

**REGULAR MEETING
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
City of Oakdale
February 16, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Oakdale Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Tuesday, February 16, 2021, at Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Avenue, Oakdale, Minnesota. The meeting was called to order by Chair Lockhart at 7 PM.

CALL OF ROLL

On a call of roll, the following were present:

Chair: Paul Lockhart
Vice Chair: Jenny Nyberg

Commissioners: Jan Cunningham
Glen Giacoletto
Mark Giannini
Freddie Jiles
Steve Meyer

Also Present: Jake Ingebrigtsen, City Council
Jeff Koesling, Parks Superintendent
Julie Williams, Recreation Superintendent

Quorum Present: YES NO

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Regular Meeting Minutes, October 20, 2020

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER CUNNINGHAM, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER NYBERG TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 20, 2020 AS PRESENTED.

7 AYES 0 NAYS

CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR ELECTION – Paul Lockhart

A motion was made by Commissioner Meyer, seconded by Commissioner Nyberg to nominate Paul Lockhart to the position of Chair. Chair Lockhart was re-elected as presented to the position of Chair.

7 AYES 0 NAYS

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

February 16, 2021

Page 2

For the position of Vice Chair, Commissioner Giacoletto nominated Jan Cunningham and Chair Lockhart nominated Jenny Nyberg. Voting took place virtually using Zoom Chat. Superintendent Williams presented the results. The majority elected Jenny Nyberg as Vice Chair. Commissioners did a roll call to elect Jenny Nyberg as Vice Chair.

7 AYES 0 NAYS

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE – Jake Ingebrigtsen

Council Liaison Assignments – The Council and Mayor decided that liaisons for commissions will be reassigned annually. Councilmember Ingebrigtsen will serve as Parks and Recreation Commission's Council Liaison for 2021.

Commission Election – Councilmember Ingebrigtsen congratulated Chair Paul Lockhart and Vice Chair Jenny Nyberg on their election. He enjoyed chairing the Planning Commission.

New Development – Councilmember Ingebrigtsen stood for questions.

Chair Lockhart will bring Commissioner Cunningham's question, about how park planning at Willowbrooke for \$50,000 is going to proceed, to Director Bachmeier.

Superintendent Koesling confirmed for Chair Lockhart that the Titan Park parcel on 4th Street had been sold. Work started three or four weeks ago on the lot.

Councilmember Ingebrigtsen would be inclined to return unused warming house money to the parks budget. A decision has not yet been made, but he will continue the discussion.

Vice Chair Nyberg reported overhearing dog park users complaining that the dog park closes too early, and they are unable to exercise their dogs after work in the winter when the park closes a half hour after sunset. She suggested a set time replace sunset based hours.

Councilmember stated that safety concerns are likely the reason that the dog park closes after sunset. He will inquire with the City Administrator what would be necessary to make a change to the park hours.

Superintendent Koesling noted that police receive complaints from one party located across the street from, and who is in opposition to, the dog park. Mr. Koesling understands along with Vice Chair Nyberg that work hours ending at 5 PM, a park that closes with sunset based hours, and a winter sun setting at 4:30 PM, will be frustrating when dog owners can't use their park. The park is not lit at night. The only lighting the park receives is from nearby street lights.

PARKS UPDATE – Jeff Koesling

Walton Hockey Refurbishing – Superintendent Koesling explained that the foundation struggled to keep ice at Walton Hockey since probably 2007. The center would disappear with the sun and crews would have to battle to keep ice on the rink. The existing foundation was removed and redone last spring and early summer. The rink has phenomenal ice this year. There has been heavy use. The

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

February 16, 2021

Page 3

rink is a great investment. Ice was not rented this year by Tartan Area Youth Hockey Association because of the warming house closure.

Bearth Field – Chair Lockhart has in his possession a plaque for Bearth Field that was given by the Minnesota Twins. It will be installed at Tanners Lake Park this spring. Travelling teams are now forming and may utilize the Walton Park pinwheel to allow more time to work on the improvements at Bearth Field.

RECREATION UPDATE – Julie Williams

Spring Newsletter – Superintendent Williams reported that the spring newsletter hit Oakdale residents' mailboxes a couple weeks ago. The newsletter includes programming for the February through May season.

