

MARION PARK BOARD MINUTES

February 4, 2015, 4:00 P.M.

Thomas Park Administration and Operations Facility

ROLL CALL: Chair Patty Wise, Charles Kress, John McIntosh, Kyle Martin, Terry Sperl

ABSENT: None

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

GUESTS: Sara Mentzer, Blue Zones Project Marion; Doug Peyton, Cedar Rapids Disc Golf Club; Paul Draper, Marion Council Member

Minutes

Moved by Sperl, seconded by McIntosh to approve the January 14, 2015, Park Board minutes. All in favor to approve the January 14, 2015, Park Board minutes as presented, motion carried.

Reports

Information for the January Financial Report was not available for the meeting. The report will be presented at next month's meeting.

The January Purchase Order Report was reviewed and accepted. Utility costs across the divisions are up. The invoice paid to Garment Design was shirts for the basketball programs. McIntosh asked about the utility payments for the pool while it is closed for the season. Staff stated that over the winter the utility invoices are based on estimates and that all of the breakers that can be turned off are turned off.

Public Input

Doug Peyton from the Cedar Rapids Disc Golf Club (prior name The Greater Cedar Rapids Area Disc Golf Club) submitted the hold harmless agreement for use of the Legion Park Disc Golf Course for their annual tournament on May 16 and 17. Peyton stated that for that last two years the Marion Arts Festival 5K Run route has traveled through the course. This has caused delays in the tournament and they aren't able to make the awards presentations until dark. Peyton requested that the 5K be asked to take a different route. The hold harmless for the Marion Arts Festival 5K has not been submitted. Wise asked staff to provide Peyton with the contact information for the Festival so that he could discuss the route with them.

Future Park Land Discussion (Waldo's Rock)

The City is working with Waldo Morris to obtain land near the trail off of 62nd Street. On the property is one of the largest glacier rocks in eastern Iowa standing at three stories tall. Council Member Paul Draper believes this would be a good spot for trail parking, a pavilion and picnic table. He feels the glacier rock would attract visitors from the area. Martin asked how much land is involved. Council Member Draper stated there are four acres with a pond on the property that serves as a storm water basin and that the City will be meeting with Morris to discuss a land donation. Kress asked about the time frame and funding. Council Member Draper said that there is a meeting set up soon but the land appraisal could take 30 days. Carolan said this may be a good project for REAP funding where the City would buy the property and a donation from Morris could be used for the infrastructure.

Council Member Draper concluded by thanking the Park Board for their past support of saving the brick wall at the City Park.

Marion Historical Society Lowe Rental Fee Waiver Request

The Marion Historical Society – Granger House Museum and Cultural Center submitted a written request to waive the rental fee for an event on April 18, 2015 in the Oaks Room at the Arts and Environmental Center. The letter indicated that representatives would attend this meeting to answer questions, but no one was present. Kress said that he did not support waiving the fee. Martin asked if the organization was part of the City; staff replied they are not. Kress asked how many rentals are by non-profit groups. Hummel estimated that about ¼ of rentals are done by non-profit groups. Wise directed staff to obtain more information about the event. No action taken.

Nicotine Free Parks

At the January meeting the Board directed to staff to develop policy prohibiting tobacco and other nicotine use in Marion City Parks. The proposed ordinance was presented. Wise asked if this has gone before Council. Carolan said it has not and this draft was for the Park Board to review; City Attorney Don Hoskins will need to review it. Sara Mentzer, Blue Zones Project Marion, said she has been working with Doug Slagle at the Police Department to ensure that this will be enforceable. Carolan felt that there still needed to be some clarification on vaporizers and will see what Hoskins suggests. Moved by Wise and seconded by Martin that the Park Board recommends the policy to be sent to the City Council to be approved. All in favor, motion carried.

Election of Officers

Moved by Kress and seconded by Sperl that the current officers retain their positions for 2015. All in favor, motion carried. Chairperson Patty Wise, Vice Chair John McIntosh, and Secretary Kyle Martin.

