

DRAFT
MARATHON COUNTY PARK COMMISSION

Date and Time of Meeting: March 5, 2024 at 10:30am Location: Room 5 at 212 River Dr., Wausau WI 54403

Park Commissioners present: Dawn Herbst, Lou Larson, Jean Maszk, Rick Seefeldt

Excused: Allen Opall

Staff present: Jamie Polley-Parks, Recreation and Forestry Director, Andy Sims-Assistant Director of Operations, Jamie Alberti – Corporation Counsel Paralegal

1. Call to Order – President Seefeldt called the Park Commission meeting to order at 10:30 am. Official notice and the agenda for the meeting was posted publicly in accordance with the State statutes.

2. Public Comment – none brought forward.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the January 30, 2024 Park Commission Meeting – Motion by Maszk, second by Herbst to approve the January 30, 2024 meeting minutes. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 4-0.

4. Policy Issues for Discussion and Committee Determination

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee

1. Recognition – 2023 Soccer Field of the Year Award from WI Sports Field Management Association – The People’s Sports Complex has been voted on as 2023 soccer field of the year by the Wisconsin Sports Field Management Association. They are recognized with a plaque and a press release that will be going out.

5. Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution:

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee

1. Accepting a Donation from River District Development Foundation of Merrill to Complete Master Plan for Future Trail from Wausau to Merrill – Staff have been working with the Wisconsin DNR, Lincoln County and a local non-profit biking group stationed in Merrill to evaluate the possibility of establishing a trail from the City of Wausau to the City of Merrill. Through a variety of discussions, it was found that Wisconsin Public Service (WPS) has a corridor for much of the way where they had planned to build an electric rail car. This corridor is also identified by the State as a future State Trail segment. In preliminary discussions with WPS the use of the corridor may be a possibility for this future trail. The groups worked together to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to develop the Wausau to Merrill Trail Master Plan. The RFP was advertised during the month of November with proposals due on December 1, 2023. Five proposals were received. The steering group narrowed the proposals to two firms and issued a set of follow up questions. Upon final review of the additional submittals the group selected MSA Professional Services, Inc. to complete the project. The non-profit, River District Development Foundation of Merrill has agreed to pay for the project in the amount of \$91,601. It is recommended that the agreement for a project such as this be between the contractor and the county or state. Marathon County’s Corporation Counsel has reviewed the agreement and has agreed that the County can sign the agreement with the two actions, one, the Park Commission accept the donation of funds from the nonprofit and two, the County sign a memorandum of understanding with the non-profit agreeing to the payment of services and on the scope of the project. Staff is developing this memorandum of understanding. **Motion** by Larson, second by Herbst to accept the donation of \$91,601 from River District Development Foundation to be utilized for the completion of a master plan for a future trail from Wausau to Merrill. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 4-0.

2. April Meeting Dates – After discussion it was decided to keep the April meeting date on April 2nd and the Director will join remotely. It may move ½ hour earlier or later depending on her schedule. (It was later determined that the meeting will be held at 11:00am on April 2nd)

6. Policy Issues for Discussion and Committee Determination for Consideration by Environmental Resources Committee

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee – None

B. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee to Forward to the Environmental Resource Committee for its Consideration – None

7. Policy Issues for Discussion and Committee Determination for Consideration by Environmental Resources Committee – None

8. Educational Presentation/Outcome Monitoring Reports for Discussion

A. Project Update – Big Eau Pleine – *Trees* – Additional large hazard trees have been removed in the west campground. *Firewood* – Staff is completing the cutting of firewood for the 2024 season, and we are filling the firewood bins for the upcoming rental season. Marathon Park – *Eastgate Hall* – favorable bids were received, and work has begun, the ceiling tiles have been removed and the electrician is setting up the new lighting. Once complete the ceiling contractor will move back in to install the new ceiling. The siding will begin to be removed in the next couple of weeks. Work will continue through the months of March and April. *Ice Arena Feasibility Study* – JLG Architects has provided the County with the first draft of the program needed for the facility based on the user meetings and feedback collected. Staff has met with them to provide feedback. The next step is to refine the program and begin to develop the floor plan. A team will also start to review the requirements of the saferoom and how that will be integrated into the plan. A Third group will begin working on the economic impact analysis. *Trees* – Infested ash trees have been removed. *Arbor Day Planting* – is planned for Thursday, April 25. *Wausau Cyclones* made the playoffs and secured home ice advantage. Their first playoff game is March 8th. To accommodate these games, we will keep the ice in on rink 1 an extra week. Rink 2 ice is coming out the week of March 4th. *Marathon Park Junction playground* – We removed this playground on 2/27 for safety reasons. The playground had repairs that needed to be made and the parts are no longer available. This playground will be replaced in the future when the splash pad is replaced per the Westside Master Plan. Bluegill Bay – Construction has begun on another new dock. This dock, along with some hardscape work by the dock entrance, will make both sides of the Bluegill boat launch ADA compliant. North Central Health Care – Our department submitted a bid for fence removal and turf restoration at NCHC. Mission Lake – Staff is still working on a cost-effective plan to replace the beach timbers. We have two quotes for material. One possibility is to use concrete planks that we have as well. Playgrounds – Marathon Park Campground and Amco Park playgrounds. Installer has contacted us and is ready to begin installing as soon as we can prep the sites.

B. 2023 Recreation Deputy Report – Polley discussed the Law Enforcement Report. It included information on parks and forestry patrols; criminal complaints; citations and warnings; criminal charges and arrests; and recreation motor vehicle patrols. Snowmobile, boat, and UTV patrol hours are tracked and reimbursed from a DNR grant for this work.

9. Announcements

A. Next Meeting Date & Time, Location – Tuesday, April 2, 2024 at **11:00am**, 212 River Dr., Rm.5, Wausau, WI 54403

B. Future Agenda Items – City Service Level Proposal

10. Adjourn - Motion by Herbst, second by Larson to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 am. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 4-0.