
DATE: December 19, 2017

TO: Marion Mayor & Council



Prescribed Prairie Burn at Lowe Park on November 29.

Park Board Activity

- **ITC Electric Line Easement Request for Hanna Park:** A revised easement request was reviewed. Although the easement was approved, the board felt the compensation offer for the easement use did not take into account the negative impact to the park.
- **Professional Service Agreement:** The board approved an agreement with Burbach Aquatics, Inc., (Platteville, WI) for professional services in regards to the municipal swimming pool water line leak. The company will review leak detection efforts completed and begin on-site detection testing in the spring.
- **Cemetery Mowing:** The one-year service agreement with Rick's Lawn Care was approved for a spring clean-up and weekly mowing at Oak Shade Cemetery for 2018.
- **Summer Concerts:** The board approved the contracts for summer entertainment events at Lowe Park: Dogs of Society Elton Rock Tribute (John Gore) on June 23; Pianopalooza (Tony Bohnenkamp) on July 14.
- **FY2018-19 Budget:** Director Carolan reviewed the budgets submitted for all of the divisions for FY2018-19. Requests for new equipment and staffing were highlighted.
- **Receive and File:** Letter from Dr. Randy Toothaker regarding park hours for Gill Park.

Department Report

- **Fall Leaf Collection:** Leaf collection has wrapped up for the season. The extended nice weather in November allowed operations staff extra time to cover all parks, city facilities and the cemetery several times.
- **General Parks Maintenance:** Picnic Tables and benches have been collected from all parks, sorted for repairs and stored under pavilions for the off season. Community gardens at Lowe Park were cleaned and fall tilling has been completed. All snow removal equipment has been inspected and is ready for the upcoming snow season. Preventative maintenance on equipment has started. Electrical issues at the Taube Park Pavilion were also addressed this past month. A subcontractor working for CenturyLink cut the main power line to the pavilion.
- **FY 2018-19 Budget:** The department has been working over the last 6 weeks preparing the fiscal year 2018-19 budget proposals. Review of draft budgets with the city manager and Finance Department will take place in mid to late December.

- **Senior Meals Program:** Horizons has contacted the City with a request to bring back the seniors meal program. Due to lack of funding and participation the program was suspended at Lowe Park a few years ago. The department fully supports the meals program and will be working with Horizons to implement the program.
- **Low Park South End Development:** Work continues on plan development for phase II of the project. Site plans are being finalized and are close to having the play area proposals solidified. Design for the restroom and pavilions are also taking shape. An open house to gather public input is planned for Tuesday, January 9 at 6 p.m.
- **Prairie Burn:** A prescribed 10.27 acre prairie burn was conducted at Lowe Park and was very successful. Staff will continue to identify areas where fire maintenance can be utilized on a spring/fall burn cycle. (Photo at right.)
- **Faulkes Heritage Woods:** In October, Forestry staff tagged six tree stands sitting on park property. One tree stand remained in violation and was removed. All other stands were removed by the private owners prior to the follow-up inspection by staff.



• **Fall Tree Planting:** The Alliant Energy Branching Out fall tree planting was completed along Tower Terrace Road east of 10th Street. Forestry staff, Transamerica volunteers, and Trees Forever employees planted 84 right-of-way trees. (Photo at left.)

Five memorial trees were planted during the month in honor of loved ones. The trees are planted at Lowe Park with the intention of increasing the tree canopy.

• **Tree Tags:** A new tree maintenance tag was developed and is now in use for tagging households in areas where maintenance is necessary.

• **Citizen Requests Tree Issues:** There were 3 citizen requests in November regarding right-of-way trees.

- **Staff Training:** Forestry staff attended a continuing education course for pesticide application through the local Iowa State University Extension Office.
- **Forestry Management:** Rural right-of-way mowing areas were reviewed for woody vegetation management. No immediate concerns were recorded. Scope of work and seasonal work scheduling will be considered during the development of an Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) plan.

Woody brush removal was completed at Waldo's Rock Park for the spring prairie pollinator seeding plans.



- **Oak Shade Cemetery:** There was one burial, one disinterment, and one space sold last month.

