

## PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018

The Merrill Parks & Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 4:15 p.m. at the Smith Center.

Members Present: Brian Artac, Dave Sukow, Joan Tabor, Mike Willman, Kate Baker, Kyle Gulke, and Jean Ravn

Members Absent: None

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf

Visitors: Dave Johnson, Kandy Peterson, Erik Pfantz, Melissa Schroeder, MP3

\*\*Motion Sukow, seconded by Artac to approve the minutes from the May meeting.

\*\*Carried unanimously.

\*\*Motion by Ravn, seconded by Baker to approve the claims from May 2018.

\*\*Carried unanimously

The next item on the agenda was to elect Chairperson of the Commission. Wendorf took over the meeting for this portion and asked for nominations for chairperson. Wendorf summarized duties and responsibilities of Chairperson, including being a member of the City Plan Commission.

\*\*Motion Artac, seconded by Sukow to nominate Mike Willman as Chairperson of the Commission.

\*\*Carried unanimously.

Public Comment: Greg Hartwig urged the Commission to re-consider/urge others to support the continuation of alternate River Bend Trail route to Pine Ridge Avenue. The route was discussed at the Board of Public Works a few weeks ago and the loop route back to Park Street was approved but the route to Pine Ridge Avenue was not acted upon. Hartwig stated the importance of connectivity throughout town and this would be a very positive continuation. Ravn mentioned that she has had some public feedback on this topic as well.

The next item was to elect Vice Chairperson of the Commission. Wendorf led the discussion again and Baker asked what the duties were for Vice Chairperson. Wendorf explained that this person is responsible to run the meetings when the Chairperson is unable to attend, and that any Commissioner has the ability to request items be placed on the agenda.

\*\*Motion Sukow, seconded by Tabor to nominate Brian Artac as Vice Chairperson of the Commission Baker asked if it were possible to nominate herself as Chairperson. After brief discussion, it was determined that was not possible.

**\*\*Motion Gulke, seconded by Ravn to nominate Kate Baker as Vice Chairperson of the Commission**  
Wendorf then asked the Commission if they would prefer voice vote on the two nominees or secret ballot. The Commissioners requested secret ballot vote. Wendorf passed out ballots and collected them and counted them. The results were 4 in favor of Artac and 3 were in favor of Baker.

**\*\*After the results were tallied, the Commission unanimously for Artac as Vice Chairperson.**

The next item on the agenda was to begin revisiting the topic of Skate Park. Wendorf began the discussion by talking about Mayor Woellner's public comment from the previous meeting requesting the Commission revisit the skate park discussions. Mayor Woellner stated that he would like to formulate an Ad-Hoc Committee to steer the process and he mentioned that he had some ideas for funding as well. Wendorf mentioned that at this time we should not be looking at specific locations, designs, funding, or any other details but this was to reintroduce the topic and get things started. Sukow stated that he talked with Mayor Woellner after that meeting and he mentioned that he would like the Ad-Hoc Committee to focus on design and funding, as well as potential locations. Willman stated that he would like to use the word funding instead of fundraising because the fundraising word can limit potential people who would otherwise like to be involved. Artac mentioned that we will most likely need to revisit some of the previous locations that were discussed at length over the past few years. Ravn mentioned the area between Lions and Stange Park where there are currently houses would be an intriguing spot because of its location and would not interfere with current park purposes. Willman mentioned that those are great ideas but today we are looking at discussing the formation of an Ad-Hoc Committee to dig deeper into all of the details that it would take to develop a new skate park. Wendorf mentioned that he was involved in the process of developing the current site years ago and the theme was the same over the past few years as it was 16+ years ago. Wendorf also mentioned that this might be a great opportunity to think outside of the box and potentially look into a vacant building for an enclosed four seasons skate park. Wendorf said this has never been considered before and could be a better investment of efforts to have something for 12 months instead of 7-9. There are other communities who have indoor skate parks, and in some instances they are not affiliated with Parks & Recreation. Ravn commented that she liked Wendorf's previous summary where it stated that a preferred location doesn't have to be in a park so as not to change the intended purpose, or usage, of a current park setting. Gulke also mentioned that he likes the idea of one main skate park and a few smaller/simple skate facilities spread around. The conversation then began on Ad-Hoc Committee volunteers from the Commission and Willman asked if there were any volunteers. Gulke and Baker voiced their interest in being involved on the Ad-Hoc Committee. Wendorf stated that he would reach out to Mayor Woellner to begin putting the new Mayor's committee together and set a game plan. Wendorf said he will report back to the Commission when things get going.

The next item was monthly reports. Wendorf asked if there were any questions before summarizing the upcoming summer projects, aquatic center opening, and busy recreation season that was upon the department. He mentioned that things were going well.

**\*\*Motion Ravn, seconded by Artac to approve Wendorf's monthly report.**

**\*\*Carried unanimously.**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, at 4:15 at City Hall.

Public Comment: Commissioner Ravn stated she had a call from some of the volunteers that offer the free lunch in the park program at Stange Park about availability during construction. Wendorf stated that it should not be a concern and asked Ravn to have them contact him for any arrangements. Greg Hartwig asked the Commission to reconsider their location (prior to public comment the location for the July meeting was to be at the Smith Center again). He stated it is difficult to hear at times, as well as the lack of live stream capabilities at a remote site. The Commission thanked him for his feedback and changed the location to the City Hall.

\*\*Motion Artac, seconded by Ravn to adjourn at 5:18 p.m.

\*\*Carried unanimously.

Dan Wendorf  
Recording Secretary