

**MINUTES – HULL PARKS COMMISSION**  
**Thursday, September 18, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.**

**TOWN OF HULL MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

**4550 WOJCIK MEMORIAL DRIVE, STEVENS POINT, WI 54482**



**1) CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting of the Hull Parks Commission was called to order on Thursday, September 18, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. by Parks Chairperson Dave Wilz at the Hull Municipal Building, 4550 Wojcik Memorial Drive, Stevens Point, WI 54482.

Present: Chair: Dave Wilz, Committee Members: Maurice Stoltz, Mike O’Keefe, Brian Hicks, Jim Mendyke, Roland Schroeder, Parks Secretary: Patty Amman.

Absent: Janeen Cooper

Excused: Pete Kaminski

**2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE JULY 17, 2014 PARKS MEETING.**

Mendyke Regarding the discussion in the minutes about parks liability, there is a recreational immunity statute in Wisconsin. We’re not charging anyone to use the parks. If someone is in there and they’re injured on our equipment, the Town is not liable for that.

Amman That’s what I was wondering because I think that was what I was asking about.

Wilz Thanks Jim. How did you pick that up or did you have it in the back of your brain someplace?

Mendyke I did. I used to insure the City of Stevens Point and actually Judge Finn had one of the rulings that upheld the recreational immunity statute in Wisconsin in a park in Stevens Point. So it rang a bell with me when I was reading that.

Wilz Okay, good. Also, I think what goes along with that comment too was that we have our insurance people go through everything every fall and Pete had reported that last fall they gave us real high marks because they went to all the playgrounds and everything was well maintained.

Mendyke If there was a piece of equipment that wasn’t maintained and someone notified us, then we could be held liable if it wasn’t fixed.

Wilz Right, then it’s shame on you. Any other comments about the minutes from July 17?

Amman Who wasn't here last time? Jim, was that you? My question is because I try to make the minutes almost verbatim because for whoever is not here, when you read it, it's as close as you can get to being at the meeting and it helps you get up to speed.

Mendyke It was very nice. I felt like I didn't miss so much then.

*Motion made by Maurice Stoltz to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2014 Hull Parks Commission meeting. Seconded by Roland Schroeder. Motion passed with voice vote.*

**3) CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS. AGENDA ITEMS ARE FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: NONE.**

**4) ANNOUNCEMENTS; CHAIRPERSON AND MEMBERS.**

Wilz A few quick announcements. For a number of years right next door here where we have the brush and the leaves and compost, as you know, it's unattended and uncontrolled. It didn't used to be that way back in the day then we relaxed and opened it up for people and it's gotten a little bit uncontrollable with who is coming in, what they're bringing in, what they're dropping off and everything else. So we're going to be working on a program to tighten it up, put gates in and go back to the way we used to do it having days and hours that people can come in. We're not going to prevent it; we've just got to control it. Especially with the amount of brush that gets dropped off here and we don't know what new development it's coming from. When we put this into play in the next couple of weeks, John would like to get something started this fall, get people trained. We'll refine it moving forward. I made the observation that if we have that many non-Hull people in here dumping; we're not going to get a lot of push back from Town of Hull people because it's affecting just a few people. So if you utilize that area, know that is coming within the next couple of weeks with restrictions but there will be signs and information out by the road as to when it's open. It'll be open probably 2 days a week and during the fall cleanup, every Saturday and maybe limited hours on Sunday too because in the fall that's when, especially working people, have time to do their lawns.

We wanted to inform you that we're in the budgeting process right now and continue to work on that. We've been working on it for a few months. It's not just the budget coming up but we're taking a long-term approach, 5 to 7 years out trying to figure some things out. It's that time of the year.

For those of you that are aware, and those not aware, a couple of things going on in the town, if you saw in the paper, Nick and Dianne Somers, who own 80 acres out here north of Emerald Forest subdivision wanted to apply for a high capacity well permit. Wanted to clear cut everything and turn the 80 acres into ag. There was push-back, obviously, from the large subdivision out there. They were concerned about all the woods coming down and then what was going into the soil, and then the water drawdown potential because of Well #11 and all of our history there. We had a public forum meeting out at SPASH. Nick and Dianne showed up along with Louis Wysocki. They sat there and listened. They're very nice people but they're business people too and they've got their rights. They had offered to pull back doing that if Hull wanted to buy the land. In fact he had an offer to purchase with them. We thanked them for the possibility. We did some investigation. I didn't want us buying any piece of land

unless there's a long-range approach to the acquisition of the land. We re-engaged with them to see if there are other ways we can work with them to keep that impact down if they decide to go forward and obviously we hope that they don't. Again, that's related to water.