- **Citizen Requests Tall Grass/Weeds:** No citizen calls were received about tall grass in November. One property was mowed from a citizen request received in the prior month.
- **B-I-N-G-O Night:** BINGO night continues with its popularity with a full room on November 17. The event will take a break over the holidays and return in January.
- **Department Brochure:** Work continues on the *2018 Guide To All Things Parks and Recreation*. A final draft will be sent to the printers the week of December 18; distribution will begin in early January.
- **Holiday Programs:** The Candy Cane Hunt is Saturday, December 9 at Lowe Park from 9 to 10:30 a.m. There are 34 kids (ages 3 to 6) registered for the holiday camp. Kids will spend the morning doing Christmas crafts before embarking on the great candy cane hunt.

Santa's Little Workshop is Saturday, December 9 at Lowe Park from noon to 5 p.m. There are 24 kids (grades K to 5th) registered for the holiday camp. Kids will spend the afternoon doing Christmas crafts, games, candy cane hunt, and more.

- **Youth Recreation Programs:** Putt-Putt Mini Golf wrapped up its final day on November 28 at Lowe Park. Twelve kids (ages 5 and 6) spent four weeks learning the basics of putting in a fun, non-intimidating environment. Kids learned such things as proper grip, stance, stroke, and pace before designing and competing in their own mini-golf course around the interior of the building.



Youth Basketball for 2nd to 6th grades began practicing in November and games start December 2. The four divisions contain 18 teams in total.

- **Arts Council:** The Coffeehouse Night event on November 10 featured Tom's Guitar, Tom Nothnagle with 50 people in attendance.

The Arts Council dedicated the Prairie Revival and Disappearing Culture sculptures on November 18. Both artists, Reinaldo Correa and J. Aaron Alderman, gave short presentations on their sculptures. Light refreshments were served with 30 people attending.

The art exhibit at The Gallery is by John Thomas L. Richard, a pottery and 3D artist, and Doug Knutzon, a retired graphic design artist and will be on display until February 3.

- **Master Gardeners Report from Phil Pfister & Shelby Foley:** On October 10, at least 20 of the Master Gardeners intern class attended a hands-on workshop on fall bulbs at the Lowe Park Greenhouse. The evening included reviewing homework assignments, and a hands-on workshop on forcing fall bulbs. Shelby Foley and Judy Stevens led the fall bulbs workshop.

Work is well underway for dividing and potting stock plants for the upcoming growing season in the greenhouse. Plants are being collected that will be used for propagation workshops, which will then be used in the demonstration gardens, sold at the Winter Garden Fair, plant sale, and other Master Gardener activities. To accommodate all the activities, we have gone to Tuesday and Thursday work sessions, from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Six to twelve Master Gardeners attend each workshop.

Linn County Master Gardener Pam Brackey, and her husband Wes, have donated an original Tom Newport piece of art to the Master Gardener's Lowe Park Gardens. They had commissioned the work for their gardens, but now have donated it to the MG gardens. We placed it in the bed on the east side of the greenhouse. We very much appreciate the generosity of this donation, and encourage everyone to stop by, especially when the sun is shining, to view this piece of art. This piece is quite stunning.

Linn County Master Gardener Coleen Kint has donated the American Horticultural Society book on Plant Propagation. This book covers all aspects of propagation, and includes many full color pictures. Coleen intends the book to be used to assist in the education and practical application of propagation at the Lowe Park Greenhouse.

Between six to eight Master Gardeners have been working to further winterize the greenhouse. After some ingenious brainstorming, the group came up with a way to seal the gap between the wall and the fabric gutter for the heat curtain, and to close the gap at the gable ends that allows air to flow past the heat curtain when it is closed at night. We continue to look for ways to further "tighten" the greenhouse to help reduce energy costs.

Our thanks to the City of Marion for including the upcoming Winter Arrangements workshop and the Winter Garden Fair in the latest issue of the Marion Messenger. We really appreciate the support they provide our Master Gardener events and activities.

SAFE ROOM & ARTS CENTER USAGE – NOVEMBER

Events with alcohol permits: 8

AV Equipment Rentals: 1

Some reservations use more than one room.

