

**Walworth County Board of Supervisors
Park Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 15, 2020
Walworth County Government Center Room 114
100 West Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin**

Chair Nancy Russell called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Roll call was conducted and the following members were present either in person or by remote attendance: Chair Nancy Russell, Vice Chair Dan Kilkenny, Supervisor Brian Holt, and Citizen Members Mariette Nowak and Merilee Holst. A quorum was declared.

Others present, either in person or by remote attendance:

County Staff: County Administrator Mark Luberda; Director-Public Works Richard Hough; Deputy Director-Asset Management (PW) Matt Mortwedt

On motion by Vice Chair Dan Kilkenny, second by Supervisor Brian Holt, the agenda was approved with no withdrawals.

On motion by Vice Chair Kilkenny, second by Supervisor Holt, the April 27, 2020 meeting minutes were approved.

Public comment – There was none.

Consent Items

- Reports

- 1) Park Summary Report – June 2020

Chair Russell asked about the savannah project listed and Deputy Director-Asset Management (PW) Matt Mortwedt said he is meeting with Geneva Lakes Conservancy (GLC) soon to discuss the details. Chair Russell requested this Committee receive copies of the final Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) for both GLC and the Kettle Moraine Land Trust (KMLT). She expressed concern at the small number of projects related to the parks themselves in the report. Mortwedt said the prairie has been completed and he will be discussing the savannah project with GLC tomorrow. Chair Russell noted she would like the barn at the White River Park to be utilized to its full potential. Mortwedt said he plans to develop a fall burn plan as the burns could not take place this spring due to COVID-19 restrictions. Citizen Member Merilee Holst asked what the projected completion date is for the Natureland concrete pad and well. Mortwedt said the next step is to bring in the contractor, but there is not much work left, and he believes it will be completed in less than thirty days. Mortwedt also noted July 15th is not actually a volunteer day, but an educational walk with KMLT at Price Park. He added that he will discuss possible educational activities with GLC at his meeting.

- 2) Report from Mariette Nowak following a walkthrough conducted at Natureland Park, Price Park Conservancy, and White River Park

Citizen Member Nowak said she was pleased with Natureland and Price Parks when she visited both recently. She noted that she had encountered unleashed dogs on the trail at Price Park and expressed her wish for a sign to be placed there alerting citizens that unleashed dogs are not allowed on trails. She also noted there is a nest box that has fallen apart at Price Park and Mortwedt said he will speak to his staff about addressing these issues. Nowak then said there is an invasive yellow iris that is non-native near the bridge closest to the parking lot on White River Park, and requested staff remove them as soon as possible and

Mortwedt said staff will take care of this. She added that at White River Park, she has also noted recently-planted non-native plants she is concerned about, as the County has an ordinance that prohibits the planting of non-native species in County Parks. She then spoke to the importance of planting native plants. Hough said he believes these were planted by County staff with good intentions, and asked how Nowak would like to proceed. She said she hopes this will not happen again, but said it would make sense to leave them now that they are planted. She said she has asked in the past, and would like to reiterate, that a list of proposed plants be presented to the Park Committee prior to plantings in the future. Hough suggested a list be created of approved plants and trees so each decision does not need approval by the Committee every time there is a planting. Nowak suggested plants be run past her personally prior to plantings in the future. Chair Russell asked if Nowak could give Mortwedt a list of the nurseries in the area that carry native plants. Mortwedt apologized for the misunderstanding and said it is his intention to follow the ordinance closely in the future. Supervisor Holt recommended the plants listed on the current list be reviewed to ensure they are acceptable and to ensure staff is educated. Mortwedt said staff will work with Nowak in the future to ensure cooperation takes place.

Unfinished Business

- Update on the SEWRPC Park and Open Space Plan

Mortwedt said the updates on Chapters 4 and 5 are coming, but are not available at this time. He received an email from SEWRPC staff with questions for recommendations regarding Chapter 4, related to Lake Access. SEWRPC staff is curious if the County has any plans to provide additional access to waterways. Chair Russell noted it may be beneficial to identify logical places that provide water access. Hough noted these chapters will be brought before the Committee again before they are finalized.

- Ordinance **-07/20 Amending Sections of Chapter 42 of the Walworth County Code of Ordinances Relating to Parks and Recreation

Chair Russell stated she wants there to be clear wording identifying there is no camping allowed at White River Park, as there is no supervision present to ensure rules are being followed. Holst expressed concern over the wording of “and special event” on line 5, and suggested changing “and” to “and/or.” Supervisor Holt suggested only including the approved camping area at Natureland Park as part of the ordinance. **Vice Chair Kilkenny made a motion, second by Supervisor Holt, to approve the ordinance amending sections of Chapter 42 of the Walworth County Code of Ordinances Relating to Parks and Recreation, subject to the mentioned changes and additions. Motion carried 5-0.**

Reports/announcements by Chairperson – Chair Russell said we need to spend more money on our parks resourcefully and stated she wants to see our parks improved to better serve our community. She also encouraged Mortwedt to keep the Committee members updated prior to the September meeting, as there is a large gap between meetings.

Confirmation of next meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 14, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.

Adjournment

On motion and second by Vice Chair Kilkenny and Supervisor Holt, Chair Russell adjourned the meeting at 3:06 p.m.