



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Wednesday, September 5, 2007

6:30 PM

1625 Northport Dr. (WPCRC)

CALL TO ORDER

President Scarbrough called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. A quorum was present and the meeting was properly noticed. He then notified members of the audience that if they wanted to speak on issues from the Agenda, they needed to complete the Registration Forms at the back of the room and deliver them to the Recording Secretary prior to that agenda item being discussed.

A motion was made by Chewning/Clausius acknowledging the amazing job that Superintendent Morgan has done over the past seven years, in a truly classy manner in times of great stress and who puts the interests of others before himself. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ROLL CALL

Present: 4 -

Joseph R. Clausius; Michael Schumacher; Betty Chewning and Emanuel Scarbrough

Excused: 2 -

William W. Barker and Betty N. MacDonald

Additional Member Present: Steve Webster

Parks staff present: James Morgan, Si Widstrand, Laura Bauer, LaVonne LaFave, Donald Studesville

City staff present: Captain Richard Bach, Ald. Lauren Cnare

PUBLIC COMMENT

Registered Speaker:

NAME	Comment
Julie Yearling	Concerned about plans for 837 Hughes Place

Superintendent Morgan reported he had not seen any plans from Community Development that would move the location of the proposed park. The property at 837 Hughes Place had been purchased by the city for park purposes. There is a proposal to build a senior housing development next to that parcel. The proposed park would be open space with benches. He also noted that the shelter and drinking fountain shown in the original master plan for the spray park would not be built. It was necessary to scale back the amenities for the

spray park because the bids for construction came in much higher than the amount donated for the project. Some of the comments from the speaker relate to the adjoining school property. There are no physical changes occurring there. The parking and bus pull out have been completed and there will be some additional work on Cypress Way to install a pedestrian island.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Webster/Schumacher to approve the Minutes of the July 13 and August 8, 2007 regular meetings of the Park Commission. MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

Request from Charles Adams for Interpretative Park on Milwaukee Street/Wyalusing Drive.

A motion was made by Webster/Chewning to take item VII. C. out of order. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Non Registered Speaker:

NAME

Charles Adams – form completed by Recording Secretary

Parks Development Manager Widstrand referred to a map that showed the areas of public ownership that were acquired over the past 15-20 years near the area referenced by Mr. Adams. Those parks are Dominion Park that is next to a proposed school site, Reston Heights, Door Creek and the Dane County Blooming Grove Drumlins Natural Resource Areas. He does agree with the philosophy but those concepts are incorporated in the larger open space corridors shown on the map. The location Mr. Adams refers to is kitty corner from Reston Heights Park and is privately owned. The land surrounding Mr. Adams proposed Interpretative Park has been platted into building lots and land values are in the range of \$200,000 per acre. Parks would prefer to use its development money to purchase land in newly developed areas where no parks exist. It would be a very expensive parcel for Parks to purchase in an area that already has several parks.

The primary issue is what is an adequate amount of park space for a neighborhood. When looking at the size of the Door Creek Park holdings this neighborhood probably exceeds our current standards. To put another park relatively adjacent to an existing park would be expensive. Even if it were a natural area, sidewalks would have to be plowed and garbage hauled. There are many areas in the city that are very park deficient. Superintendent Morgan stated he met with Mr. Adams and Alder Cnare on site. He agrees there is some value for the neighborhood but it is his belief that it should be a neighborhood association private park. He questioned where outdoor education classes could be held on that parcel.

Parks is sympathetic to preserving the oaks but they have already had impacts in terms of sod grading and drainage from the surrounding development. It's great when trees can be preserved in developments and some may be able to be preserved, but sometimes trees are lost during construction.

A motion was made by Webster/Schumacher to refer this matter to staff for an official recommendation as to what is rational and what barriers exist given that it does not sound feasible at this point. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.** It was suggested that Parks provide some advice to Mr. Adams and the neighborhood association as to possible options to pursue.

A motion was made by Schumacher/Webster to take item VIII A. out of order. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Request of Ald. Michael Schumacher to review Mallards Use of Warner Stadium

Registered Speaker:

NAME	Comments
Vern Stenman	Available to answer questions

Superintendent Morgan reported it was an outstanding year for the Mallards. The working relationship between the Mallards and Parks was good and the parking improvements that the Mallards helped pay for was successful. The people coming to the games are serious fans and there are not serious drinking problems or parking lot problems. There are some parking issues out on the street and there are little things that crop up from time to time.

