

MARION PARK BOARD MINUTES

November 12, 2014, 4:00 P.M.

Thomas Park Administration and Operations Facility

ROLL CALL: Chair Patty Wise, Charles Kress, Kyle Martin, Terry Sperial

ABSENT: John McIntosh

STAFF: Mike Carolan, Karlene Hummel, Aaron VanMilligan, Darcie Coberly

GUESTS: Nick Glew

Minutes

Moved by Kress and seconded by Sperial to approve the October 8, 2014, Park Board minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

Reports

Moved by Wise, and seconded by Sperial to approve the October Financial Report. Arts Council expenditures have increased due to more activity. It was noted that Farmer's Market revenues are down. All in favor, motion carried.

The October Purchase Order Report was reviewed and accepted. An invoice related to flood repair was paid to Bobcat of Cedar Rapids for equipment rental.

Public Input

Nick Glew, president of the Marion Economic Development Company provided information about Home Base Iowa. The City of Marion is working to become designated as a Home Base Iowa Community. The state program lets veterans know that in addition to a job, Iowa can provide them a caring, welcoming community.

To become a Home Base Community, five standards have to be met, including developing a welcome/incentive package for veterans that may move into the community for employment. Glew stated that the program is designed for those moving to the community for a new job and to aid in the transition. Glew requested the Parks department commit to contributing to the Marion package. If the designation is awarded, Marion would be promoted at a State level and show us as a progressive community. There are three counties who currently are designated as Home Base Communities (Greene, Howard, Clarke) and three cities working towards the designation.

Wise asked what is the value being contributed by other Marion businesses or city departments. Glew said it varies from \$20 to \$200. Moved by Wise and seconded by Martin to donate a \$100 gift certificate or voucher per veteran to be used towards a Marion Parks and Recreation program or rental usage. All in favor, motion carried.

Amphitheater Usage Report

A report outlining usage of the Klopfenstein Amphitheater for the Performing Arts was presented. In 2014 there were three private events and seven free public events held. For 2015, there are three private events and eighteen free public events booked. All of the private rentals of the Amphitheater have been for weddings. Martin asked if the Sunrise Yoga brings sound equipment. Hummel said during 2014 they borrowed it from the Fire Department and that sound equipment is not provided for any users.

Refund Rate for Recreation and Aquatics

When a registration in a recreation or aquatics program is cancelled, a \$5 administration fee is deducted from the returned registration fee. Hummel stated that if a cancellation is made after shirts are ordered this does not cover the costs involved. She is requesting that the administrative fee be increased and that any late registration fees collected become non-refundable. Moved by Wise and seconded by Kress to increase the administrative fee for cancelling a recreation or aquatics program registration to \$10 and the late registration fee not refundable effective January 1, 2015. All in favor, motion carried.

Farmers Market Activity

After reviewing the 2014 Farmers Market vendor participation and attendance, Carolan asked the Board to review the direction of the Market for next year. The Wednesday Market dwindled to four vendors and was cancelled mid-season. The Department purchased and displayed banners in the park, a weekly article is written in the Marion Times, and promotional information is included in the Marion Messenger and the Department's monthly email newsletter.

The Cedar Rapids Farmers Markets are experiencing the same trend with their City Market at Noelridge and has about the same number of vendors as Marion. Hiawatha's Market on Sundays is successful because it's not competing with traditional markets.

Kress said some local businesses are buying from local vendors and eliminating the appeal of going to the Farmers Market for fresh produce and goods. Martin asked how long has the Wednesday Market been going? Staff thinks 20 years, but the number of participating vendors has dropped over the last 10 years. Kress thought maybe it was time to discontinue the Wednesday Market. Martin stated that he looks at Markets as an event, and if he needs groceries he goes to a grocery store. Carolan asked if there were suggestions to bring more vendors to participate, perhaps by offering incentives. Martin and Wise didn't feel that was the issue. Moved by Wise and seconded by Martin to discontinue the Wednesday Farmers Market for the 2015 season. All in favor, motion carried.

Parks Operations Snow Removal Equipment

In the current fiscal year there is \$18,000 budgeted in equipment reserve for a right-of-way mower. The mower was purchased this summer for \$8,590. Carolan requested to use the remaining funds to purchase a 12' snow pusher to be attached to the New

Holland tractor that was purchased. Moved by Kress and seconded by Wise to reallocate remaining funds up to \$8,000 in the equipment reserve account for the purchase of a 12' snow pusher. All in favor, motion carried.

John McIntosh arrived at 4:45.

Donnelly Park Trail Bridge Engineering Services

In the current fiscal year there is \$200,000 funded from local option sales tax to construct a bridge over Dry Creek in Donnelly Park to replace the low flow concrete bridge system. A request for proposal will be prepared and distributed for engineering services for the design and construction of this project. Moved by Wise and seconded by Sperl directing the Parks and Recreation Director to prepare and distribute a request for proposal for engineering services for the design and construction of a bridge over Dry Creek in Donnelly Park. All in favor, motion carried.