As far as parks go, we have now employed a part-time parks person who will finish cutting parks for the rest of the season. From my understanding, talking to Pete, it's worked out pretty well.

I was going to tell Janeen the Bike/Ped program in Portage County, the county wide program is going to be re-convening to finish off the program. I don't know if she wants to sit in on that and work on that with me, so that's coming up.

Amman Is there a date when that's going to be?

Wilz No. I contacted Sarah Wallace. We talked on the phone and e-mailed. It's not on the docket yet so I'm figuring after the first of the year. So I don't know the possible date.

Tree planning grant: we just received a grant application from American Transmissions which is an unrestricted grant. We applied for it last year and we got it. We got \$500, unrestricted. The idea was if we got it, at least if they got the renovation done and we wanted to do some landscaping, we could certainly go for that. It just came in. I told Pete this morning to go ahead and apply for it because it's totally unrestricted.

Amman Is that something you can get every year? Apply for it?

Wilz ATC is American Transmission Company and this is an outreach program that they have as long as they have money to fund it for communities. It's a way they give back because a lot of what they do when they go across Wisconsin and the Midwest as you know is they take it down as they're putting in transmission lines. So this is their community give-back program. As long as they have money to do it, I imagine they're going to offer it. They'll give anywhere from \$100 to a maximum of \$5,000 depending upon the number of people that apply for what's in the coffers. It's a math thing.

Don Kissinger from the DNR always sends out a memo about these grants and in his letter he talked about in North Central Wisconsin last year there were 14 communities that applied and received grant funds and we were noted in here. So Pete's going to try again. As long as they're offering, we'll keep applying.

Stoltz I know the trees in Sorenson look awful.

Wilz Trees got beat up. We lost almost everything over by me that was planted.

Stoltz They looked good in the spring but there might be one branch on each tree that's green. Out of the 5 I think there's maybe only 1 that looks good. The rest of them look like dead twigs.

Wilz We may have to get a hold of Don if we're losing a lot of them. That last tree program we did that you were so helpful with, you could only ask for it once every 4 or 5 years to get what we were able to get. If you wanted it every year, you had to start committing 50% and you were into the tens of thousands of dollars. The city does that. So we said let's wait and see what happens.

Other announcements? Anybody else have anything they'd like to announce?

## 5) REVIEW OF PREVIOUS PARKS REPAIRS AND PROJECTS – PETE KAMINSKI.

Wilz            Pete couldn't be here tonight. It's the report with the green on it sitting in front of you. The last time we met, he didn't have a lot of stuff done because we were still short a road crew person and we hadn't replaced the parks person yet. But they've accomplished a lot and it's pretty self explanatory here what he's accomplished so far this summer.

Amman        Pete showed me the binder the guys use when they go around and work on the different parks and work off the inspection sheets we had. They went right down the inspection sheet and did everything that was on there.

Wilz            He did mention to me today, and I think I saw it on one of your post-it-notes there, fall is when they sometimes do the chips and I don't think he's planning on doing anything with that as everything is looking in pretty good shape. That was the only thing he normally does that he schedules that isn't going to be done.

Amman        Right. Part of it had to do with the fact that Pete was trying to get a hold of the contractor that they get the chips through and he's not able to connect with them right now. Also, since the chips look pretty good now, he said he probably won't get to it this fall.

Stoltz        They usually do the other half of the fertilizing now in the fall.

Amman        Yes. He will be doing that.

Wilz            He said he would wait until October. He wants to make sure it doesn't need to get cut one more time before he puts it down and blows it all over the place. Any questions on this? Anything we need to add to this that we need to communicate with Pete on that you don't see that you have a concern about?

Schroeder    If he's wondering why they stop with the lawn mower and don't mow Conifer Acres, the city has been mowing it. I had asked them if they would just mow when that thing was full along the roadway.

Wilz            They're just doing it now.

Schroeder    Yes, they're doing the whole thing and just finished Wednesday again. It's been the last couple of months they've been there every other week.

Wilz            Thanks Rollie.

Schroeder    I see our parks guy pull up and look, then get back in his truck and move on.

Wilz            I isn't Randy Herman, he left us around the end of May.

Stoltz        Who is the new guy?