This year a lengthy study was completed regarding the future of the stadium. The Common Council passed a Resolution to complete the next level of planning and look at engineering questions. Parks and the Alder felt it was also a good time to sit down with the Mallards and review some of the issues that have cropped up this past year. Captain Bach from the Northside Precinct was also present to address police concerns, including some incidents at Rhythm & Booms. Hopefully this discussion allows Parks and the Mallards to resolve the issues that have come up as well as discuss expectations for the future.

President Scarbrough acknowledged the good things the team has brought to the Northside and how nice it is to have the Mallards in Warner Park Stadium. However, he wondered why the miscommunications came about and asked Mr. Stenman of the Mallards to clarify what happened in regard to showing the movie following a game and allowing batting practice after games.

Mr. Stenman agreed that the relationship between the Mallards and the city is evolving and getting better each year. Part of the problem is that the Mallards assume that things are okay for them to do without asking permission. Hopefully next year as they add staff they will be in a better position to designate a specific staff person to work with city staff to correct these oversights. He noted that he is not only the person who is working on the stadium renovation but also the person who deals with the city maintenance staff and is dealing with too much on his own. The Mallards take a lot of pride and ownership in the stadium and the stadium reflects highly on their image. They forget it belongs to the City of Madison.

The issues that occurred during Rhythm & Booms (R&B) address Mr. Stenman's

statement about Mallards pride. The Mallards have done a wonderful job of reinvesting capital money into the stadium. One of those projects was the new office building in front, aerifying the turn and putting in walkways for good first impressions coming into the stadium. During R&B it became a super highway of golf carts and the Mallards tried to reroute some of the cart traffic away from the stadium entrance. It became a point of contention with police and Parks staff. The Mallards acted on their own instead of going to Parks staff and asking for help in fixing the problem. They barricaded the area with picnic tables without permission and police had to ask several times for the barricades to be removed.

It was suggested to Mr. Stenman that it appears the Mallards find it easier to ask forgiveness than to ask for permission and it becomes a pattern. It is wise to err on the side of too much communication rather than not enough.

Captain Bach added that the above statements were accurate and the concerns that police had in the past about alcohol have been mostly resolved. He noted the concern police had regarding R&B was there was an agreement on Friday that the picnic tables would be removed by Saturday and they created hazards. The other issue was police received reports from patrons in the park that Mallards staff was swearing at R&B people. Police did not personally witness those incidents. Mallards' staff may need to be reminded to conduct themselves in a professional manner when dealing with the public at all events in the park. Captain Bach was confident they can move beyond those issues.

Schumacher noted Mr. Stenman has already identified there will be one person working as the contact for the team with city staff. The relationship is an evolving item.

A motion was made by Schumacher/Clausius to accept the oral report.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Golf Committee Minutes of April 24, 2007 Meeting

A motion was made by Clausius/Webster to accept the Minutes of the April 24, 2007 Golf Committee meeting. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Fatality at Odana Hills Golf Course

Superintendent Morgan first offered condolences to the family and friends of the golfer who died. He provided some additional details on the fatality at Odana Hills. The individual was playing with a foursome and his three companions went back to the clubhouse and he continued. As a result of the incident, the Mayor has requested options for warning devices at the city courses. These devices would have to be both visual and auditory. It is much easier to install a warning system for a single golf course. The challenge for Parks is there is more than one city course and there are 300+ parks

throughout the city, as well as boat launch sites and conservation parks with remote areas. How the system gets activated is also an issue; would someone need to be physically on site or would it be self-activated? Parks is investigating different systems, some are wireless and some are not. One has a series of sensors that can trigger sirens and flashing lights at multiple locations up to 3 miles away. Any of these systems will have a significant financial impact on golf and general parks. Parks is investigating different options to present to the Mayor. The Golf Committee will discuss the issue of warning systems at their October meeting.

