

**DRAFT**  
**MARATHON COUNTY PARK COMMISSION**

Date and Time of Meeting: Tuesday, January 8, 2019 at 2:00 pm

Meeting Location: Conference Room 2, 212 River Drive, Wausau WI 54403

Park Commission members present: Connie Conrad, John Durham, Gary Gisselman, Pat Peckham, Dennis Smith

Park Commissioners excused: Jacob Langenhahn, Rick Seefeldt

Staff present: Jamie Polley, Dan Fiorenza, Greg Freix,

Others present: Aaron Ruff-CWOCC, Tara Matthews, Caterina Morice

**1. Call to Order** – President Gary Gisselman called the Park Commission meeting to order. Official notice and the agenda for this meeting were posted publicly in accordance with the State statutes.

**2. Public Comment Period** – none brought forward.

**3. Approval of Minutes of the November 6, 2018 Park Commission Meeting** – **Motion** by Conrad, second by Peckham to approve the November 6, 2018 Park Commission minutes. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

**4. Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports**

A. Discussion and Possible Action to Apply for a Trail Accelerator Grant to Develop a Master Plan for the Brokaw Mountain Bike Area – Polley said this trail accelerator grant is offered through the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) and it's to help develop plans for sites that are underutilized. The Central Wisconsin Off-Road Cycling Coalition (CWOCC) has developed a conceptual plan for the 80 acre property the County owns in Brokaw but is in need of a much more in depth, detailed plan with specific trail designs, maps and site plans to begin fundraising and trail-building efforts. Ruff said the Parks Department is going to be the applicant for the funding because CWOCC as a 501c3 cannot apply. This grant would bring in IMBA Trail Solutions which is IMBA's trail building arm. CWOCC and the Parks Department have previously worked with them on Sylvan Hill and Ringle trail projects. CWOCC will be responsible for writing the grant and will provide the \$15,000 in funds that will be matched with \$15,000 in grant funds. Ruff mentioned that it was a competitive grant but he felt their group could make a good case for it. This grant is to design a site plan, additional funding will be needed to professionally build the trail. Conrad thanked the CWOCC group and said because their reputation is out there and they have done an excellent job on previous projects that this is an easy decision. The soft use of the land and the economic impact to the community are all wins so she appreciates this project. It has easy access off the highway and is minutes away from restaurants and lodging. Peckham commented that a portfolio of trail opportunities is being built in efforts to become an IMBA Ride Center. Polley mentioned she had reached out to the Nordic Ski group because a sign was found there. No one she reached out to was aware of a group out there. They thought years ago people would make their own trails but it is hard, steep and rocky terrain so only elite skiers would have done that. Nordic skiing did not see a need for this area. **Motion** by Peckham, second by Durham to allow the Park Department to be the applicant for a trail accelerator grant on behalf of CWOCC. Motion **carried** by voice vote.

B. Discussion and Possible Action on 2019 Project and Task Plan – Polley had put together a list of all the County projects that were approved for this year. There were no capital improvement projects approved other than rolling stock. These projects are ones that staff is working in conjunction with groups on, they are grant projects, and they are also projects that are in the general operating budget that are budgeted for every year for smaller projects. The biggest project will be the update of the outdoor recreation plan. The forestry division received a sustainable forestry grant and will do some treating of forest areas for regrowth. Other projects include flooring replacement at the ice arena in Marathon Park, light upgrades in Marathon Park, and an electrical upgrade at the Dells of the Eau Claire Park, and a joint project with MC United Soccer for an open air shelter at the Eastbay Sports Complex. Some carry overs to 2019 include a paving project at the Big Eau Pleine Park and restroom replacement funds. Tasks include evaluating Marathon Junction and its operation and working on a park asset list, 5-year capital improvement plan, a community assessment of program needs, user group agreements, Friends of the Mountain Bay Trail organization, forest and park land acquisitions, sponsorship program, and a new or improved website. Questions were answered.

C. Parks, Recreation & Forestry Mission Statement – Polley explained that the Department was tasked with looking at the County Strategic Plan and the County Comprehensive Plan, specifically and the areas where the Department is identified in those objectives and to become familiar with how the Department is part of the objective. Managers first are working on updating the Department’s mission. Polley said a few key words kept coming up that related to the Department like adaptability, sustainability, and the healthy recreation aspect. Three top mission statements were narrowed down from ten that had been submitted. Those three have been given to all of the full time staff to rank. Polley will then bring those results to the Park Commission. Polley said they wanted to get a statement that was all encompassing of what the Department does and that people could remember. Commission members gave positive feedback on the statements and discussion followed.

#### D. Project Update

Marathon Park MPB/Ice Arenas: Daily programs and arena maintenance operations ongoing. Youth Hockey, High Schools, Wausau Riverwolves, Central Wisconsin Storm and Public Skating. Public Skating attendance is up 30% from last year. Nine Mile Trails: Trails, equipment and staff are all on standby in anticipation of significant snowfall in order to open. If weather remains above normal and snowfall below normal scheduled culvert work will be completed at designated areas. Operations Building Project: Storeroom remodel and reorganization to improve allocation of space and efficiency of locating products and supplies. Campground Firewood Processing: Will begin processing end of next week at Big Eau Pleine Park and work around other winter and weather operations. (100 cords). Mountain Bay Trail: Intersection gates will be removed, repaired, repainted and new safety reflectors added for next season. Routine Operations/Programs: Snow removal; walks, trails, parking lots and roads. Urban forestry program; tree trimming and removals. Building and structure maintenance. Shelter reservations and special events. Equipment maintenance and repair.

Fiorenza reported that the Ragnar running race is coming back next year, nordic ski events are not going so well because of the lack of snow, Riverwolves is going fine, and the Eastbay Sports Complex is still getting rave reviews. He mentioned that the pond hockey event this weekend will move to Sunny Vale Park.

#### **5. Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution - None**

#### **6. Policy Issues for Discussion and Committee Determination for Consideration by Environmental Resources Committee - None**

#### **7. Announcements**

A. Next Meeting Date & Time, Location – Tuesday, Feb. 5, 2019 at 2:00 pm, Rm 3, 212 River Drive, Wausau WI 54403

B. Future Agenda Items – Spring Park Tour, cost recovery of our facilities

#### **8. Adjourn – Motion** by Conrad, second by Durham to adjourn at 3:00pm. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.