

DRAFT
MARATHON COUNTY PARK COMMISSION

Date and Time of Meeting: June 29, 2021 at 10:30 am

Meeting Location: Conference Room 5, 212 River Drive, Wausau WI 54403

Park Commissioners present: Dawn Herbst, Allen Opall, Pat Peckham, Rick Seefeldt, James Wadinski, Kelly Zagrzebski

Commissioners Excused: Jean Maszk

Staff present: Jamie Polley-Director, Greg Freix-Asst. Director of Operations, Marcus Aumann-Asst. Director of Community Services-(via webex)

1. Call to Order – Vice-President Peckham called the Park Commission meeting to order at 10:30am. 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 May 4, 2021 Park Commission Meeting – Motion by Herbst, second by Opall to approve the May 4, 2021 Park Commission meeting. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 6-0.

4. Policy Issues for Discussion and Committee Determination

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee

1. Welcome to New Park Commission Member – Peckham noted Conrad’s resignation from the Commission. Kelly Zagrzebski was appointed to the Park Commission as a citizen member by the County Board on June 22, 2021. Zagrzebski gave some background information about herself.

2. Election of Officers – Nomination and Election of Park Commission President and Vice President – Nominations for President were opened. Opall nominated Peckham for President. Nominations were closed and a unanimous ballot was cast to elect Peckham as President. Nominations for Vice-President were opened. Herbst nominated Rick Seefeldt. Nominations were closed and a unanimous ballot was cast to elect Seefeldt as Vice-President.

3. Summer Parks Tour Parks of Interest – The date for the tour is August 26th. Possible parks discussed included Dells of the Eau Claire, Amco, Big Rapids, 45/90 Geographical marker, Norrie Lake on the Mountain Bay Trail. Staff will determine which parks to tour. City Council and County Board members will be invited on the tour as well.

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. 2022 Staffing Requests – Polley is bringing a few new employee requests forward for two reasons. One is that they have to be taken to both the Commission and the City Park Committee because the funding is split. The other reason is that Department staff had taken a culture survey and some themes came out of it related to staffing/equipment needs. Polley discussed some of the details from employee meetings that took place regarding the culture survey. Freix gave an overview of all the properties, programs and services that have been added to the Department over the years while staffing was reduced. He gave detail on the reduction of full time staff while there were increases in seasonal staff. He said seasonals are getting harder to find and their availability is limited as to how early in the year they can start. Polley mentioned one example is that if Rib Falls Park is developed that will be an extra 300 acres that is going to need more maintenance and extra staffing. She felt staff has to do a better job of explaining what it means for the Department if something new is built or a higher level of maintenance is needed somewhere. It has to look at the sustainability of the Department and ways to increase revenue. Staff needs to know the expectations from elected officials on what the priorities are. There are ways other counties are doing things that this County may want to consider.

Two positions are needed and one position is a Recreation Supervisor whose primary responsibility would be aquatics and managing the three outdoor aquatic centers in addition to other aquatic programming. Adding this position would allow the Recreation Superintendent to focus on enhancing the recreation programs offered by both the City and the County increasing the program revenue received for each entity. This position would be funded 40% by the County and 60% by the City. The second position requested is a Maintenance Technician. This position is under the direction of the Operations Manager and is needed based on the added amenities, events and maintenance requirements. This would allow the Department to enhance the services we provide to the community and allow other staff to more efficiently manage their workload. This position would be funded 50% by the County and 50% by the City. Freix emphasized that every effort has been made to be more efficient and save costs but the Department just needs more help. Discussion followed. **Motion** by Wadinski, second by Herbst to approve the additional two positions and move them onto Environmental Resource Committee for further recommendation. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 6-0.

Zagrzebski left the meeting at 11:30am.

7. Educational Presentation/Outcome Monitoring Reports for Discussion

A. Park Update - Marathon Park Playground: Installation of the equipment with the contractor has begun and should be complete by July 1st. Working to set a date for the poured in place surface installation. County Playgrounds: Replacement of sand with Engineered Wood Fiber continues (approximately 70% complete). Big Eau Pleine Park Playground has been removed and the new playground will be installed by our staff within the next month. Marathon Park: Stump cleanup from late spring Ash Tree removals is underway. (Process was delayed due to required cleanup from last windstorm). Horticulture Program: All beds and planters were recently planted with flowers at county buildings and facilities. Routine Operations/Programs: Mowing Operations, Urban forestry program; tree trimming, removals. Building and structure maintenance. Shelter reservations and Special Events. Equipment maintenance and repair. Questions were answered.

B. Polley explained that in 2021 the Department will be providing additional staffing for the Fair as the Fair's Building and Grounds Superintendent (BGS). For several years the fair provided their own BGS and our Department provided that position with two full-time staff (and additional help as needed) for the week prior to, during and after the fair. The Fair's BGS has chosen not to come back. The Fair has agreed to cover the cost of this position upon receiving sufficient revenue. The Fair has also agreed to provide the Department with sponsorship opportunities throughout the fair including the Pardee Street gate, sponsorship of the Rodeo and our logo on the electronic board in the grandstand each night. Our logo will also be featured in the fair brochure, social media and banners within the park. Discussion followed.

C. 100+1 County Parks Anniversary – Polley reported that the 100+1 County Park Anniversary is still scheduled for August 28th from 3-9pm in Marathon Park. The tentative schedule for the celebration includes food trucks, Parks and Sheriff's equipment on display, train rides, splash pad, possible wagon rides, activities (arts and crafts, foam area, obstacle course, bags tournament, inflatables, photo booth, etc.), local entertainment, Hello Weekend band and fireworks.

8. Announcements

A. Next Meeting Date & Time, Location–Tue., August 3, 2021, 2021 at 10:30am at Park Operations 900 Pardee Street followed by Joint Meeting with the Fair Board.

B. Future Agenda Items – September meeting will be held at the Historical Society building to view the 100 years of County parks display.

9. Adjourn – **Motion** by Opall, second by Seefeldt to adjourn at 11:50am. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 6-0.