He also spoke about people who stayed on the course at Yahara after sirens were sounded because of the tornado that went through the Stoughton area. Another aspect is whether an enforcement policy would be needed to ensure that everyone came off the courses. The golf course users are primarily adults and should be able to see the signs placed in all the clubhouses entitled Lightning Kills. If we fail to give an alert we may be more liable. The City Attorney is reviewing the ramifications of what would happen if a warning system were in place that required someone to activate it, and the golf courses were closed so an alert wouldn't be given. At this point we do not have an answer.

President Scarbrough reported he has seen this attitude when he has been on the courses. Some people just stay out. If this behavior exists at the golf courses, what about people in parks? If they are picnicking, will they leave and will they understand the warnings?

Chewning indicated it was strange to be spending the money for this type of system when most people understand the risks associated with lightning and they choose to stay out. She asked if additional information regarding lightning could be posted at the courses, in general parks, conservation parks and dog parks. There are already many signs posted at the golf courses about the dangers of lightning.

The only reason there is an air horn at Yahara is that the course is not covered by a Dane County siren.

Olbrich Botanical Society Minutes of June 19, 2007 Meeting

A motion was made by Chewning/Webster to accept the Olbrich Botanical Society Minutes of the June 19, 2007 meeting. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5-year Program Planning Process

One commissioner, commenting on the low turnout, noted that it appeared the planning process almost seemed artificial and wasn't sure if it was bad timing or lack of interest or people were satisfied with the status quo because of the low turnout of participants. Another commissioner reacted to the emphasis that was placed on expanding services and what type of services could be offered in the future. Widstrand explained that this planning process is for Olbrich staff to determine program direction before the physical master plan questions are incorporated following the Garver reuse issues.

Ad Hoc Committee on Alcohol and Related Behaviors in Parks**Registered Speakers:****NAME Comments**

Nina Emerson Requests electricity to be turned off and bathrooms locked at Brittingham

Brendon O'Donnell Wants help from Parks and Police to maintain existing ordinances

Peter Taglio Asked for solutions at shelter, shut bathrooms, turn off electricity, use port potties

Jamie McCarrlle Neutral - distributed information to reduce crime and alcohol in parks

Superintendent Morgan reported that he has worked with the Police Department this past summer on the search actions. The first date was canceled because of another high profile action that diverted police. He was present with Parks staff that were also involved in hauling away items of no value. Items of value were taken to the police property room. There were eight arrests and three people were given citations. The Parks staff were very concerned about possible identification and retaliation and wore their sweatshirt hoods up around their faces, exposing only their eyes. The neighbors have been a great partner in taking great care of the park and trying to keep it clean. It is an enforcement issue. When there is enforcement there is some push back by people who are sympathetic to the homeless. Unfortunately there are individuals with significant mental health issues and alcohol and drugs are their medicine of choice. Police will begin going back in periodically and issuing citations for curfew violations and alcohol possession.

The police action took place on a Friday night and Saturday night there were more than 30 people back in there. It is a very serious problem. During the police action on Friday there was also prostitution going on in the parking lot. Several of the individuals were taken in to the police station because they had no identification and had very suspicious behavior.

If the restrooms are locked, then Parks staff must clean urine, feces and vomit throughout the shelter. Electricity has been cut back as much as possible while still providing some lighting for police to see inside the shelter. The Mayor has given permission to gate the shelter with some type of wrought iron fencing.

Commissioners noted that many people in the city have looked at solutions, including some of the solutions mentioned this evening. They asked about hosting a larger meeting of various agencies to deal with this issue collaboratively, what solutions are possible, determine if there are gaps and who can help. A loitering ordinance might be one tool, possibly more police resources are necessary.

President Scarbrough recounted that the Ad Hoc Committee to Study Alcohol and Related Behaviors in the Parks went to four different areas of the city to gather citizen input. Following those meetings, it was concluded that this is not a Parks Division problem alone, but a city and county problem that will

require the involvement of many different agencies, such as Dane County Human Services, City-County Health Department, Madison Police, Dane County Sheriff, Dane County Social Services and the Mayor and County Executive's offices. He has spoken to the Mayor and plans to speak with the alders regarding this ongoing problem.

