further support from these groups in lieu of charging for the use of the fields.

c. Outdoor Swimming Pool Daily Fees & Season Passes. Discussion regarding attendance at the pool, fees, hours, etc. Dick indicates that if the City wants to cut more expenses at the pool, potentially we could be closed on Sundays and restrict the open hours of the water slide. Discussion regarding use of pool passes vs. daily passes, lowering the price to increase attendance, having promotional free or half-price days, birthday party packages, the no carry-in policy, and in general better marketing of the pool. After discussion, **motion by Carmen Muenich, seconded by Curt Stepanek, all present voting aye, to raise the pool passes by \$10.00 to \$95.00/year for residents and \$105.00 for non-residents.**

d. Adult Sports Individual Fees. After reviewing these programs, Bill and Dick suggest keeping the fees where they are. The revenue is covering the specific expenses of its program. Raising fees may decrease participation, which would have the opposite effect and decrease revenue.

e. Capital Improvement Projects. No discussion.

- 8) Discuss/Consider Recreation Program Report. The youth soccer program is now done. Programs are moving from outside to inside. Adult basketball and volleyball will be starting October. With Loopy's starting a winter volleyball league, the number of co-ed teams is down. The program brochure will go to print in a couple of weeks.
- 9) Discuss / Consider Personnel Report. Bill Faherty reports that everyone is working the 7:00 to 3:30 shift at this time, so the zoo is closing and the zoo gates are being shut at 3:30 during the week.
- 10) Discuss / Consider Friends of Irvine Park Zoo Report. There was no meeting, but Dick Hebert indicates that they were very helpful with the grand opening of the cougars. A big thank you to them as well as to Gordy's, who donated 500 hot dogs & buns for the event.
- 11) Discuss / Consider Parks Maintenance Report. Staff has been working on Christmas lights. Inmates from the Correctional Institute have been very helpful with various projects at the zoo. They have helped with landscaping, painting, and doing cement work as well as other projects. Bill is hoping to release the cougars to their new exhibit on Saturday at 11:00 a.m. Bill reported the deaths of one elk and one primate. The bathrooms will be closed for winter soon.

The Casper Foundation has given a donation of \$25,000 to repair the roof and inside of the Main Pavilion. They've also donated \$10,000 for the design work of the front of the zoo. Looking at the possibility of having a Japanese snow monkey, otter, and aviary exhibits.

Bill also reports that the 2009 calendar is being started. A future covered bridge project mentioned.

- 12) Board Member comments or concerns. Dennis Doughty indicates that the council meetings have gotten relatively short. He believes the Council would appreciate having members of the Park Board and Parks & Rec staff attend and believes it would help facilitate communication. Dick reports that both he and Bill will be at a state conference the first week of November. Curt Stepanek indicates the new Flag Hill Shelter looks great and that staff is to be commended for their work. Carmen Muenich asks to go back to agenda item 5 for clarification of the process that is going to take place. Jason Anderson indicates that he will send an e-mail to the administrator asking for status. Committee 4 will review options and bring to council. Jason would like to keep the December 1 date in place for now so the urgency is there and things keep moving, although he indicates a new date could likely be found if needed.
- 13) Approve Claims. **Motion by Dennis Doughty, seconded by Carmen Muenich, all present voting aye, to approve claims of \$59,678.07.**
- 14) Adjournment. **Motion by Curt Stepanek, seconded by Carmen Muenich, all present voting aye, to adjourn.**

Submitted by:

Audrey Stowell, Secretary