

MARATHON COUNTY PARK COMMISSION

Date and Time of Meeting: Sept 3, 2024, at 10:30 a.m. Location: 22 River Dr, Room 5., Wausau WI 54403

Park Commissioners present: Jeff Frese, Lou Larson, Allen Opall, Rick Seefeldt, Sarah Watson

Park Commissioners excused: Tom Neal, Jean Maszk

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

Others present: Laura Scudeire, Health Officer, Kate Florek, Environmental Health and Safety Director

1. Call to Order – Seefeldt called the Park Commission meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. 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 July 30, 2024, Park Commission Meeting – Motion by Opall, second by Watson to approve the July 30, 2024, meeting minutes. Motion **carried** by voice vote; vote reflected as 5-0.

4. Policy Issues for Discussion and Committee Determination

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee

1. 2025-2026 Parks and Recreation Facility and Program Fee Schedule – Every year the fee schedule is brought before the Park Commission for approval. We were given the directive by the administration to increase these fees by three percent (3%). Regular fees for shelters and camping will be reflected for 2026 because as of May 1, 2025, patrons will be able to begin registering for the 2026 season. There was a discussion regarding the boat launch fee. Patrons put their boats in the water using the launch site with their trailer and then park their trailer on site in the trailer parking area. Kayakers have been allowed to use the boat launch free of charge if they are not using a trailer. We have had some issues with cars parking in spots intended for trailers and have been enforcing trailer-only parking in these spots because there are only so many spaces for trailers to park. After some discussion, the committee would like more research and information about how other counties are addressing issues like this and what a fee structure and enforcement would look like going forward if implemented. **Motion** by Larson, second by Watson to approve the 2024-2026 Parks and Recreation Facility and Program Fee Schedule as written. Motion **carried** by voice vote; vote reflected as 5-0.

2. Intergovernmental Agreement to Provide Park Services for the City of Wausau – The annual intergovernmental agreement to provide park services for the City of Wausau has been reviewed, approved and recommended to move forward by the City Park Committee last June. Once the Park Commission approves this agreement, it will move simultaneously to Environmental Resources Committee for approval. **Motion** by Opall, second by Frese to approve the intergovernmental agreement to provide park services for the City of Wausau as written. Motion **carried** by voice vote; vote reflected as 4-1.

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

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee - None

B. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee to Forward the Environmental Resource Committee for its Consideration

1. Implementation of Beach Monitoring of Marathon County Park Beaches – Laura Scudeire, Health Officer, and Kate Florek, Environmental Health and Safety Director at the Health Department, gave a presentation regarding the expansion of the beach monitoring grant at Big Eau Pleine Park. The grant addresses a variety of issues affecting the biological water quality at the public beaches of Marathon County. Monitoring has been happening for the past three (3) weeks at Big Eau Pleine Park. If the committee moves forward with this proposal, we will start monitoring all the beaches from Memorial Day to Labor Day for Coliform/E.coli and Algae except at Big Rapids Beach. All the coastal waters on our great lakes are monitored through grants and in collaboration with the EPA. Marathon County has a lab at the Health Department, and we do not have the cost of sending samples off to be tested like other counties do. The Health Department would take the samples, run the test, and analyze the data. They would then work with the Parks Department to post signs when it is unsafe to go in the water. Because the Health Department would need to replace one piece of equipment to do the testing, the estimated expense for beach monitoring for the first year is \$12,100. Each subsequent year the estimated cost is \$5,300, which covers the cost of staff time to travel, collect, and process the samples at the lab.

Watson left the meeting at 10:57am.

Motion by Opall, second by Larson to approve the implementation of the beach monitoring of Marathon County Park beaches was discussed and is recommended to move forward. Motion **carried** by voice vote; vote reflected as 4-0.

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

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee - None

7. Educational Presentation/Outcome Monitoring Reports for Discussion

A. Project Update – Ice Arena Study– The Ice Area Study is still going strong. We obtained a FEMA grant to do the study to incorporate a safe room into a future facility. The structural engineers are going through all the FEMA regulations and adding that to the program design. We are then going to discuss the estimated cost for the full facility and cost for the full facility with the safe room included. This is a big decision moving forward with fundraising as we decide if we want the safe room to be added or not. The benefit of putting a safe room into this facility is that, even though it has grants that cover up to three quarters of the cost, over half of the facility is already considered a safe room, which could shelter a couple thousand people during a natural disaster. We are continually updating our user groups and answering questions, and it is our hope to bring to this committee the initial look at our October meeting. Lots of events are happening right now even though the pools are closed, and summer events and summer sports are coming to an end. The Marathon and Blues Fest (Oak Island) happened a couple of weeks ago. Art in the Park is this weekend, Festival of Arts, Maken Festival is next weekend. The caulking was done at the 400 Block and more needs to be done to finish the job. We don't want to ruin the caulking that has already been done so we are coming up with a plan, but it is going to take some time to get that accomplished. MCN Ball Cup at the Sports Complex is coming up. The Nine Mile Running event is Friday and Saturday.

8. Announcements

A. Next Meeting Date & Time, Location – Tue, Oct 1, 2024, at 10:30 a.m. at 212 River Dr, Room 5, Wausau WI 54403

B. Future Agenda Items – Beach Water Quality Monitoring, Tenth Street Wall Repairs

9. Adjourn - Motion by Opall, second by Larson to adjourn the meeting at 11:09 a.m. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 4-0.