He then related he had lunch at the Brittingham Shelter today. He spoke with the 10 to 15 men, 1 woman and social services worker who were present and found out they go there because they are comfortable with their friends. They laughed about the tickets that have been issued. President Scarbrough stated that if there is not someone in authority there all the time they come back because they have nothing else to do. He asked them what they would do if the shelter was locked and they told him they'd walk to another park. These are individuals who don't have jobs but some of them do have places to live. The individuals who hang out there are from the same social and economic background and hang out together. This will continue to happen in this park or move to another park unless a way is found to change the attitude of both the community and the people at the shelter. One individual acknowledged they sometimes get rowdy and Scarbrough told him that wasn't acceptable behavior. Another real issue is there were a number of men sitting by themselves looking as though they were heavily medicated. They have no place else to go but they will find a way to survive.

It was noted that there are currently ordinances that no alcohol is allowed in the park, and no overnight camping is allowed and these are enforceable issues. It was also noted that the city as a whole needs to address the issue of places for homeless individuals, for alcohol treatment centers and for a collaborative cross agency effort to deal with these issues.

The neighbors and the Park Commission do not want to surrender the park to these activities. Parks could rewire sections of the building to keep minimum overhead lighting on. Locking the restrooms didn't work. The issues aren't all physical. Some individuals who stay in the park do so because they are not allowed into the homeless shelters because of bad behavior or intoxication. Madison has been very tolerant in the past. The new police approach to go in with cameras and repeated site visits late at night may make it less desirable.

Warner Park Community Recreation Center Advisory Committee Minutes of May 16, 2007 Meeting

A motion was made by Webster/Schumacher to accept the Warner Park Community Recreation Center Advisory Committee Minutes of the May 16, 2007 meeting. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Action Report from Meeting of July 26, 2007

Webster reported that he serves on the Warner Park Community Recreation Center Advisory Committee and believes that a comprehensive plan studying all aspects of the park is a good idea. A motion was made by Webster/Schumacher to approve the requests contained in the Action Report from the meeting of July 26, 2007. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Schumacher questioned whether the Chair of the Advisory Committee had the

authority to create an ad hoc committee to plan the 10-year celebration. It was noted that the Advisory Committee is a subcommittee of the Park Commission and could make those nominations because they will not be dealing with financial matters that would fall under the purview of the Common Council.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PARK COMMISSION

President Scarbrough reported that Michael Schumacher advised him that the Mayor appointed him to the James Madison Park Property Planning Committee rather than accepting the recommendation made by the Park Commission. He had also received word from Bill Barker that the Mayor spoke with Barker advising him that he was not accepting the Park Commission's recommendation relative to Barker's appointment to the James Madison Park Property Planning Committee because the Mayor knew what Barker's position was relative to that issue and he did not want to have a person with that position on the committee. Commissioners commented that Schumacher might feel uncomfortable with the appointment. Schumacher responded that he mentioned to the Mayor that it was putting him in an uncomfortable position.

President Scarbrough then reported that Steve Webster was not being reappointed to the Park Commission following the expiration of his term this past April. Webster had been appointed to fulfill an unexpired term for a Commissioner who had resigned mid-term. The Mayor has appointed David Wallner to this position. Scarbrough indicated he really enjoyed working with Webster. Chewning expressed dismay that the Mayor had chosen to replace Webster, who is an expert beyond belief, a UN representative who has dealt internationally on major environmental issues such as natural disasters and homelessness, especially given that we are dealing with homelessness issues in our parks.. Webster has done a fabulous job and has always been so helpful and fair and brings a bigger vision to issues.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PARKS

Written Report of Supervisor's Activities

The written report of Supervisors' activities will be mailed to Commissioners next week. Because the meeting was moved up a week, they were not able to get their information to staff in time to compile the report.

Informational Items

He noted the beach numbers that compared 2006 to 2007. The annual report is available for review. There have been very favorable comments from people who have read it.

He then provided information on the SprayPark using data collected by one of the Parks Summer AASPIRE Interns. Attendance was tracked hour by hour and minor adjustments will be made in the hours of operations based on those

statistics. There were more than 120 different kids every day it was open. It was staffed by a rotation from Goodman Pool as attendants. It was a very good summer and there were a number of parents who came to the SprayPark with their kids.

