

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S JUNE 2023 REPORT**

### **COMMUNICATIONS TO BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**

#### **Park Superintendent's Monthly Report Summary**

The month of May saw numerous staffing changes within the Division (see below) and many of those are critically timed to help us be as ready as we can be for the "Super Bowl" season for Parks between Memorial Day and Labor Day. We are excited to have filled the Parks Alive Coordinator as well as multiple operations positions that are critical for our conservation and ecology work.

The month of May was hot and dry. This created some unique challenges for the team. It is rare to nearly stop mowing in the month of May, but with the extended dry weather and high temps, we did take some pauses throughout the month. This did allow for a smoother than normal onboarding of seasonal staff, as we were able to get to the desired numbers before the grass was completely gangbusters. This also helped ease pressure on the median maintenance transition. The best news on that front has been the clear improvement in availability of parks resources for parks work during this peak mowing time.

The Goodman Pool opened on June 9<sup>th</sup>, and there was a line of people waiting to get in an hour before. The Pool is reasonably staffed for the year and we expect a good season. It is fortunate that we have our partners at MSCR providing lessons, as we would have been short on guards to offer that ourselves this year. Beach guarding will mostly be non-existent this year due to a lack of sufficient guards. It is unfortunate, but the reality of the lifeguard labor market is that it has not recovered in a significant way from the loss of guards through the pandemic.

The Olbrich Gardens team continues to work on implementation of the strategic plan adopted by the BPC in May. This work will include many facets, but perhaps the most significant for the BPC will be the plans to update the Master Plan for the Gardens to meet the demands of the Gardens today and for the next 20-30 years.

The weather also allowed Golf to have a phenomenal month, with rounds and revenue far exceeding the totals from May last year. As of June 8<sup>th</sup>, we are up nearly 40% year over year in both rounds and revenue. A solid June would put the golf program in a great position for the year, even if we had less than great weather in the second half of the season.

The Lake Monona Waterfront project continues to move forward. Sasaki is nearly under contract and they have a planned site visit this month. It is exciting to get to this stage, but we are now entering a critically important phase of making decisions about what is in and not in the plan. This will include making choices related to practicability of amenities and features. There are many complicating factors in this complex project, but I am confident with the Ad Hoc Committee providing direction and the professional team at Sasaki we can stay on schedule for the Master Plan.

#### **Future Commission Items**

- Golf Enterprise Update – The Golf Team is working to prepare a report to the Golf Subcommittee, Facilities Programs and Fees Subcommittee, and the Board of Park Commissioners on the past 2 years of operations as well as an outlook on future

opportunities to continue to implement the Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks' recommendations. Given recent staff departures and budget actions, the goal is to present additional information to the BPC between July and September.

- Results Madison / Division Work Plan– The City has been working on Results Madison, which moves towards a more significant utilization of data in decision-making, including budgeting for the past few years. Staff will be preparing information on this and the Parks Division's work plan to present to the Commission. The goal is to present information to the Commission in July.

## Personnel Updates

### Promotions/Hires:

- Debra Alleyne has been hired to the position of Parks Alive Program Coordinator. She started in her new position on May 30, 2023.
- Molly Berkholtz was promoted from her position as Landscape Maintenance Worker in Central Parks to Conservation Technician in the Conservation Resource section. Her promotion was effective May 28, 2023.
- Josiah Baker was hired to the position of Conservation Technician in the Conservation section. He starts his new position June 12, 2023.
- Brendon Svaglic was hired as a Parks Worker with the Mall Concourse Maintenance crew. He started his new position on May 29, 2023.
- Jonathan Sutherland has been hired as Facilities Maintenance Worker at Olbrich Gardens. He returns to this position on May 29, 2023.

### Departures:

- Jeff McMahon resigned from his position as Parks Worker with the Mall Concourse Maintenance crew to accept a position with the City of Madison Streets Division, effective April 30, 2023.
- January Vang has resigned from her position as Parks Finance Manager to accept a promotional position with City of Madison Water Utility. Her effective date of transfer is June 12, 2023, but January has graciously agreed to support the Parks Division on an intermittent basis through the Operating Budget submission in mid-July. The Parks Division appreciates January's leadership throughout her tenure here.

## Section reports

### **Operations**

#### **Conservation:**

- Hosted volunteer workdays at Acewood and Heritage Sanctuary.
- Oiled Canada Goose eggs, controlled spring invasive species at Heritage Prairie, Knollwood, and Turville Point, and sowed native seed mixes at Acewood, Edna Taylor, and Stricker's Pond.
- Contractors performed seasonal invasive plant control at Cherokee Marsh, Edna Taylor, Owen, Sandburg Woods, and Stricker's Pond.