Wilz He's a part-timer. When this happened, when Randy gave notice, we decided as a Board to really look at and review, did we really need 4 full-time road crew members? Especially with budget tightness, now would be a great time to look at it. We knew one thing, we didn't have to make the decision right away but we had to get the grass cut. So we put an ad in the paper and we posted the pay at what Portage County was paying, \$10.18 an hour. We got a fair amount of good applicants. Not just high school kids. There was enough good ones that Pete and Mel went through and interviewed and we hired the guy that was in his late 50's, partially retired, looking for something to do. My understanding is that he's done well so we'll see how it goes.

*A motion was made by Roland Schroeder to accept Pete Kaminski's report. Motion was seconded by Jim Mendyke. Motion passed.*

## **6) DISCUSS FALL FERTILIZER – PETE KAMINSKI.**

Wilz The next thing, we had already talked about, the fall fertilizer and yes, Pete is going through and what we did was what we did last year and we're going to do it again, he's splitting the yearly amount and putting it down in the fall and in the spring. I don't notice any difference.

Stoltz Well with all the rain we had, all the parks are green and look good. Otherwise by this time of year everything is pretty brown.

Wilz So we'll just let that one stand as it is.

## **7) REVIEW OF BUDGET VS. ACTUAL (YTD).**

Wilz You've been given a copy of the budget sheet but you can put that aside and I'm going to give you one that has my handwriting on it.

Amman So this is also agenda item #8, the preliminary budget for 2015.

Wilz Yes, we're doing #7 and #8 on the same sheet. This is through the 15<sup>th</sup> of September, showing the budget for 2014 and then our year-to-date expenditures and the amount that is remaining. As we're working on budgets, what I'm doing right now, what I'm suggesting to the group here tonight, not knowing what the Board will be voting on with the budget coming up, that we basically turn in a budget for 2015 that is the same as the budget for 2014. The reason I'm suggesting that is because there may need to be a hair cut anyway when we get through the budget process and get the rest of the numbers done. Our 2014 budget that we currently have, granted we didn't use our playground equipment money this year, but we're going to come in under on all the other areas, I'm pretty certain of that.

Amman I've got a few things to add to that when you get a chance.

Wilz            Okay. In the labor category for 2014, the \$7,140 you see there, that was originally based off the fact that we were going to have a full-time road crew person at \$19 or \$20 an hour doing it. The reality is our year-to-date includes that until Randy Herman left and then we go to a \$10.18 an hour person without benefits. So our labor should come down anyway because it's going to be a different form of labor. You wanted to add something to that?

Amman        Right. What they've been doing is going around to the different parks and putting in the stainless steel chain for the swings and Pete used up his box of 100 feet.

Wilz            And he'd like to buy more.

Amman        What they've got are parks that still need more. They've got Meadow Manor needing 70 feet, Kirschling West needs 60 feet, Eastwood needs 80 feet. What Pete is proposing is, since there's still money in the budget this year, if he can get another box this year and he could start on this list and then keep working on it next year and get another box.

Wilz            He buys one every year.

Schroeder    We still have money in equipment and maintenance.

Amman        He said it could go under landscaping too because they won't be getting more chips. But either one of those accounts would have enough money.

Wilz            It's in there. Chain is really expensive; we've been converting over to stainless steel for some years.

Schroeder    But I don't know how much the stainless steel is.

Amman        A box is about \$900 then you've got to get some hooks that go with it.

Wilz            It's about \$10 a foot.

Amman        So he says about \$1,000 roughly.

Schroeder    Well if we've got the money in here, I would suggest we get a couple of boxes still this year between the landscaping and equipment/maintenance portion of the budget. Then if we run into a problem next year, we'll be ahead of the game.

Wilz            That's what I'm suggesting. Just keep 2015 the same as 2014 because I expect less in labor. Working on the budget committee, there are going to be some reductions asked for by departments and at best, it'll be a zero based budget and that's what this is. The budgeting this group has approved in the past, even when we spent our money totally in areas of playground equipment, we've always beat the budget because we've always had a little pad here and there. So I think the 2015 numbers in my handwriting there should be safe. I'm not concerned about them.

*A motion was made by Roland Schroeder to authorize Pete Kaminski to spend up to an additional \$2,500 for stainless steel chain and hooks this year. Motion was seconded by Maurice Stoltz. Motion passed.*

O'Keefe        Would that come out of landscaping and equipment?

Wilz            He'll pick because what he does is when the bill comes in, he goes in to Barb and they go into the computer and she'll ask, where do we put this. On this post-it-note, he's asking for permission.

