

DRAFT
MARATHON COUNTY PARK COMMISSION

Date and Time of Meeting: May 30, 2023 at 10:30am Location: Room 5 at 212 River Dr., Wausau WI 54403

Park Commissioners present: Dawn Herbst, Lou Larson, Jean Maszk, Rick Seefeldt, Kelly Zagrzebski
Excused: Allen Opall

Staff present: Jamie Polley - Parks, Recreation and Forestry Director, Marcus Aumann - Assistant Director -
Community Services-(via web-ex), Andy Sims – Assistant Director - Operations

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 February 28, 2023 Park Commission Meeting – Motion by Maszk, second by Herbst to approve the May 2, 2023 meeting minutes with the change that it was President Seefeldt that called the meeting to order not Vice-President Herbst. 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 - None

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 to the Environmental Resource Committee for its Consideration – None

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

A. Discussion regarding 2024 Annual Budget and Policy Recommendations from the Committee

1. Review of Mandatory / Discretionary Program Document, 2. Review of Rates and Fees Document, 3. Review of 5-Year Departmental Expense/Levy Document - Polley explained that part of the County Board's new budget process involves going through an extensive education process. One area of education is mandated versus non-mandated services and another area is levy support. From a budgetary standpoint not every dollar in the budget is the same. If a dollar is cut in one department that is 50% levy funded it doesn't have the same impact on the tax levy (necessarily) as if a dollar is cut from a department that is 90% levy funded.

Polley discussed a levy support analysis (sustainability plan) the Department had put together explaining how it would like to move forward with the goals of finding ways to reduce dependence on tax levy dollars for operations and capital projects and increasing efficiencies in the department. The Department does not have mandated services but some things it does are supported by State statute and ordinances. While it is not mandated, it provides a lot of services that are of benefit to the County and have a positive impact. It makes the area a desirable place to live and work and has a tremendous effect on the economy and economic development. Another reason the levy support analysis was put together was to look at increasing costs and growing responsibilities without increased staffing. The Department wants to maintain quality services and facilities while meeting demands and wants around parks and recreation. Staff feels it's efficient in the way staff and projects are managed with the amount of property it maintains but can always improve. Polley discussed the efficiencies of being a joint City and County department. She discussed the plan giving information on historical collective budget changes, legislative changes, the largest operational additions, operational removals, the Department's three enterprise funds, the current fee philosophy, current operations, current staffing, and the positive impacts of parks and recreation to the community. Staff is always looking at ways to modify its operations, fees, and searches for sponsorships and grants. It questions investing in revenue sources such as what facilities are missing from the community and what things it could expand on. Polley discussed three actionable steps the Department has created to pursue for the coming years to help aid it in the direction of continued resource stewardship. She also mentioned that the State if desired, could provide additional

funding or support for conservation and recreation by taking several steps to modify existing legislation. Questions were answered and discussion followed.

7. Educational Presentation/Outcome Monitoring Reports for Discussion

A. Wausau/Marathon County Parks & Recreation Foundation Update – Polley reported that the Foundation has been working on the Great Pinery Heritage Waterway Trail. Signs will be installed at various locations. A national park service grant was received to help with marketing, mapping, and finding an overall manager of the trail. The Foundation is also working on updating its bylaws and a Memorandum of Understanding with Ironbull. It has updated its grant application process at the Community Foundation making them more visible on their website and has confirmed that the Wausau and Marathon County park system is given priority for grants with consideration for others after that.

B. Capital Improvement Projects Submitted – Polley discussed the capital projects that were submitted for review for 2024 and are in order of priority include Nine Mile Septic System Replacement, Dells of Eau Claire Restroom/Shower Facility, Dump Station Installation and Camper Cabins, Arena Architectural Study, Eastgate Hall Improvements, Big Eau Pleine Restroom/Shower Facility, Cherokee Restroom Replacement, Site Planning and Architectural Study for Marathon Park Junction and Family Area.

C. Project Update – Sports Complex – four field markers received new bases and were straightened after extensive settling. This work was completed prior to the MC United Spring Cup Tournament. The Spring Cup Tournament was a very successful tournament for the soccer organization as well as the community. Thousands of people enjoyed the complex either as a player, spectator, volunteer or referee. Shooting Range – Emergency culvert repair was needed after the culvert was washed out. This work closed the range for one day. Staff is completing the upgrades to the Archery Range to close out the grant that enabled the improvements including the elevated shooting platform. Playgrounds – Bluegill Bay – Playground installation complete, waiting for border to be poured and engineered wood fibers (EWF) Cherokee – Playground installation scheduled for week of 5/29 Mission Lake – Playground installed, waiting on border and EWF Sunnyvale Softball – Batting cage installed.

D. Marathon Park Water Project – Polley reported the watermain has been replaced and is now looped through the park from Garfield Ave. to Stewart Ave. The next step is to install the laterals off the watermain. Once the contracted work is complete parks staff will complete the site restoration.

8. Announcements

A. Next Meeting Date & Time, Location – Tue., June 27, 2023 at 10:30am, 212 River Dr., Rm 5, Wausau, WI 54403 or webex.

B. Future Agenda Items – Big Eau Pleine Special Deer Hunt, Bat HCP Enrollment Program, Ordinance Updates

9. Adjourn - Motion by Herbst, second by Zagrzebski to adjourn the meeting at 11:50am. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 5-0.