Lowe Greenhouse Operations Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Carolan reviewed the MOU terms presented by the Linn County Extension for use of the Lowe Park Greenhouse. Responsibilities of the Linn County Extension are spelled out and there will be a 50/50 cost split for operating costs but does not include the grounds around the greenhouse nor insurance. Linn County Extension asked for a change to the cancellation paragraph to be July 1. Wise asked if the concern was the 90 days and suggested 120 days may be better for planning growing seasons. Carolan said the final MOU will be presented at the next meeting for approval.

Zero Turn Mower Bids

The current budget includes \$8,600 for the replacement of a zero turn mower. The new item will be replacing a 2004 John Deere 737 mower with a 54" deck. VanMilligan solicited bids for a zero turn mower and five sets of replacement blades from City Tractor Co. (North Liberty) \$6,006.39, Midway Outdoor Equipment (Hiawatha) \$6,379.25, P&K Midwest (Hiawatha) \$7,145.89, and Bodensteiner Implement (Rowley) \$7,742.61. Moved by McIntosh and seconded by Sperl to approve the purchase of a 2015 Gravely Pro Turn 252 mower with 52" deck and five sets of replacement blades from City Tractor Co. (North Liberty) for \$6,006.39. All in favor, motion carried.

Water Reels Bids

The current budget includes \$19,000 for the replacement of two water reels. VanMilligan solicited bids from the only two places in the area that sell the water reels. Bids were received from John Deere Landscapes (Cedar Rapids) \$18,987.86 and Pace Supply (Fairfax) \$20,400. Moved by

Speral and seconded by Kress to purchase two Kifco Model B140 Water Reels from John Deere Landscapes (Cedar Rapids) for \$18,987.86. McIntosh asked what will be done with the old ones. VanMilligan stated that the vendor does not want them for a trade in, but they could be sold locally or to another city. All in favor, motion carried.

Pool Concession Contract

Hummel presented the 2015 Pool Concessions Contract and recommends the renewal of the contract with Elaine Collins. Section III. Concessionaire C. Products was updated to include the wording non-alcoholic beverages and healthy food options. Although this wording was not specifically included in the prior year's contracts, the concessionaire was already meeting this requirement. Motion by McIntosh and seconded by Speral to approve the contract renewal with Elaine Collins for the pool concession for the 2015 season. Collins will provide the concession price list to be approved by the Board at a future meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

Monthly Staff Report

The staff report was reviewed. The first Sustainable Urban Forestry Training and Assistance Grant meeting was held on January 14. The kickoff meeting was well attended with around 27 participants from city departments, boards and councils.

Staff continues to work with FEMA for reimbursement of costs associated with the June 30, 2014 storm. A new FEMA representative will be taking over the claim.

February 14 is a scheduled restoration project at Faulkes Woods. Signups are being handled by Trees Forever.

There has been an increase of sidewalk complaints following the recent snow falls.

The Department is providing opportunities for staff development. Employees have attended an Iowa One Call meeting where they learned the importance of getting locates, how to understand what the locate markings mean, and how to work in an area that has been located. VanMilligan conducted in-house welding classes and Creekside Gardens taught about proper plant maintenance, mulching and pruning practices.

From the Iowa Park and Recreation Association, Hummel said the American Red Cross will be implementing changes and updates to the Lifeguarding and WSI program. Pool seasons are being effected by the state mandated school start and end dates; the effects will shorten the pool operating season.

WinterFest will be held on February 14 at Thomas Park. This is a free program offered by the department and Marion Blue Zones Project. There are a variety of fun outdoor activities planned that will use the ice rink and nearby trail.

Other

Carolan was approached by John Wilkenson regarding the Marion Farmers' Market. He is a member of the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection adjacent to Butterfield Park. He recognizes the struggles of the current market and proposed holding the market at the church's parking lot. A survey was sent to the vendors to get some input. There seemed to be some confusion by the vendors believing that if the market moved, the church would be in charge of the market. Carolan stated that the church did not have intentions of running the market and the vendors would only have a place in the parking lot to set up and not have access to the inside of the building. There also would be potential conflicts if there would be a funeral or wedding at the church. The replies

indicated a 50/50 split to move. Wise felt that if the market continually moves around, the community has to keep relearning where it is located. Martin asked what the department is currently providing for the vendors. Carolan replied a venue, signage, and publicizing in all available City resources. The City of Cedar Rapids is experiencing the same struggles with their markets. The Park Board does not support moving the Marion Farmers Market out of City Square Park.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Linn Area Mountain Bike Association (LAMBA) states that the group will design, build, and maintain a natural surface single-track mountain bike trail in Legion Park. Carolan stated that nothing has been done to develop the trail since the MOU began on June 1, 2013. The Board directed staff to contact LAMBA to dissolve the agreement and close the trails.