Schroeder      That way he has enough to do it. If he has some left over and we get pinched next year, we're in good shape.

Amman        I asked Pete if he could start doing this this fall and he said oh yes and if he could get a box, he'll use up that first box still this fall.

Wilz            We've been converting over to stainless steel chain now for the past 3 or 4 years. I notice it now in my park because Pete doesn't just do just one apparatus, he comes back through and picks it up again next year and gets the pieces done so it's been nice that way.

#### **8)        DISCUSS PRELIMINARY PARKS BUDGET FOR 2015.**

Wilz            We got #7 and #8 done. Concerning this budget, if you feel good about what I suggested, could I have a motion to submit this budget to the Board?

*A motion was made by Brian Hicks to approve the proposed 2015 Parks Budget. Motion was seconded by Roland Schroeder. Motion passed.*

#### **9)        CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF OUTDOOR ADULT FITNESS EQUIPMENT.**

Wilz            I'll lead this off and we may have to table some of this unless you've got something. You and Janeen were going to get some stuff done and report back to the group. But I want to tell you what I've found out so far between the last meeting and this one. First of all John Holdridge said that he read in our meeting notes that we were going to get adult fitness equipment. I know John reads these things. I said, I didn't think we were going to get it, we were just talking about it. We're exploring it and we don't know enough about it but it sounds pretty cool and we're trying to run it through its paces. He said do you really think there's a need for it? I said I don't know. But per his suggestion, I have reached out to try to contact but have not heard back from the Parks Director for Stevens Point, Tom Schroeder and Portage County's. I just sent that out last week so I didn't expect to hear anything yet. I just wanted to have a conversation to see if they thought about it, do they know about it, do they have any installed, what do they think about it and get some local feedback on that. The other thing is I'm going to contact John Jury about the Green Circle because you had mentioned that.

Hicks Yes.

Wilz I haven't walked the whole 26 miles in years but I don't think they have anything. It's all natural. I did get an e-mail out last week to Lana to ask her for more information on what she had told us previously about the fact that she had sold some of this to larger communities down by Kenosha, Racine, along the waterfront where thousands of people exercise every day. I wanted her to give us contact information on who actually purchased it and the parks commissioners so I could talk to them and ask how that's working out for them. Because this stuff is not cheap.

Stoltz I know there was just an article, I didn't get what city it was in but they were showing people working out on that stuff and it was set up like 3 pieces in a park area, or a couple of people could work out together at the same time. I don't know if it was in the Kenosha area or where it was. They just caught the guy on the equipment and they were talking about it. Where it came from or where it was set up, I don't know.

Wilz That's what I've got to report. Since the last Park's meeting, Janeen did send me a package that you got too. Have you been able to do anything?

Hicks I have not done anything with it yet. Is this our last meeting this year?

Wilz Yes.

Hicks I'll be ready in the spring.

Wilz We didn't necessarily need to take action on it this year but we wanted to study it because I think it's a pretty cool concept but we've got to know that we've got the right ingredients for us to try that here.

Hicks It's encouraging to hear that some places that have just a few pieces of equipment, people use it. That's been my thought, that we put in a few things, but it's not really an exercise park like you would see down in the Kenosha area.

Schroeder When you start talking about Kenosha, you have a larger population there. It looks like it's being used more. I don't think we're in that kind of situation within our neighborhoods.

Stoltz Right.

Schroeder Since I've been on the committee, when these things come up, our park policy has been for the parks to be for 12 year olds and under. Then you have the least amount of headaches so to speak because if you get adults who want something a little different, I'm not sure I would be real favorable towards that. I think we should pursue and look at it in case it comes up as an issue, but then where do you start so it's a good show in one park or the other? Because we're neighborhood parks. We're not public county parks or city parks where something like that may or may not work.

Stoltz And you need to have it where there is a lot of exposure so people can see it and use it.



Hicks Right. What park is nearest to the Green Circle so that if someone is jogging along, they can stop and do whatever.

Wilz I talked to my youngest son who lives along the lake shore in Milwaukee and he's always out the front of the condo and right down on the path going up and down that lake shore. I asked him how far does he go? He said sometimes he rides a bike for 20 miles, sometimes he jogs for 3 or 4 miles. I've walked that with him and see the activities going on in the parks. I asked if he runs into playgrounds or adult playground equipment and he said there is a little bit of that north of him about 5 or 6 miles. I asked if people use it and he said yes, there are always people around it but he hasn't stopped to look at it or see what it was. But like he says, there are thousands of people out on those trails in the summer time. That's what you do. A half of a million people live in Milwaukee.