Parks Master Plan Request for Qualifications

In the current fiscal year there is \$70,000 funded by the 2014 GO Bond for a Parks Master Plan. The request for qualifications (RFQ) will be distributed and qualified companies will be interviewed. One company will be selected to develop a Parks Master Plan. The timeline will be to distribute the RFQ in December, return deadline for RFQs in January, review RFQs in February, with company interviews in March or April. Moved by McIntosh and seconded by Wise directing the Parks and Recreation Director to prepare and distribute a request for qualifications for professional planning services associated with the Marion Parks System Master Plan. All in favor, motion carried.

Parks Operations Winter Work Program

VanMilligan presented the Parks Operations Winter Work Program. Annual activities include leaf collection, winterizing water lines, prepping snow removal equipment, before and after Christmas in the Park duties, hanging Christmas lights uptown, cleaning and repairing summer equipment, and organizing buildings. Projects include removing the Green Pavilion, taking inventory of sidewalks that the department maintains, epoxy the Thomas Park generator room floor, install cabinets and a brochure rack at the Thomas Park building, install acoustic panels in the Safe Room, clean carpets in offices, and build a trailer for the water tank. McIntosh asked about the salt used by the department. VanMilligan said that ice melt is bought pre-season in bags for use on sidewalks at city facilities. The Parks Operations Winter Work Program was filed.

Email from Brad Schuver

Brad Schuver, 805 Krumboltz Drive, sent an email request to repair and re-establish lighting for the Hanna Park parking lot at the end of Krumboltz Drive and Fairview Drive. Carolan stated that the lights were tied into the trail lighting but the trail lights were removed. Wise requested that the trail lighting be put in the next budget request. Carolan said staff will be looking at the current lighting to see if improvements can be made to address Schuver's concern. The email from Brad Schuver was filed.

Monthly Staff Report

The staff report was reviewed.

Staff has planted 131 trees in Lowe Park, along 10th Street and for the Street Tree Replacement program. New grants are being submitted; MidAmerican Energy Trees Please to fund trees for the Street Tree Replacement program, and Alliant Energy Branching Out Grant for 50 trees along Tower Terrace Road.

The kickoff training meeting for the Sustainable Urban Forestry Training and Assistance Grant will be January 14th at the Arts & Environment building. Board members are requested to attend.

Concrete is poured and underground work has been completed for the Gill Park Splash Pad.

The department is submitting a reimbursement request in the amount of \$130,000 for flood damage repairs to FEMA. This includes \$11,000 in storm damaged trees.

The Utility II position was offered to and accepted by Broc Dabling who started with the department as a seasonal employee in May 2009. His first day will be December 1st.

Carolan and Hummel have been participating in the Function and Fitness meetings. The committee is currently working on a design; gyms and community rooms are a high priority. Martin asked what entities are involved and who will own the building. The project is a joint effort between the City and the YMCA. When finished, the YMCA will staff and operate the building and recreation programs will be coordinated jointly with the YMCA and the City.

Operations staff are completing end of season tasks. Seasonal employees will be done around November 26th; however, some of those employees will be on call in to assist with snow removal during the winter.

The youth 5 on 5 basketball program has started practices and games will begin in December. Linn Mar cut back our gym space usage beginning in January.

The new Cork N Canvas program has six kids signed up and will be held November 13th.

Hummel and Tony Ireland are working on partnership programs for next year.

The pool heater is scheduled to be replaced this fiscal year with a more energy efficient model. McIntosh asked if there would be any rebates available. Hummel said she would look into it.

Other

The agreement with ITC has been approved by City Council for additional utility easement area.

The fiscal year 2014-15 budget process has started. The City Manager has asked for a three year staffing projection to be submitted with the budget.

The City Council's Strategic Planning is November 14th and 15th.

The Lowe Park Greenhouse has had excessive operation costs over the winter months. Last year it cost over \$4,000 to heat the greenhouse. McIntosh asked if events are held in the greenhouse all winter. Carolan stated that a few classes are held and the Master Gardeners start plants from seeds in late winter. Martin asked for a schedule of their winter activities and needs. Wise questioned if the greenhouse should close in January and February to reduce costs. Carolan will ask the Master Gardeners to provide this information at the December Park Board meeting.

A cemetery donation was received from Ellis and Mary Lambertsen in honor of Frank and Margaret Travis.

Between November 7th and November 10th there was some vandalism at the Lowe Park maintenance building. Several windows were broken but nothing was stolen. A police report was filed.

Board Discussion Time

Kress has heard a rumor that the Depot Pavilion will be torn down to put in an ice rink near City Park. Carolan stated that this was only a rumor. Martin stated he has heard the rumor also and he dispelled it.

McIntosh will not be at the December meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:51 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 10, 2014, at 4:00 p.m. at the Thomas Park Administration and Operations Building.

Kyle Martin, Secretary