

City of Baraboo
Parks & Recreation Commission
November 12, 2018 – Minutes

Present: Roy Franzen, James Francisco, Angela Witczak, Craig Schlender, Dan Lewison & Mike Hardy

Also Present: Ben Bromley (media), Tori Spinoso, Emily Truman & Mark Schauf (City staff)

Franzen called the meeting to order. Legal Posting of the Agenda had been met. Witczak moved and Francisco seconded approval of the October 8, 2018 minutes. Motion carried.

Witczak moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Schlender. Motion carried.

New Business: City Attorney Truman addressed the Commission about the need to review Chapter 19 on the Code of Ordinances after she noted the new special event permit changes would require that the park regulations be updated. Of particular importance was to note when the Commission would like staff to address permit applications and when they would like notification. Hardy added that the Commission only meets once per month and at times special event permits come in only 15 days before the event. So in order to approve or deny the application, the Commission would at times be called in for a special meeting to address the request. Commission members said that in most cases they would trust Hardy to address special events, and simply notify them under staff reports of any out of the ordinary event requests. If staff felt that the request should have Commission input, they would address them as an agenda item. Chief Schauf spoke about alcohol consumption in parks and on Riverwalk. Truman also mentioned that dogs in parks should be reconsidered and language confirmed, including if and where they are allowed, how long of a leash is permitted, etc. Hardy added that the Commission should consider banning smoking in the zoo, as his staff has commented recently that ashes and cigarette butts have been found in animal exhibits and there is a concern that an animal could ingest the ashes and get sick. Franzen asked Hardy, Schauf and Truman to draft language examples they could consider at a future meeting to address concerns, including special events language, alcohol and smoking, park hours and dogs for future meeting consideration.

Hardy stated that Bike Wisconsin has requested use of the Civic Center for an overnight stay June 12, 2019. They had about 100 bikers this summer use the Civic Center and overall the stay went well. Since Hardy volunteered his time to stay overnight at the Civic Center, the City didn't have any staff expense, and only charged \$250 for the rental. In 2019 the group would like to reserve room 12 in addition to the gym, locker rooms and kitchen so they have more space. Hardy added that the group brings tourists to town who shop and eat downtown and hopefully return with their families later. The regular rate would be over \$900, but Hardy recommended just charging them for room rental while the Center is open and staff time for overnight hours. \$580 would cover staff and rental time. Schlender moved to approve charging Bike Wisconsin \$580 for overnight rental at the Civic Center June 12, 2019. Second by Francisco. Motion approved.

Hardy presented a transitional conceptual plan for renovations to the old deer exhibit. He asked not to focus on the animals at this stage, but more so the exhibit layout and fencing. Staff designed the plan to be low cost, noting that Friends of the Baraboo Zoo didn't have any money to contribute and Hardy didn't want to ask taxpayers to fund additions. However, it was designed to be easily altered later with a modular design that would allow for easy conversion to more expensive exhibits in the future should money be made available. A feature of the design was the addition of a public access entrance/exit at the corner of Zoo Lane and Park Street. This would allow the interior fence along Park Street to come down and replace with landscaping at the zoo's most visible corner, eliminating the "prison-like institutional look" and provide a more welcome entrance and image for the zoo. Lewison asked if zoo staff agrees with this plan. Hardy stated that he has met with zoo staff every other week since August to discuss plans and they have provided input which had been considered, however the current plan had a few changes last week that were supposed to be discussed at last week's staff meeting, which was cancelled by zoo staff twice. Hardy provided staff with a copy of the plan that was being proposed and asked staff to e-mail him with their concerns before the meeting so he can add their comments. No one had e-mailed him, although Spinoso showed up at tonight's meeting and he believed she may have some comments. Hardy stated that he had worked with both parks and zoo staff to design the beaver pond as Phil Skwor on the parks staff has experience building ponds and his knowledge is used on all pond work done at the zoo. Spinoso noted that she did not like the location of the 2nd entrance on corner of Park and Zoo Lane as she worried about kids running into the street, however she offered no alternative. She also said she didn't like the owls "lined up in a row" and prefers seeing them split up in different areas of the zoo. She would also like to see a winding path with more space between exhibits. Hardy noted that some people like seeing animals together so they can compare and contrast similar species, and keeping them closer allow zoos to provide educational programs more easily. It is a matter of personal preference and neither opinion is right or wrong. Hardy added that he likes a more winding look to paths as well – however we have the challenge of a very small space, no budget and perimeter fencing that he didn't want to put exhibits directly against the perimeter fence so that people walking by couldn't access the animals through the outside fence, which could be a liability for

the City. Hardy stated that he began discussions with staff in August and noted to Zoo staff that FOBZ and the City had no money for the plan, so we would have to design a very inexpensive plan that allows for future enhancements when money is available. Witczak asked if Hardy could present a couple of alternate plans they could consider, as this was their first opportunity to consider. Hardy stated he could bring in additional plans to consider. He added that he was bringing it now as park staff is busy with other parks in the spring, so approval of at least part of the plan would allow us to get priorities done before spring so that park work is not affected. Franzen asked what part of the plan Hardy would need action on now. Hardy stated that Zoo Montana has a family of 3 beaver they are holding for us until spring. If Commission approves a new beaver exhibit, we can start on the pond and have exhibit done by spring for little cost. The barnyard exhibit also should be done as Hardy and Hess would be able to build that to avoid paying a contractor. Franzen moved to approve the new beaver exhibit and barnyard exhibit construction, with remaining parts of the plan to be discussed at a later meeting. Second by Witczak. Motion carried.

Staff Report: September revenues were \$15,581.26

Hardy reported that Dog Park improvements would start soon, but were on hold as City Engineer announced plans this week to improve the grade and erosion of the adjacent hillside, which will improve aesthetics but may affect the fence location and water runoff. Also, the new master lock system for the parks has been designed and ordered. We will start replacing locks and re-distributing keys soon. Finally new service doors for the swimming pool chemical rooms and Pierce Park Pavilion have been ordered and will be installed soon.

Next Regular Meeting: December 10, 2018.

Witczak motioned to adjourn, Schlender seconded. Motion carried

Respectfully Submitted,
Mike Hardy, Parks, Recreation & Forestry Director