- Friends groups at Edna Taylor, Hoyt, and Owen procured native plants through grants and donations, and planted them to support management plans for these parks.
- Designated invasive plant compost sites were posted at Acewood, Elvehjem, Kettle Pond, Sandburg Woods, and Stricker's Pond to support volunteers and other park users who can hand pull invasive species.

### **Construction:**

- Installed the gravel base for a GAGA ball court at Edward Klief Park. A member of the Boy Scouts is building the GAGA court structure.
- Initiated a pilot project at Aldo Leopold, where a new wax polymer gravel was laid on a path that was experiencing heavy wear and erosion. The product is purportedly self-healing, requiring less maintenance.
- Poured concrete for two memorial bench pads at Warner Park, a donated disc golf tee at Hiestand Park, and for the Goodman Pool expansion area in preparation for the All-City Swim Meet.
- Started playground maintenance route. A new swing set was installed at Orton Park, and new playground mulch was placed at Westmorland, Morrison, Hiestand and McGinnis parks.

### **Facilities:**

- Completed a number of projects at the Mallards Stadium, added auto locks to the Tenney Pavilion, repaired the splash pad and painted the tennis bounding boards at Reindahl, installed the refurbished Law Park pier, and re-lamped the Olin parking lot and exterior building lights.
- Performed the annual pool, splash pads and drinking fountains start-up work. The team will begin to test pool chemicals and inspect the pools and splash pads daily.
- Installed an accessibility railing on one of the Warner piers. The railing was designed and funded by Yahara Fishing Club.

### **General Parks:**

- Focused on mowing and seasonal athletic field preparations and maintenance.
- Completed seasonal tree planting and started work on landscape bed beautification projects.
- On-boarded several seasonal staff. Continue to work on the hiring process, but have made good progress.
- Supported preparation and clean-up for the Walk MS and Great Strides of Madison events at Warner, the Picnic in the Parks at Burrows, and other smaller events.
- Completed Memorial Day preparation efforts at Forest Hill Cemetery. The Madison Veteran's Council will again hold the annual remembrance at the Union Rest site.

### **Mall Concourse:**

- Installed additional annual flowers at the Top of State Street and Forum of Origin, and continued watering plants almost daily. Mowing turf was an increasing priority this month.
- The Madison Night Market event returned, as well as other smaller events. The crew ably supported the numerous deliveries and assisted with cleanup almost every day.
- Power washing the service area continued with sidewalks, bus shelters, and amenities getting a much needed cleaning. Water features were turned on with the assistance of Facilities Maintenance.

## Olbrich Botanical Gardens

### June Monthly Update

#### Horticulture Interns for Summer 2023

Interns started their internships in the outdoor gardens at the end of May. Over the summer, they will work in every garden completing a variety of horticulture tasks. The interns will also attend educational field trips to learn about horticulture at other gardens, nurseries, and more. Early in June, the Education Intern and Blooming Butterflies Intern will join the group of interns. Join us in welcoming our next generation of public garden professionals.

#### **Megan Wagner** (she/her/hers):



Hometown: West Bend, Wisconsin  
School: UW – Madison  
Major: Landscape Architecture  
Favorite Plant: celosia

#### **Samantha Anhalt** (she/Her/hers):

Hometown – Mishicot, Wisconsin  
School – UW-Madison  
Major – Natural resources and  
Environmental Engineering  
Favorite Plant – hibiscus





**Joe Haupt** (he/him):

Hometown – Minneapolis, Minnesota  
School – UW-Madison  
Major – Forest Science & Life Science Communication  
Favorite Plant – quaking aspen



**Morgan Haak** (she/her/hers):

Hometown – Sun Prairie, Wisconsin  
School – UW-Madison  
Major – Landscape Architecture  
Favorite Plant – manjula pothos

**Celena Cheng** (She/Her):

Hometown – Flanders, New Jersey  
School – Rutgers University  
Major – Horticulture w/minor in Medicinal and Economic Botany  
Favorite Plant – swiss cheese plant



**Abigail McGraw** (she/her/hers):



Hometown – Germantown, Wisconsin  
School – UW-Madison  
Major – Horticulture, Certificate in Sustainability  
Favorite Plant – lilac

## Job Openings

The **Director of Horticulture** and **Director of Guest Experience** are now both live and open for applicants. They are both reachable from Olbrich's website at <https://www.olbrich.org/careers> and the City of Madison Jobs page at <https://www.cityofmadison.com/jobs>. The positions have been posted on a variety of job websites. Sites where the jobs have been shared include: American Public Garden Association, Indeed, LinkedIn, Museum Hue, Association of Fundraising Professionals, and American Alliance of Museums. Interviews are anticipated for July 2023.

