

DRAFT
MARATHON COUNTY PARK COMMISSION

Date and Time of Meeting: August 4, 2020 at 10:30 am

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

Park Commissioners present: Connie Conrad, Allen Opall, Pat Peckham, Rick Seefeldt, James Wadinski, Jean Maszk, Dawn Herbst

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

1. **Call to Order** – President Conrad called the Park Commission meeting to order at 10:32am. 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 Park Commission Portion of the Minutes of the June 30, 2020 Joint Park Commission and Forestry/Recreation Committee Meeting - Motion** by Opall, second by Peckham to approve the Park Commission portion of the minutes of the June 30, 2020 Joint Park Commission and Forestry/Recreation Committee meeting. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 7-0.

4. **Policy Issues for Discussion and Committee Determination**
 - A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee
 1. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Targets Utilized at the Duane L. Corbin Shooting Range – Polley explained that a County Board Supervisor had passed on concerns from a constituent of human silhouette targets being utilized at the County’s Duane L. Corbin Shooting Range. Staff contacted the County’s Corporation Counsel on this matter. The ability to choose the target used in shooting practice has First Amendment "freedom of expression" implications. A park, by its very nature as a public space, has been traditionally viewed by courts to be a public forum for expression of ideas. Discharge of firearms is prohibited in all other City/County Parks, except Duane L. Corbin Shooting Range Park, pursuant to the rules and regulations established by the County. The County does have authority to regulate the manner in which firearms are discharged. For example, customers are not permitted to shoot outside of their designated lanes. One hallmark of permissible First Amendment regulation is that it must be content-neutral. Not allowing a silhouette target is considered regulation of content. It is a subjective judgment based on an image that offends the sensibility of some people, but not others. The County can restrict targets that contain personal likeness as this is not content neutral. The only content-neutral restriction would be to require that customers use only targets purchased (or provided upon payment of the fee) at the park. Staff does not recommend this restriction due to staffing needs and, during this time of COVID-19, increased face to face interaction. A rule could be added to the current list of rules and regulations such as “All targets must be content neutral and not contain the likeness of an individual”. Questions were answered and discussion followed. **Motion** by Opall, second by Maszk to add a rule that says “all targets must be content neutral and not contain the likeness of an individual”. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 7-0.

 2. Discussion and Possible Action Reallocating 2020 Small Project Funds - The PRF budget includes \$100,000.00 each year to complete small projects that fall outside of the general maintenance items but are not large enough to submit as Capital Improvement Program requests. In 2020 \$106,729.00 was allocated to small projects. Each year the department chooses which projects are priority projects. Items this year have shifted as different opportunities have presented themselves. This year the projects that had been scheduled included the Eau Claire Dells step overlook, dehumidifier replacement in the ice arena, Multi-Purpose Building sound system upgrade, and marquee replacement at Marathon Park. An opportunity arose earlier this year when the Highway Department was paving County Road Y and also paved the campground park road which was a needed project and provided a significant cost savings. Staff had to reallocate funds for it so decided to take the Marathon Park marquee off the list for this year and will submit that as a capital improvement project. The other big project that was going to be done this year was to replace one arena sound system at Marathon Park. Currently there are four different sound systems put in by different user groups to serve their particular purpose. The County is replacing these systems with one universal system that can be used by all groups. The project scope changed to include both rinks based on the needs of the user groups therefore requiring a reallocation of funds. An additional project was to purchase the connections on how the glass is held in MPB 2. Questions were answered. **Motion** by Seefeldt, second by Peckham to approve the reallocation of funds to the revised 2020 priority small projects. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 7-0.

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. None

7. Educational Presentation/Outcome Monitoring Reports for Discussion

A. Department and Park Commission Overview – Polley gave an overview of the mission, vision, and role of the Park Commission; the department’s programs and facilities that are available to the community; past, current and future projects; and the department’s goals related to the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. Members were given detailed information including a contact list, the organizational structure of the department, an overview of the department website, Park Commission bylaws, history, the executive summary from the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, the fee structure, current budget, and user group information. Polley discussed the history of the Park Commission and the City Park and Recreation Committee. She mentioned that Covid-19 had raised some questions of the department regarding authority so the agreement will be clarified. The joint department has been working well and staff manages the parks as one system, not looking at whether it’s City or County but to make sure it all runs well. Polley said the parks and facilities serve all of Marathon County and the City of Wausau and provide year round activities. The department looks at all aspects to provide quality of life, tourism, and natural resources to the public. Polley discussed the past, current and future planned projects. She discussed the goals which include: making sure everyone has access to the park system; protecting its natural resources; maintaining the facilities to a high standard so they are safe and enjoyable; promoting outdoor recreation, and continuing to be a partner to all of its user groups and service organizations. Conrad asked that differently-abled participants are taken into consideration as plans and parks are developed because the value of this is so great.

B. Project Update – Park Maintenance and Operations-Dells of Eau Claire Dells Beach/Picnic Area: Due to recent flooding on July 27-28; Park staff will need to repair washouts, make turf repairs, road and trail repairs, debris cleanup, and restroom remediation. Repairs will start week of August 1 after site firms up. MPB #1: Refrigeration controller installation is in progress. Staff recently completed upgrades on electrical in switch boxes (electrical control panel) to prepare for controller. Staff will work with a contractor after next scheduled event to install a new dehumidifier unit (replacement) in the northwest corner of the arena. Marathon Park Farm Museum: Contractor has completed repairs/rebuild from winter snow load collapse. Park staff will now start to rebuild electrical system. McMillan Marsh: Staff recently completed granite leveling on approximately 1 ¼ mile of trail/dike. Mountain Bay Trail: Trail grading for leveling and vegetation control is in progress. Routine Operations/Programs: Mowing Operations, Urban forestry program; tree trimming, removals, stump grinding, EAB treatments in progress; Building and structure maintenance; Shelter reservations and Special Events; Equipment maintenance and repair; Shooting Range; Marathon Junction; Campgrounds; Firewood processing will begin week of August 1 due to increased demand. Restroom Maintenance; increased maintenance (daily) and staffing due to COVID 19 recommendations.

8. Announcements

A. Next Meeting Date & Time, Location – September 1, 2020 at 10:30 am, Rm 5, 212 River Drive, Wausau WI 54403

B. Future Agenda Items – none brought forward

8. Adjourn–Motion by Herbst, second by Opall to adjourn at 11:45 am. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 7-0.