Room	Paid	Free
Safe Room	1	4
Amphitheater	0	0
Lobby/Gallery	0	2
Art Room	0	1
Sunburst	1	11
Hickory	10	5
White Oak	0	0
Red Oak	3	3
Red & White Oak	4	14
Entire Facility	0	0
Outdoor (Pond) / Greenhouse	0	0
2017 MONTHLY TOTAL	19	40
2016 MONTHLY TOTAL	24	35

Activity Type	Monthly Usage	Number of Attendees
Gallery Open / Arts Council Activities	5	142*
Seniors Bingo /Dance / Cards	20	447
Parks / Recreation	7	298
Master Gardeners	1	62
Meetings / Work / School / Church	5	112
Blood Drive	1	21
Family Gatherings / Showers	13	700
Rehearsal/Wedding/Reception	3	181
Civil Service Testing	1	50
City Election (Safe Room & Oaks)	2	228
2017 MONTHLY TOTAL	58	2,241
2016 MONTHLY TOTAL	57	2,677

*Art Gallery visitors not reflected.

MARION PARK BOARD MINUTES

November 8, 2017, 4:00 P.M.

Thomas Park Administration and Operations Facility

ROLL CALL: Chair Patty Wise, John McIntosh, Kyle Martin, Amy Hussel

ABSENT: Terry Speral

STAFF: Mike Carolan, Karlene Hummel, Darcie Coberly

GUESTS: City Engineer Dan Whitlow, Jay Moore, Jo Moore

Minutes

Moved by McIntosh and seconded by Hussel to approve the October 11, 2017, regular Park Board minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

Reports

The October Financial Report was reviewed. Moved by Martin and seconded by Hussel to approve the October Financial Report. Carolan noted revenues are at 47 percent of projections and expenses are at 35 percent of projections. All in favor, motion carried.

The October Invoice Report was received and filed. Staff reviewed payments made to Brecke Mechanical Contractors (\$565.74 for a heater control panel replacement), Breeden Tree Service (\$9,478 for tree removals and trimmings), Farmers State Bank VISA (\$461.87 for strobe lights and headstone cleaner), Iowa State University (\$70 for forestry staff pest applicator recertification), Modern Piping (\$1,390.08 for HVAC service calls and repairs), Pospisil Painting (\$44,685 for pool and light pole painting), and Weber Stone (\$1,452.52 credit for returned fill lime).

Public Input

None.

Lindale Trail Sewer Line

City Engineer Dan Whitlow presented project information to extend sanitary sewer to a proposed new development east of Lindale Drive and north of Blairs Ferry Road. The line would serve the new development as well as businesses west of Lindale Drive (currently being served by septic tanks, service pumping, or no service). Whitlow asked for the board's recommendation of placement for the sanitary sewer line; next to, under, or a pre-determined distance from the trail. Wise asked about the length of time to complete the project. Whitlow indicated about three weeks. The board was in favor of placing the new sanitary sewer line under the trail. Carolan stated the trail is scheduled to be asphalted in an upcoming fiscal year. Whitlow will present more information to the board as the project comes together.

Emerson School Play Area

The department was approached by the Marion Independent School District (MISD) about a play area at the old Emerson School building (1400 10th Avenue). There is currently no funding planned for another park development project. McIntosh asked if the school will be keeping the property. MISD will be modifying the building for the Marion Home School program. The current playground area on the east side will become parking as well as some of the area on the south west side. Wise felt the request is worth exploring but we should wait to see how MISD moves forward with their plans. Martin indicated MISD’s goal is to use the building in the fall of 2018.

Sejkora Farms, Inc. Lowe Park Farmland Agreement

The annual lease agreement is being renewed with Sejkora Farms for farmland on Lowe Park. There is no change in the number of acres nor the rate for the upcoming year. Moved by Wise and seconded by Martin to recommend to City Council approval of the one-year lease agreement with Sejkora Farms, Inc., for 33 acres at a rate of \$225 per acre. All in favor, motion carried.

Lowe Arts & Environment Center Replacement Tables

Replacement of tables for the Arts & Environment Center is budgeted for in the current year. Quotes were obtained for 16, 60” round tables and 22, 72” long tables.