## Documenting History

Olbrich Gardens is working with the University of Wisconsin to document the history of the Royal Thai Pavilion. A UW student has been selected to conduct and record oral history interviews with individuals that were vital to the construction and placement of the Royal Thai Pavilion in Madison at Olbrich Gardens. Starting this fall, the student will conduct research in collaboration with Olbrich Gardens and UW to identify who will be interviewed and what questions will be asked in the interviews. Then they will conduct the interviews. The student will work under the direction of Troy Reeves, Head of the Oral History Program at UW-Madison. Olbrich Botanical Society is seeking donations to fund the stipend the student will receive to complete this project.

## Community Services Report June 2023 – Terrence Thompson

### Community Events (Kelly Post):

- The Community Events team has received much-needed help from the Parks Division. Ashley Moseberry was provisionally appointed to the Community Event Assistant role to help with the administrative duties related to permitting hundreds of Park and Street Use Events during this busy season. Ashley comes from the Warner Park Community Recreation Center, where she has worked for 2 years. She has experience hosting community events and is excited to learn the permitting side of things.

- The first weekend in June saw multiple events in our Parks and on the Streets. In our Parks, we permitted two kids' fishing days in conjunction with permit-free weekends, the WI Army National Guard Open House, and multiple smaller community events, including some MMSD end-of-school events. Downtown was busy this weekend, with Cars on State, Cows on the Concourse, Trek Pride Ride, and the first Live on King Street of the summer. Now that Memorial Day is in the books, we have reached the "unofficial start of summer," and you will find multiple events in Parks and on the Streets almost every day in Madison until the end of September. The summer in Madison is a magical time, and these amazing events build community and appreciation for what Madison has to offer.

### **Warner Park Community Recreation Center (Zach Watson):**

- The WPCRC hosted the Spring Fest Arts and Crafts show on May 6, 2023, and welcomed 650 participants and Family Fun Night on Friday, May 8, 2023, with 156 participants.
- The Friday Night Basketball Series concluded with the Annual Spring-Break-Away 3on3 Tournament on April 28, May 19, and May 26. We had 217 participants ages 11-18 years old participate in tournaments. For each tournament, we provided free referee apprenticeship training, 3-point contests, and middle and high school divisions in partnership with the Madison Police Department's CORE Program.

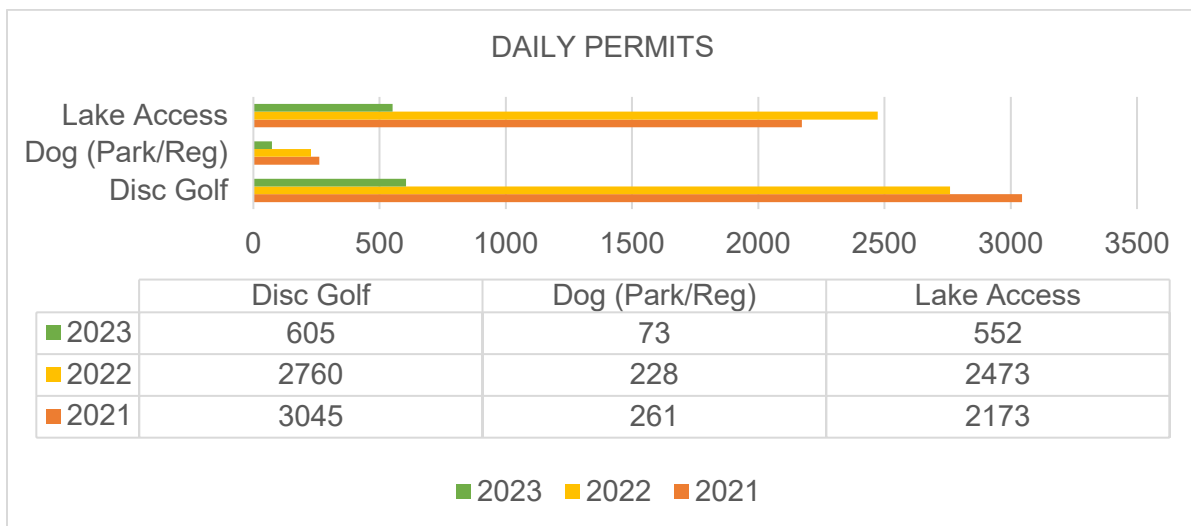
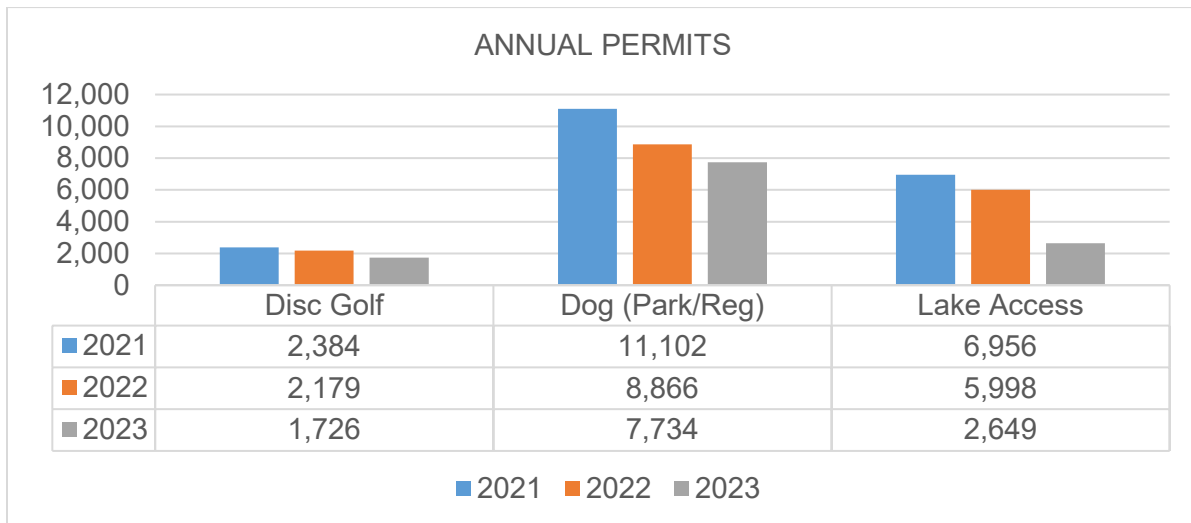
### **Recreation Services & Aquatics (Tracey Hartley)**