Hicks Although I'm always surprised at how many people are on the Green Circle and I run the Green Circle a lot.

Schroeder I think running and walking around it are very, very popular. I used to run a lot, 50-75 miles a week, but the last thing I would think of would be stopping and doing some exercising. I might stop and do some stretches if I'm tightening up.

Wilz Or sit down on a bench!

Schroeder No, that you don't want to do because then you'll have a problem. But you have exercises, if you read the running books, that you can do. Some of them you can do as you're running to keep the blood circulating to your fingers and stuff. Other than that, you keep going because once you get that pace and breathing pattern, the last thing you want to do is stop because trying to get back in there again, it's tough.

Wilz Well we'll pick this back up next spring but I especially want to pick up on what you said Rollie. Your reminder that there are other things to think about. We need to investigate it and see if it makes sense. If we're heading in that direction, we need to have those discussions about what should our parks be or is it time to change that thought too?

Mendyke You could almost do a survey with the newsletter. Do you use the parks? What do you use them for? What would you like to see in them? Would you consider...

Hicks If we had some adult fitness equipment there, would you work out on it?

Mendyke We can see them cycle through and driving by but those are our observations. I'd be interested to see what the community wants.

Wilz That's an excellent thought because when we put out the spring newsletter, parks always has a little article in there. I usually write the little thing that goes in there and that's a wonderful place to have a contact, make a call, e-mail, whatever they want.

Mendyke I'm anticipating we're going to get some kudos because they are in great shape. The equipment is so nice in all the parks and up to date. But going beyond that, what else would they like to see?

Wilz Okay, great.

Schroeder When I ask those questions, when I go out by Pleasant View or Kirschling East, they say what they like is that there isn't a lot of big kids and adults and they can be there with their kids and sit at the picnic table and read and look up and know that they're going back and forth. When you ask them what more do they need, they say when we think of something, it just seems you guys are putting it in. So that's a kind of compliment.

Wilz You're fixing stuff, you're updating now and then.

Stoltz Nothing is broken. If it's broken, it's fixed right away.

Wilz I really have high marks for Pete and Randy and the crew. They're good at it and they're on that stuff.

Hicks They have pride in their parks and they feel like it's their own back yard.

*A motion was made by Roland Schroeder to table this discussion until the Spring 2015 Parks meeting. Motion was seconded by Brian Hicks. Motion passed.*

#### **10) DATE OF NEXT MEETING IN SPRING OF 2015.**

Wilz Let me ask you Brian, are Thursday's still best for you?

Hicks Yes. I'll need Thursday's until after May when my Wednesday's would be open.

Wilz Well Thursday's work all the time right?

Hicks Yes, Thursday's work all the time.

Wilz We'll just leave it on Thursday. If we tried to kick off the beginning of 2015 the same way we did this year, it would be Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>. I didn't look to see when Easter is. Didn't we get into trouble with that this year so we changed it?

Amman Yes, what we had before was we had picked a week and we didn't realize it was the week before Easter.

Wilz So we postponed it.

Schroeder This year (2015) Easter should be early.

Amman Holy Week is the first week of April so we'd be way past it by then.

Wilz That's not too late. Things are starting to grow. Last April there was probably still snow on the ground.

O'Keefe They're forecasting a bad winter this year too.

Stoltz Yes, they said same as last year, maybe worse.

Wilz If spring does start early, we'll get an e-mail out along with the Parks checklist and you can turn those in early prior to the meeting and Pete can be working on them already. It is the 23<sup>rd</sup> right?

Amman Yes. That's way down here and Easter is way up here someplace. It's been a few years since we've had an early spring.

Wilz You know, let's change that. Go to April 16<sup>th</sup>. This last year, because of the hard winter, it worked. But I'm hoping to get back to normal.

Amman That would be the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday in April.

Wilz Rollie, are you moving out?

Schroeder I'll have a place here and a place there. That'll probably be spring baseball so I'll probably be out there then.

Wilz Thank you everybody for coming.

*THE NEXT HULL PARKS COMMISSION MEETING WILL BE THURSDAY, **APRIL 16, 2015 AT 6:30 P.M.***

**11) ADJOURNMENT.** *A motion was made by Maurice Stoltz to adjourn the Hull Parks Commission meeting. Motion was seconded by Roland Schroeder. Motion passed.*

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Amman  
Hull Parks Commission Secretary  
Town of Hull, Portage County