The Marion Park System Master Plan Request for Qualifications (RFQ) resulted in responses from RDG Planning & Design (Des Moines), GreenPlay LLC (Louisville, CO), Snyder & Associates Inc (Cedar Rapids), Alta Planning & Design (Davidson, NC), Hitchcock Group (Naperville, IL), and Confluence (Cedar Rapids). Quotes ranged from \$46,000 (RDG) to \$85,500 (Hitchcock Group). The RFQs were reviewed by staff from the several City departments and an interview was held with Confluence. Staff felt they interviewed very well and liked that they were a local company. Martin stated that the company is very design oriented. Moved by Wise and seconded by Sperial to move forward to City Council with the RFQ from Confluence. The Master Plan will be a ten year comprehensive plan and contain a five year action plan. Carolan will be forming a steering committee to be appointed by the mayor. Wise and Martin requested to be part of the committee. All in favor, motion carried.

Activity Report from the Master Gardeners for February was received and filed.

The Fiscal Year 2015-16 Budget second draft was reviewed. In the Parks division, the Utility II position that was moved over to the Urban Forestry Utility (UFU) Fund in the prior fiscal year will be re-established. There will be 16 part-time employees, including the cemetery clerk that will be utilized to back up the administrative assistants after the initial cemetery data has been transferred. In the Recreation division, the part-time recreation assistants are decreased as more certified referees and umpires are being used. The Urban Forestry Utility Fund is increasing by 51 percent as the City Arborist position will be fully funded beginning July 1 and an Arborist Tech position funded beginning January 1. The Arborist Tech position will be a certified insecticide applicator and will treat designated ash trees against the emerald ash borer. Equipment used by the UFU employees will be shared with the Public Services Department until it can be funded. Capital Outlay purchases include hedge trimmers, saws, window shades for the Arts and Environment Center, a snow plow, a SNAG golf kit, and some permanent art pieces. Equipment Reserve will fund the replacement of a projector, table and chairs for the Arts and Environment Center, a ranger, 1445 mower, F350 dump truck, playground equipment, and a diving board. Capital Projects includes a pavilion in Legion Park (with funding from LOST), LED lights at the Arts and Environment Center, development of the Lowe Park south entrance, and a new hook truck. Council will be approving the budget following the public hearing on March 5.

Board Discussion Time

Sperial stated that the Swamp Fox Festival is being held on September 26, 2015. Previously it was held earlier in the month and the dates were set more than a year in advance. He asked staff why it was moved to later in the month and stated that many high school class reunions are planned specifically to coincide with the event. Staff advised that the Swamp Fox is a community event and the committee set the dates for 2015. The Parks Department provides support for the

location and coordinates the children's activities. Wise, chair of the 2015 Swamp Fox Festival, stated that a survey was completed following the 2014 event to determine needed improvements. The community feedback revealed the desire to have more activities uptown; the Committee felt changing the event date to coincide with the Marion Chamber's Fall Market would help accomplish this. Sperl stated that he does not recommend changing the date of the 2015 event to the later date. Kress agreed saying that setting the date should be done more than a year in advance so that class reunions and other gatherings could coordinate with the event. McIntosh said that the 2015 date conflicts with the fire training academy and thinks this may be a problem because the firefighters coordinate the parade. Wise said she would share these concerns at the next Swamp Fox Festival committee meeting.

Wise asked if staff followed up with the graduation party that is renting the Hickory Room on June 14 when the Marion East Rotary will be having their outside event. Hummel has contacted the family and they are not concerned about any conflicts as long as their guests won't have a problem getting into the park and there is parking reserved for them.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 11, 2015, at 4 p.m. at the Thomas Park Administration and Operations Building.

Kyle Martin, Secretary