

PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, October 10, 2023

1. Call to order by Beth Arneberg at 6:00 p.m.
Roll Call: Members Present: Audrey Stowell, Justin Agnew, Travis Siebert, John Abbe, Beth Arneberg and Reggie Geissler
Absent: Heather Martell
Staff present: John Jimenez.
2. Approval of Minutes: September 12, 2023. **Motion by Siebert/Geissler to approve minutes of September 12, 2023. Motion passed.**
3. Personal Appearances by Citizens. None.
4. Discuss/Consider Special Event Applications. John states Main Street has submitted their applications for the Christmas parade and Pure Water Days. **Motion by Siebert/Abbe to approve special event applications as presented.** Discussion of porta-potty being placed at opposite side of park from bathrooms and using sandbags instead of spikes to secure as we have requested of other entities. **Motion passed.**
5. Discuss/Consider
 - a. Marshall Park Tennis Courts. John has received two proposals. One keeps the footprint of the courts the same with the end result being six pickleball courts and one tennis court; the other expands the footprint resulting in six pickleball courts and two tennis courts. Either plan would involve overlay painting of the lines for conversion of the tennis courts to pickleball courts when needed. The quote for the expanded two-court plan is \$230,700. The quote for keeping the size the same is \$150,000. Discussed having one vs. two tennis courts, benefit of converting to pickleball courts as needed, popularity of pickleball, and expanding now vs. in the future. Expanding the footprint now is the preferred option. Senn Blacktop is making a donation, as is the Thorpe Foundation. Remaining funds would need to come from other sources.
 - b. Entrance Pillars Off Jefferson. To restore current pillars is \$108,000. To rebuild is about the same cost. The Board would like to keep the same look aesthetically. Discussion included but wasn't limited to cost, condition of stone, removing the outside pillars, moving the lights, using current stone in new structures, adding new stone to old structures and possibly adding an arch. Consensus of members is to restore old stone, but potentially remove outside stand-alone pillars and add an arch. To be discussed again next month.
 - c. Flag Hill Phase 2 Design. John outlines the proposed design for Phase 2, which includes a parking lot, plaza, playground and accessible trails. Discussion regarding playground amenities, including zip line in the trees, which would involve removal of some trees. Board suggested getting a

design option for the zip line not in the trees. John encourages members to go look at the area to be able to better envision the options. Also discussed the new steps and possible flag placement. Total project cost is \$655,700. Timeline is to finalize design around December and send it out to bids in early 2024 and break ground in spring.

- d. Utilizing Christmas Village donations to improve the overall experience. Currently there is music in two locations. One right as you come in from Bridgewater at the restrooms and the other is at the Activity Building. John received quotes for new speakers, etc. Discussed using QR codes for and donation possibilities. **Motion by Siebert/Abbe to use donation funds of \$6,180 for the speaker installation project. Motion passed.**
 - e. The Sale of The Vintage Bike at Main St. John has been approached by someone to purchase the Vintage Bike on display at Main St. Beth discovered that the bike was donated by the City and has been loaned to Main St. There is general hesitation to sell the bike at this time. Discussion regarding lack of information regarding the bike and policy relating to collecting and getting rid of items donated to the Park.
 - f. Employee Retention Incentives. John discussed the possibility of using some of the funds received from Olson's toward a Christmas bonus to the Park Staff. He would also like to implement a policy for Park Dept. employees to be able to use park shelters at no cost at specific times. Discussion. **Motion by Arneberg/Siebert to approach Committee to use Olson funds as an employee retention incentive and use park shelters at no cost at specific low-use times. Discussion to come back to Park Board after review by Committee. Motion passed.**
6. Recreation Report. Members can read through the printed Recreation Report.
 7. Director Report. John reports it's budget time. He's still hiring part-time staff, but there is no interest. There are many Christmas Village volunteers with a couple more groups still scheduled. Displays are going up Saturday, November 4, starting at 9. All volunteers welcome. John reports the new trail at Erickson is almost done. John is still very interested in getting automatic gates to help with closing of park. This would also help with hours of the staff, etc.
 8. Approve Claims. **Motion by Arneberg/Siebert to approve claims in the amount of \$38,384.11. Motion passed.**
 9. Park Board Members' Concerns or Comments. Request for funds for pickleball courts and pillars needs to be submitted to Thorpe Foundation for its annual disbursement. Suggestion that weddings at Bandshell be asked not to leave fake flower petals on the ground. Reminder of the condition of the duck pond boardwalk. John provides update on animals: Lady elk has passed away, bison were moved for easier transfer (getting new herd). John would like to get placed inspection on gates to make sure they are still safe. Hyena may be replaced with bobcats. We've lost both owls; looking into converting the first aviary exhibit into a primate exhibit to give lemurs more room.

10. Adjournment. **Motion by Siebert/Abbe to adjourn at 8:13 p.m. Motion passed.**

Submitted by:
Audrey Stowell, Secretary