AARP Tax Aide – The Discovery Center is a tax assistance site. Covid-19 modifications for the popular program mean that only 100 taxpayers could be accommodated, and all appointments were filled after two days. Filling appointments usually takes weeks. The Discovery Center appointments will take place on Thursdays and Mondays and begin on Thursday this week.

Indoor Market –The vendors are happy the markets have resumed in person again for the few dates left; February 20, March 6 and 20, from 9 AM to 1 PM at the Discovery Center. The scaled back markets feature ten vendors with social distance.

Snowshoe Rentals –At least 60 snowshoers have rented snowshoes at the Oakdale Nature Preserve since the end of December. The cost is \$5 for a two hour rental and sizes are available for adults and youth. Groups of six or more should call to make a reservation.

Story Strolls –*My Heart is Like a Zoo* by Michael Hall can be read while strolling through the park using the Discovery Center Loop Trail. Washington County and Oakdale Recreation partnered and received a lot of positive feedback for the program. Suburban Community Channels featured the Story Stroll last week on their Youtube Channel with an interview with Youth Librarian Megan and Recreation Assistant Laura.

Wahoo Adventures Snowshoe Bonfire – The annual luminary lit snowshoe trail throughout the Oakdale Nature Preserve will return Saturday, February 27. Kerri from Wahoo Adventures is offering a modified event with reduced capacity and staggered evening start times. Almost 100 snowshoers will participate.

Art Discovery Fair – Vendors are signing up for the Saturday, March 27 rescheduled fair at the Discovery Center.

Summer Program Instructors – Applications and job descriptions can be found on the website. Applications are accepted through the end of March and interviews are held in April. A few will be hired. Those interested can call Oakdale Recreation.

Garage Sales – In reply to Commissioner Cunningham, Superintendent Williams informed that the City has two garage sale events. Oakdale Recreation is planning the Indoor Garage Sale. Plans for

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

February 16, 2021

Page 4

the Citywide Garage Sale are still in discussion. Superintendent Williams will get back to Commissioner Cunningham on the Citywide Garage Sale.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Wellness 50+ – Commissioner Cunningham shared that the Wellness 50+ Lake Elmo Snowshoe Event on February 2 had a good turnout. Looking ahead, a First Aide/CPR event with the Oakdale Fire Department will be planned for fall, and bike maintenance class will be taking place in the future. Both of these events do not have an age requirement. Wellness 50+ will team with the AARP and their Age Friendly Communities program. Those interested can email Julie Williams who will connect them with Wellness 50+. Wellness 50+ would like to learn requirements and find a suitable park for a community garden and peace pole.

Maintenance of Donated Projects – Superintendent Williams informed that the Council is looking into ordinances for the maintenance of community gardens that are placed in City parks. She is currently keeping Wellness 50+ Bonnie Wilson informed on the conversation.

Councilmember Ingebrigtsen added that the Council had a heavy discussion last fall about what happens when funds run out for a donation the City receives and how we can maintain donations. The discussion hasn't continued because Council has a lot on their plate right now, but he anticipates it will come back up. Councilmember Swedberg brought the item to the Council. He will follow up on this item with the City Administrator.

Chair Lockhart explained that the commission walked through the Oakdale Nature Preserve to find donated plots with plantings but no maintenance.

Capital Improvement Program Projects – Chair Lockhart will touch base with Director Bachmeier on the 2021 projects in the Capital Improvement Program so the commission can start looking forward toward 2022.

Councilmember Ingebrigtsen replied to Chair Lockhart, stating that the Parks budget was approved. He added that he is hopeful that the \$1.9 trillion package discussed in Congress and \$350 billion for states will pass, and that decision makers will allocate money to municipalities giving a bit of help.

Superintendent Koesling reported that the four Oakdale Nature Preserve signs have been installed. The project was budgeted for \$15,000 and came in at a cost under budget at \$7,000.

Welcome Freddie Jiles – Vice Chair Nyberg formally welcomed Commissioner Freddie Jiles to the commission. She shared that it is nice to have a new face and that she continues to share position openings for commissions, and seeks diverse representation though out the city whenever possible.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER CUNNINGHAM, SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR NYBERG TO ADJOURN THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION, DATED FEBRUARY 16, 2021, AT 7:43 PM.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

February 16, 2021

Page 5

7 AYES 0 NAYS

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Linzmeyer