

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

Date and Time of Meeting: Tuesday, July 30, 2019 at 10:00 am  
Meeting Location: Park Operations Shop, 900 Pardee Street, Wausau WI 54401

Park Commissioners present: Gary Gisselman, Pat Peckham, Rick Seefeldt, Dennis Smith  
Park Commissioners excused: Connie Conrad, John Durham, Jacob Langenhahn  
Staff present: Jamie Polley, Greg Freix, Jon Daniels  
Others present: Pickleball Club Members, Chad Billeb – Chief Deputy Sheriff’s Dept., Brian Kowalski – City Pages

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

**Public Comment Period** – none brought forward

**Approval of Minutes of the July 2, 2019 Park Commission Meeting – Motion** by Seefeldt, second by Smith to approve the July 2, 2019 Park Commission minutes. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

**Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution:**

Discussion and Possible Action by Committee to Forward to the Environmental Resource Committee for its Consideration  
1. Approve the Donation of Labor and Funds to Construct Six Pickleball Courts in Marathon Park by the Wausau Area Pickleball, Inc. – The Wausau Area Pickleball, Inc. is proposing to fully fund and build six pickleball courts at Marathon Park. The building of the six pickleball courts was presented for 2019 as a capital improvement project which was not funded. It was again proposed as an improvement project for 2020 with an 80% donation from the pickleball club until the club came forward offering to fund 100%. The six pickleball courts will replace the two deteriorating tennis courts south of the three current pickleball courts. The addition of the pickleball courts will serve the growing pickleball players in the community and will allow for the department and the club to host pickleball tournaments that will generate revenue. The pickleball club currently has about 180 members and continues to grow. Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the country and a lot of communities are embracing it. The pickleball club would like to work with the department to provide introductory lessons, youth lessons, etc. and has members in their club that would be willing to provide the help. Members discussed the long waiting times to be able to play on the three courts at Marathon Park. Polley mentioned that there are courts in other parks that have been lined for pickleball and as the tennis courts are redone throughout the parks, staff will re-evaluate the need for whether or not to have tennis courts and pickleball or whether they need to covert more to pickleball. The tennis courts that are heavily used for tennis are the ones by Oak Island Park.

Seefeldt questioned if a total of nine courts would be enough for the future. Pickleball members explained that twelve would be ideal for tournaments. Discussion took place about which direction might be best to locate additional pickleball courts if that would be considered as a future possibility. Freix noted that if additional courts are built other stakeholders would need to be notified. Polley said that another item brought forward to CIP is to relook at the master plan for Marathon Park. The County now owns more buildings to the south of the park. There will be a lot of stakeholders involved in the best use of the entire park.

Peckham questioned if Seefeldt wanted to make sure when this project was completed that it was easily expandable or if he was looking to add another three courts to the current project which would increase the costs. Polley suggested that because they have the two existing tennis courts footprint already there they will work on this project to build six pickleball courts. If the request is for three additional courts they will take their time over winter and discuss that location. **Motion** by Peckham, second by Seefeldt to approve the donation (with the utmost gratitude) of labor and funds to construct six pickleball courts in Marathon Park by the Wausau Area Pickleball Inc. Motion **carried** by voice vote.

2. Position Restructuring – Chief Park Ranger to Recreation Deputy

Polley said the current Chief Ranger, Jon Daniels, is retiring after 37 years with the County. Recently the County Board has

given the final approval for the hiring of a new 0.6 FTE Snowmobile/ATV Coordinator to allow for a full-time Park Ranger to be hired to dedicate more time to park enforcement. Daniels was deputized by the Sheriff and moving forward officers deputized by the Sheriff will work under the Sheriff's Department. County Administration has approved a collaboration between the Park, Recreation and Forestry Department and the Sheriff's Department where our department will contract with the Sheriff's Department to provide a Recreation Deputy that will be housed in the Park Department offices. The Recreation Deputy will be assigned solely to patrolling and monitoring the parks and forest units. Funding for the position will remain in the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department budget under contract services.

The Sheriff's Department has also put forward a request for an additional position this year that will be 80% grant funded for snowmobile/ATV enforcement, water enforcement and safety programs. The other 20% of that position will be funded by the Sheriff's Department. Billeb commented that both positions would be stationed at the Parks Department reporting to a lieutenant in the Sheriff's Office. When one is working the other one is off. The parks will get additional coverage and during peak times of the year when they are out on boats, snowmobiles or ATV's that will also be shared in order to meet DNR and the community's requirements. The Sheriff's Department does a small contract with Rib Mountain for services they provide there which is similar. They are in business of shared positions and already do so in the drug unit, and crisis assessment response team.

Daniels felt it will be a dramatic improvement over the current arrangement because he did not have the time to devote to proactive enforcement in the parks. Questions were answered. **Motion** by Peckham, second by Smith to approve the position restructuring of the Chief Park Ranger to a contracted deputy position with the Sheriff's Department for recreation. **Motion carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

#### **Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports**

A. Cost Recovery of Enterprise Funds and Special Use Facilities – Polley explained that Department costs will be an ongoing discussion with the Park Commission. At the last meeting Commission asked what 100% cost recovery would mean for the enterprise funds and special use facilities. The three enterprise funds are Eastbay Sports Complex, Nine Mile and Marathon Junction which all technically should be at 100% cost recovery. The special use facilities are the Marathon Park Ice Arena and Sunnyvale Softball Complex which are in the department's overall general operating budget so they are not technically separated out but they are big facilities which generate a lot of revenue. Eastbay Sports Complex had a directive of 70% cost recovery and currently between expenses and revenues, not including equipment or dedication, the costs are at 73% cost recovery. Nine Mile is at just about 100% cost recovery and this amount fluctuates every year depending whether or not there is snow. Marathon Junction is supposed to be 100% cost recovery but there has been transfer of about \$7,000 from the levy the last couple years to offset that. Sunnyvale Softball Complex was at a directive of 70% cost recovery at one point which was reduced to 55%. Polley said the Marathon Park ice arenas are at 85% cost recovery which also fluctuates. Polley said that moving forward, staff will also look at equipment costs and determine what additional costs that puts on the facilities. Polley explained that none of its budgets include any type of deferred maintenance or improvement costs. Any improvement they can't fit into the operating budget or fees has to go through the CIP process. Peckham was surprised that the expectation for Nine Mile was to be 100% cost recovery. Polley thought the overall Nine Mile fund had a small deficit. Some years they have gone over 100% cost recovery and some years it has been less. If it was over every year then there would be some funds to cover a bad snow year or for improvements. That is why having events out there, even though it's a huge balance of the number, types of events with daily users, logging, hunting, etc., that the events really generate a lot of revenue for Nine Mile. Freix commented that the tournaments at Sunnyvale Softball Complex bring in a lot of revenue there. Polley said that staff will continue to bring information regarding costs to the Commission.

#### **Announcements**

- A. Next Meeting Date & Time, Location – Tues., August 6, 2019 at 2:00 pm, Room 3, 212 River Drive., Wausau WI 54403
- B. Future Agenda Items – CORP discussion with MSA

**Adjourn – Motion** by Peckham, second by Seefeldt to adjourn at 11:10am. **Motion carried** by voice vote, no dissent.