



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Meeting Minutes - Approved BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Wednesday, May 11, 2011

6:30 PM 1625 Northport Dr. # (Warner Park Community Recreation
Center)

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The regular meeting of the Madison Board of Park Commissioners was held on Wednesday, May 11, 2011 at Warner Park Community Recreation Center, 1625 Northport Avenue. Vice President Leopold called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. A quorum was present and the meeting was properly noticed.

Parks staff present: Superintendent Kevin Briski, Steve Doniger, Eric Knepp, Kay Rutledge, LaVonne LaFave
City staff present: Karl Van Lith
Commissioner: Betty Chewing excused

Present: 5 -

Mark Clear; Madelyn D. Leopold; Joseph R. Clausius; William W. Barker and Emanuel Scarbrough

Excused: 1 -

David L. Wallner

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Clausius/Scarbrough to approve the April 13, 2011 Minutes of the regular meeting of the Park Commission. MOTION CARRIED with Clear abstaining.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Registered speakers:

Marlene Hardick Trapping beaver in Tenney Park
Timothy Garrett Trapping beaver, report on clean up

IV. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

There were no disclosures or recusals by members of the Commission for any item on the agenda.

V. REPORTS

A. Long Range Planning Subcommittee Minutes of January 31, 2011 meeting

A motion was made by Barker/Scarborough to accept the Minutes of the January 31, 2011 meeting of the Long Range Planning Subcommittee. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Olbrich Botanical Society Minutes of the March 15, 2011 meeting

A motion was made by Scarborough/Barker to accept the Minutes of the March 15, 2011 meeting of Olbrich Botanical Society. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

C. President of the Park Commission

Vice President Leopold read a Proclamation commending Joann Walker for her many years of service to Warner Park Community Recreation Center and its Advisory Committee. (copy attached) Ms. Walker stated that volunteering is reward in itself.

D. Superintendent of Parks

1. [22368](#) Written Report of Supervisor's Activities

A motion was made by Clear/Clausius to accept the written report of Supervisor's Activities. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

[22625](#) Joann Walker Proclamation

Attachments: [JWalker cert .pdf](#)

2. Informational Items

The monthly newsletter will be sent out electronically in the next week.

The Cooperative Dog Park Group has made some modifications to the language but not the intent of the Dog Park Rules to make them uniform throughout the county. The modifications are to provide Wisconsin State Statute and Dane County and Madison Ordinance information.

Registered speaker:

Dolores Kester Thanked Parks staff for their openness to input from the dog park community

A flyer was distributed regarding the annual Rubber Ducky River Race being held at Burr Jones Field on Saturday, May 14, in collaboration with the Madison Parks Foundation. The proceeds from this event are used for Goodman Pool Scholarships. It was also announced that the third Ride the Drive would be held on Sunday, June 5, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. [22333](#) To extend the closing hours at Garner Park to 11:30 p.m. on Saturday, July 16, 2011 for the 9th annual Opera in the Park event post-concert reception for donors. (AD 19)

Sponsors: Paul R. Soglin, Mark Clear, Joseph R. Clausius and Chris Schmidt

This Resolution was RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER

A motion was made by Barker/Clear to approve Resolution ID#22333 To extend the closing hours at Garner Park to 11:30 p.m. on Saturday, July 16, 2011 for the 9th annual Opera in the Park event post-concert reception for donors. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- B. [22338](#) Request of Deb McCue, Vice President Madison Fireworks Fund, Inc. to extend the closing of Warner Park to 11:30 p.m. for Rhythm & Booms on Saturday, July 2, 2011 (rain date July 3, 2011) to allow one music stage and beer garden/food court to operate following the fireworks.

Attachments: [R&BExtended Hours.pdf](#)

A motion was made by Clear/Barker to approve Legistar ID#22338 Request of Deb McCue, Vice President Madison Fireworks Fund, Inc. to extend the closing of Warner Park to 11:30 p.m. for Rhythm & Booms on Saturday, July 2, 2011 (rain date July 3, 2011) to allow one music stage and beer garden/food court to operate following the fireworks. MOTION CARRIED with Scarbrough voting nay. Scarbrough asked that the Park Commission at some future date, address the issue of alcohol sales in connection with special events.