	Webstraurant	Lifetime	Competitive Edge
16 - 60” round tables	\$2,879.84	\$4,799.96	\$4,179.96
22 - 72” long tables	\$1,275.78	\$1,649.99	\$1,659.99
Shipping	\$425.73	0	0
TOTAL	\$4,581.35	\$6,449.95	\$5,839.95

Moved by Martin and seconded by Hussel to approve the purchase of replacement tables for Lowe Arts & Environment Center from Webstraurant in the amount of \$4,581.35. All in favor, motion carried.

Utility Task Vehicle Plow and Sander Bids

In the current fiscal year, \$7,000 is budgeted in capital outlay for a v-plow and a rear drop spreader for the utility task vehicle (UTV). Carolan solicited and received the following bids:

<i>Company</i>	V-Plow	Salt Spreader	Total Cost
City Tractor (North Liberty)	Snow Valley \$3,378	Snow Ex \$3,062	\$6,440.00
Future Line (Cedar Rapids)	Boss \$3,549.99	Buyers \$3,264	\$6,813.99
Rexco (Cedar Rapids)	Boss \$3,721	Buyers \$3,354	\$7,075.00
Winter Wonderland (Cedar Rapids)	Snow Ex \$4,365	Snow Ex \$3,698	\$8,063.00
Kromminga Motors (Monticello)	N/A	Snow Ex \$3,500	

City Tractor submitted the low bid for both items; however Carolan stated the v-plow does not have the poly blades needed. The next low bidder for the v-plow was from Future Line. Staff would like to purchase the two items from the separate vendors. Moved by McIntosh and seconded by Hussel to purchase the UTV salt spreader from City Tractor (North Liberty) in the amount of \$3,062, and the v-plow from Future Line (Cedar Rapids) in the amount of \$3,549.99. All in favor, motion carried.

Marion Municipal Swimming Pool 2018 Fees

Following the 2017 pool season staff reviewed fees and compared them to other communities' fees. Hummel presented the following recommended rate increases:

Activity	Prior Rate	New Rate	Activity	Prior Rate	New Rate
Swimming Lessons	\$33.00	\$40.00	Lap Swim	\$2.00	\$3.75
Private Pool Rentals	\$190.00	\$200.00	Swim Club	\$500/season	\$20/hour

At \$33, swimming lesson fees were the second lowest of the communities polled. An increase to \$40 (\$4 per lesson) would fall in the median range. Hummel shared swimming lessons at the Linn-Mar Aquatics Center are \$7 each. Moved by Wise and seconded by Hussel to approve a rate increase for swimming lessons from \$33 to \$40 beginning with the 2018 season. All in favor, motion carried.

The lap swim admission fee of \$2 was the lowest of the communities polled. An increase to \$3.75 would match the pool's daily admission adult rate and still be in the mid-range compared to other communities. Moved by Wise and seconded by Hussel to approve a rate increase for lap swim admission from \$2 to \$3.75 beginning with the 2018 season. All in favor, motion carried.

Hummel is recommending a small increase for private pool rentals from \$190 to \$200. Moved by Wise and seconded by Hussel to approve a rate increase for private pool rentals from \$190 to \$200 beginning with the 2018 season. All in favor, motion carried.

Currently swim clubs are charged a lump sum of \$500 per season. Hummel is proposing changing to an hourly rate of \$20. The communities polled charge an hourly fee ranging from \$5 to \$60. Moved by Wise and seconded by McIntosh to approve a rate change for swim clubs from a lump sum of \$500 per season to \$20 per hour beginning with the 2018 season. All in favor, motion carried.

Receive and File

A revised Electric Line Easement agreement with ITC Midwest LLC for Hanna Park was received and filed. Carolan stated he will thoroughly review the document's details so a final agreement can be ready for approval at the next board meeting. The department does not want to be limited or restricted from completing park improvements in the easement area which do not interfere with ITC's structures.

The 2017-18 Fall/Winter Work Schedule was received and filed. This schedule is completed on an annual basis. November items include leaf pickup, snow removal preparations, and winterizing tasks. December to March projects include interior facility maintenance, preventative maintenance on equipment and machinery, and snow removal as needed.

An email from Brian Soenen was received and filed. Soenen shared some comments and suggested improvements for trails and parks in Marion. Carolan and other staff have responded.