- **Events:** Madison Parks will be participating in Safety Saturday again this year. Staff movie training will be underway very soon.
- **Aquatics:** We are hosting our all-staff training, Aquatics Boot Camp, on June 3-4, 2023. We will offer a Lifeguard Training class to our new hires the week of June 12, 2023. All staff will be CPR/First Aid/ AED for the Professional Rescuer. The Goodman Pool opens Friday, June 9, 2023, at 12pm—a special thank you to Goodman Jewelers for sponsoring the first 500 people. We are still hiring lifeguards. The All-City Swim meet is scheduled for July 27-29, 2023, at the Goodman Pool. We have been working with the Friends of Goodman Wave for the past year to prepare for the meet and are looking forward to hosting a successful event.

### **Customer Service (Joanne Austin):**

- **Watercraft Storage Update:** Madison Parks has 426 watercraft agreement storage spaces available at 15 different parks. At this time, 420 of these spaces are filled. Four remaining open spaces have been claimed, and only two remain open. We have a waitlist for each park, so filling these open spaces at Olin and Marshall Parks will likely occur soon. Some trees along the Lake Monona shoreline at Olbrich Park have unfortunately not survived the 2018 flood. These trees are very close to the existing watercraft storage racks. For safety reasons, these storage racks are being relocated to the Starkweather Creek side of Olbrich, where Parks already has existing racks. Maintenance at the creek side location will be easier for operations staff, and we can add four additional storage spaces. We are coordinating this move with operations staff, Rangers, and our customers.

- Dog, Disc, and Lake Access Permits:** Below are the total permits purchased in 2021 and 2022, including totals in 2023. Customers continue to purchase online, and staff processes them as quickly as possible. As a result, the desire to obtain permits is high at this time of year. As of June 5th, we have 730 permits to be processed and mailed out.



**Rangers (Jason Vroman):**

- Rangers completed Toolcat training with East Parks Staff. It was a great display of cross-section teamwork and will significantly improve the ability of Ranger staff to maintain and enhance the Disc Golf Courses. Disc Golf Ranger, Will Goss, has already been making improvements to Hiestand Park using the Toolcat. Thank you, East Parks!



- Rangers completed the second session of Krav Maga's defensive tactic training. This was the first session for our hourly staff and the second for some full-timers. Badger Krav Maga is a local minority-owned small business, and the owner Freddie Harris is great to work with.
- Lastly, Rangers have been busy trying to keep up with the nice weather and increased use of the Parks. As use increases, so do calls for service and concerns from the community. Rangers attended 4 different community meetings at Reynolds, Brittingham, Door Creek, and Vilas. We are also working with the community while being proactive on issues at Demetral, Warner Beach, Penn Park, and more.



*Krav Maga self-defense*



*Toolcat training*