He then reported on Canine Day at Goodman Pool. There were about 600 dogs in attendance on Labor Day. The pool was closed for the season on Sunday night and it was then de-chlorinated for the dogs. That also meant that people couldn't swim. There was a wonderful organization of volunteers to clean up after the dogs. There were really no problems other than an overabundance of dog hair collected in the filters. Overall, for a first time event, it went well and the sponsors hope to do it again next year. There were some people who came to swim but were told it was a fund raising event for Capital Canines and they came in and watched and were not upset.

A motion was made by Schumacher/Webster asking that the record reflect their thanks to Elinor Riley for working so hard on the various special events that occur throughout the year. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

CORRESPONDENCE, RESOLUTIONS, ORDINANCES

Request from Joan and Pete Degen to place a Memorial Rock on their son's grave at Forest Hill Cemetery

Registered Speakers: All in SUPPORT

Pete Degen

Jacob Moskowitz

Leah Koerner

Debora Gil Casado

David Tengler – not speaking

Eric Heywood – not speaking

Andrew Deising – not speaking

Also Attached sheet with many registrants in support who did not wish to speak

Superintendent Morgan noted that this request is very similar to the request that came before the Commission this past July. The rules that are in place focus on the new areas of the cemetery to maintain consistency. The rules were much different when the older sections were created. From an operational standpoint, it poses no problem. He again reiterated that the Park Commission is the descendent authority of the original City Cemetery Board that was merged into the Park Commission many, many years ago. This type of issue could be included in discussions when the cemetery rules are updated rather than always having to come before the Park Commission when it relates to the older sections in the cemetery. Webster felt there was some merit in reviewing these requests on a case by case basis and using the Commission to back up staff decisions.

President Scarbrough thanked the young people who came out to speak and stressed that this is the proper manner of doing things and he expressed hope that they would stay engaged in the political process by finding issues they feel strongly about. He referred back to the Park Commission discussion earlier

this evening relating to problems in Brittingham Park. Tonight these young people had an opportunity to see how the Park Commission deals with these types of issues.

A motion was made by Webster/Chewning to approve the request from Joan and Pete Degen to place a memorial stone on Seager's grave at Forest Hill Cemetery. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

E-mails from family and friends in support of request

Request of Brian Benford, Program Director for Neighborhood House Community Center, Inc

A motion was made by Clausius/Schumacher to approve the request of Brian Benford, Program Director for Neighborhood House Community Center, Inc. to host a Greenbush Fall Festival at Edward Klief Park on Saturday, October 6, 2007 subject to sponsor's compliance with staff recommendations. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

06568

Authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to enter into an Amendment to the Agreement between the City and Organizacion Latina De Futbol, Inc. to require Organizacion Latina to schedule and designate a field marshal for Elver Park fields #3 and #4.

A motion was made by Webster/Schumacher to approve Resolution 06568 authorizing the mayor and clerk to enter into an amendment to the Agreement between the city and organizacion latina de futbol inc. to require Organizacion Latina to schedule and designate a field marshal for Elver Park fields #3 and #4.

Present: 6 -

Joseph R. Clausius; Michael Schumacher; William W. Barker; Betty Chewning; Emanuel Scarbrough and Betty N. MacDonald

NEW BUSINESS

Shelter and Gates of Heaven Fees for 2008

It was noted the fees people pay to use the Park shelters is a great bargain. When setting the fees for each coming year, staff looks at fees charged by surrounding municipalities. A motion was made by Schumacher/Webster to approve the fees as detailed on the sheet for Shelters and Gates of Heaven in 2008. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Diseased and Dead Elms and Oaks on Private Property, 2007 Requiring Condemnation

It was recommended that at the October 10, 2007 meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners, a public hearing be held beginning at 6:45 p.m. to declare

diseased and dead elms and oaks a public nuisance according to City of Madison general ordinance 23.40 (4)(b).

ADJOURNMENT

Prior to the motion to adjourn, Steve commented that he had very much enjoyed his tenure on the Park Commission and was disappointed that he was not reappointed. He also stated that his replacement, David Wallner, was also appointed to the James Madison Park Property Planning Committee.

On motion of Chewning/Clausius the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.