Other Items

Carolan provided an update on the Lowe Park South End Development. MSA Consultants are working with Fry and Associates, and Outdoor Recreation to provide playground proposals. Conceptual designs from each company were shared with the board for their comments.

The Mayor asked the department to consider bringing in a larger tree to City Square Park for the Peace Tree lighting at Christmas in the Park held on December 1. Wise felt part of the beauty and meaning of the tree is to watch it grow and mature over the years and lighting a smaller, younger tree this year will be fine. Martin asked if there would be a way to enhance the new tree. McIntosh echoed Wise's sentiments and the tree as is should be used. Martin agrees the department should not install a bigger tree just to have a bigger tree this year.

Pool Report

The 2017 Pool Report was reviewed. Hummel stated it was a good year with no accidents nor injuries. Only one complaint was received regarding the reduced hours this summer. The new hours saved nearly \$9,500 in wages and allowed for a 50% increase in private pool rentals. Attendance was down, but followed the trend of other communities. Hummel indicated the roster of pool staff was down due to a change in federal child labor laws pertaining to 14 and 15 year olds. The water line leak is still being investigated; Roto-Rooter has been on-site several times to narrow down the leak location.

Staff Report

The staff report was presented and highlights were shared. The department has received many compliments about Waldo's Rock Park. Seasonal mower operators finished up in late October. Graphics on the new Forestry Bucket Truck were applied and is being used daily for tree work. A boundary inspection was completed of Faulkes Heritage Woods; several trees stands were found on the park property and were tagged for being in violation of City code.

Upcoming November recreation programs include Putt-Putt Mini Golf, Youth Basketball, and BINGO Night. Work on the 2018 program brochure has started, as well as the process to solicit for recreation software for the department.

Board Discussion Time

None.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 13, 2017, at 4:00 p.m. at the Thomas Park Administration and Operations Building.

John McIntosh, Secretary

MARION TREE BOARD MINUTES

November 8, 2017, 7:00 A.M.

Thomas Park Safe Room

ROLL CALL: Chair Scott Hansen, Rodney Bluml, Tom Ryan, Marilyn Tormey,
Mark Sanderson

ABSENT: Mollie Lorenz, Sunshine McDonald

STAFF: Mike Carolan, Mike Cimprich, Pat Carlson

GUESTS: Rick Breeden

Minutes

There was a minor wording correction to the October 11, 2017, minutes. Moved by Tormey and seconded by Bluml to approve the October 11, 2017, Tree Board minutes as corrected. All in favor, motion carried.

Financial Report

The financial report was received and filed. The Iowa DNR *Trees for Kids* grant award of \$1,140 was reimbursed for the 2016 cycle which was used for planting trees in front of Linn-Mar schools. A new memorial tree was purchased in honor of Marjorie Schmidt. Payments were made to Fleming Nursery (\$2,300 for 28 trees for the 2017 *Trees for Kids* grant) and Iowa Prison Industries (\$25 for a memorial plaque).

Public Input

None.

Right-of-Way Tree at 2180 Robert Court

The 2012 street tree planting project included trees on South 22nd Street from Grand Avenue south to the bypass. John Nirschl, 2180 Robert Court, has contacted the department to express concerns about the tree planted in the right-of-way (ROW) parking at his property. Nirschl did receive a letter in 2012 indicating trees would be planted in the area. Nirschl said he talked to an individual the day the trees were planted and requested a non-nut bearing tree be planted adjacent to his property. He stated he was told the tree would not bear nuts. Nirschl does not want the responsibility of cleaning up the acorns from the tree and outlined other concerns relating to safety and liability. There is no record of his request either written or from people present the day of the planting in 2012. The tree in dispute is a Burr Oak which dropped acorns for the first time this year. These concerns were discussed with Tree Board members. Nirschl has requested the tree be relocated (removed) and possibly another tree planted in its place. Cimprich advised the tree is now approximately 10-12 feet tall and in excellent health. The success rate for transplanting the tree would be very low. Nirschl's neighbor, Raigan Johnson, 2195 Catherine Court, sent an e-mail advising they are in concurrence with Nirschl's request as some of the acorns do fall on their property and they also do not want to pick up acorns. The Tree Board discussed this issue and agreed the six-year-old tree is a value to the city's tree canopy; the city does own the tree; and tree issues are remedied at the discretion of the Tree Board. Carolan shared that per state code homeowners are responsible for maintaining the