1. [22339](#) To authorize the closure of Warner Park lagoon and its connecting waterway to Lake Mendota during 2011 Rhythm and Booms celebration. (12th AD)

Sponsors: Satya V. Rhodes-Conway and Anita Weier

This Resolution was RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER

A motion was made by Clear/Clausius to approve Resolution ID#22339 to authorize the closure of Warner Park lagoon and its connecting waterway to Lake Mendota during 2011 Rhythm and Booms celebration. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. [22340](#) To extend the closing hours at Warner Park to 11:30 p.m. on Saturday, July 2, 2011 for the 19th annual Rhythm & Booms Independence Day fireworks event. (12th AD)

Sponsors: Satya V. Rhodes-Conway and Anita Weier

This Resolution was RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER

A motion was made by Clausius/Clear to approve Resolution ID#22340 to extend the closing hours at Warner Park to 11:30 p.m. on Saturday, July 2, 2011 for the 19th annual Rhythm & Booms Independence Day fireworks event. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

C. [21481](#) To approve the Madison Sustainability Plan.

Sponsors: Satya V. Rhodes-Conway, Judy Compton and Marsha A. Rummel

Attachments: [Sustainability Plan_02-22-11.pdf](#)
[Studies on Pesticides and Health.pdf](#)
[BID_SustainPlan_Input.pdf](#)
[Mikolajewski Sustainability Plan Comments 3-10-11.pdf](#)
[Sustainability Plan Memo-CDBG_03-31-11.pdf](#)
[Engineering comments](#)
[BID_SustainPlan_Input.pdf](#)
[Registration Statement Sustainable Design CDBG April.pdf](#)
[GMCoc Sustainability Plan Memo_04-11-11.pdf](#)
[Klafka Comments on Madison Sustainability Plan dated October 281nov10.p](#)
[Widstrand Comments.pdf](#)
[Planning Division Memo 042811.pdf](#)
[ped bike .pdf](#)
[SustainabilityReport042711.pdf](#)
[MyMemoonCitySustainPlan.docx](#)
[Green roofs requirement in Madison Sustainability Plan.htm](#)
[Madison Sustainability Plan.txt](#)
[sustainability plan for Union Corners.txt](#)
[Madison Food Systems.htm](#)
[Madison Sustainability Plan Comments 5-10-11.doc](#)
[MadisonSoilVolume.pdf](#)
[SDE_SWAC Meeting_110512.pdf](#)
[Sustainability Plan recommendations APPROVED 5 12 2011 by BOHMDC.p](#)
[Paul Abramson comments.pdf](#)
[Comments emailed2.pdf](#)
[Comments emailed3.pdf](#)
[Peak Oil.pdf](#)
[Peak Oil 2.pdf](#)
[Si Widstrand Comments.pdf](#)
[Comments emailed.pdf](#)
[DannaOlsenEmail.pdf](#)
[BIDSustainPlanInputUpdated.pdf](#)
[Sustainability pesticide .pdf](#)
[Sustainability Plan - DMI edits 6-8-11 pdf.pdf](#)
[Lance Green Comments 5-10-11.pdf](#)
[Water Utility Comments on the Madison Sustainability Plan.pdf](#)

This Resolution was Return to Lead with the Recommendation for Approval to the SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND ENERGY COMMITTEE . Due back on 5/18/2011.

Karl Van Lith of the city's Human Resources Department and representing the Sustainable Design and Energy Committee presented the update to the 2005 Madison Sustainability Plan that looked at green buildings and energy conservation in order to meet the needs of citizens today and in the future. There are 10 different sustainability categories which are to be used as a guideline by policy makers when looking at sustainability efforts for the next 10 years. There have been five public hearings on the Plan as well as presentations to 10 committees. The Park Commission was asked to look at the goals and actions to determine if there was anything missing and to

identify those areas in which the Parks Division and Commission might like to partner.