property on city ROW and the City of Marion follows the state code. It was noted that annually acorns drop over a 2 to 3 week period. There is concern this may set a precedent on future tree issues if the board would approve its removal. It was motioned by Bluml and seconded by Hansen to deny the request to have the tree removed in the ROW at 2180 Robert Court. All in favor, motion carried. The board requested a letter be written to Nirschl, with a copy to the neighbor, stating the Tree Board's concerns and there are many species of Oak Trees, which also happens to be the state tree. Carolan advised he will draft a letter and share it with Tree Board members before it is sent to the property owners.

Requirements for Street Tree Installation by Developers

Carolan advised the city's Planning Commission made a recommendation to city council to develop an ordinance requiring property developers plant a tree in the right-of-way on each lot when establishing a new development. This requirement is in the planning stages with the city's Planning Department. This will alleviate some of the pressure of the city to plant trees, however, it will mean more trees planted that will require maintenance. This is in the very early stages of development with the city's Planning Department, and more information will be shared as it becomes available.

Grant Application Updates

Cimprich advised grant requests have been submitted since last month's meeting. The MidAmerican Energy *Trees Please* request was for \$2,000. In the past the award has been \$1,000 and a summary letter was included with the grant request outlining the reasons for the increase in the funding request.

Cimprich checked with the city's Engineering Department regarding trees on the 35th Street extension and the 7th Avenue roundabout. There are no funds available from those projects for tree planting.

The Alliant *Branching Out* grant request was for \$7,075 for spring 2018 planting along 35th Street northwest to the roundabout. Approximately 57 trees will be planted with those funds, if awarded. Cimprich did meet with Darin from the city's Engineering Department as it relates to that area. There are plans to re-zone and develop some of the property next year. It was recommended that trees be staggered on the west side of the street.

The Rockwell grant application will be made available in January or February.

Our Woodland Legacy Symposium

Cimprich shared information about this full day event presented by Trees Forever. The City of Marion is one of the sponsors of this educational session held at the Cedar Rapids Country Club. If any member is interested in attending they may do so at no cost and were asked to contact Cimprich to RSVP. Carolan added this is a very worthwhile event and there will be room for as many members who wish to attend.

Receive and File

A thank you note was received from the Linn-Mar FFA Agriculture Education students for allowing them to participate in the *Trees for Kids* planting event.

Other Action or Discussion Items

Tormey indicated she has suggestions of additional locations for tree plantings. Cimprich will send her the Excel file for her to add it to which will be shared with tree board members. This list is continually reviewed by the tree board and staff.

Staff Report

Cimprich reported all water bags were removed from trees, water trailers have been winterized and prairie mowing has been completed.

He and Ryan Hays attended Chipper Operator Specialist training sponsored by the Iowa Arborist Association. It contained a lot of safety training which is not offered very often.

The new bucket truck graphics have been completed.

Cimprich introduced Rick Breeden of Breeden Tree Service and advised they are doing a good job of getting work orders completed on tree issues.

The *Trees Please* street tree planting event was completed with 33 trees planted.

An inspection of Faulkes Heritage Woods was done and six tree stands were found on the property. All of the stands were tagged and five of the six stands have been removed. The remaining stand got a second tag notice providing 48 hours to get it removed. If the stand isn't removed by the owner, the city will do so. The question was asked whether there are "no hunting" signs at Faulkes. Signs were placed last year and are still posted. The decision on a burn at Faulkes has not been finalized. Cimprich is waiting for feedback from Kirkwood as they have instructors, students and equipment that can be used for such an event. Another factor is that it has to be scheduled on a somewhat last minute basis due to weather concerns.

Cimprich advised he is completing required reports for last year's grant awards, working on the budget for FY 18-19 and will have the Tree City USA award paperwork completed by the December 31 deadline.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 a.m.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, December 13, 2017, 7:00 a.m. at the Thomas Park Safe Room.

Rodney Bluml, Secretary