The city uses a sustainable framework called The Natural Step (TNS) that looks at ways to decrease use of fuel, electricity, natural gas and water. It also covers herbicides and pesticides and using natural repellants.

Superintendent Briski stated that the Parks Division does support the plan with the exception of the goal of committing 4% of the land area to be used for urban agriculture by 2020. The Parks Division supports urban agriculture and hosts/partners with community gardens in many of our parks. Four percent of the city area is approximately 2000 acres; that compares to all of the conservation park acreage or all of the park fields green space. He asked that land throughout Dane County be part of this initiative.

A motion was made by Clear/Scarborough to approve Resolution ID#21481 to approve the Madison Sustainability Plan. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- D. [21985](#) Authorizing the execution of an Underground Utility Easement and Easement Release to Madison Gas and Electric Company across a portion of Cherokee Marsh North located 6098 North Sherman Avenue.

Sponsors: Anita Weier

Attachments: [9494 Easement Exhibit.pdf](#)

This Resolution was **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER**

It was noted that the easement was buried at their cost under the service road so it no longer cuts through the woods.

A motion was made by Scarborough/Clear to approve Resolution ID#21985 authorizing the execution of an Underground Utility Easement and Easement Release to Madison Gas and Electric Company across a portion of Cherokee Marsh North located 6098 North Sherman Avenue. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- E. [22114](#) Authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a lease for farming purposes with Daniel Kaltenberg for the City-owned parcel located at 5898 North Sherman Avenue, being a part of Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park.

Sponsors: Anita Weier

Attachments: [9493 Exhibit A-2.pdf](#)

This Resolution was **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER**

This converts the tillage to get rid of weeds. It will be planted in corn or soy beans and not for the sale of produce. Staff was asked about the possibility of community gardens at that location.

A motion was made by Clausius/Clear to approve Resolution ID#22114 authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a lease for farming purposes with Daniel Kaltenberg for the City-owned parcel located at 5898 North

Sherman Avenue, being a part of Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- F. [22117](#) Authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a lease for farming purposes with Joshua Miller for approximately 24 acres within Door Creek Park.

Sponsors: Lauren Cnare

Attachments: [9654 Exhibit A.pdf](#)

This Resolution was RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER5/16/2011.

This lease is a way of keeping the land open until it will be planted in prairie or developed into athletic areas, so that staff doesn't have to mow down weeds throughout the year. Staff was requested to look at whether the property could be used for community gardens in the interim.

A motion was made by Clausius/Clear to approve Resolution ID#22117 authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a lease for farming purposes with Joshua Miller for approximately 24 acres within Door Creek Park. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- G. [22290](#) Amending the Final Report of the Central Park Design and Implementation Task Force.

Sponsors: Joseph R. Clausius and Marsha A. Rummel

Attachments: [Central Park Final Report 6-7-11.pdf](#)

This Resolution was Recommendation for Approval to the COMMON COUNCIL.

Barker stated that the previous Final Report was written prior to the Research Products property being available for purchase. That purchase allowed the joining of the two separate parcels into one contiguous space. A hiatus was also taken while they were determining what would happen with the high speed rail issue. The Plan is very flexible and speaks about the same approved uses of playgrounds, community gardens, skate park, and performance space.

Superintendent Briski recognized Bill Barker for all of his work as Chair of the Central Park Task Force. He was also recognized as the Citizen Board member of the year by the Wisconsin Park and Rec Association in large part because of his work as Chair of this Task Force.

A motion was made by Clear/Clausius to approve Resolution ID#22290 Amending the Final Report of the Central Park Design and Implementation Task Force. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- A. [22014](#) Request by Team Magnus/Luke Batchelor-Clark and Christopher Berge to hold the second Wizzard Cross at Hiestand Park on December 3-4, 2011.

Attachments: [Cyclocross appl.pdf](#)
[Conditions for Cyclocross.pdf](#)

Doniger reported that, at the direction of the Park Commission, other parks besides Warner were reviewed. The organizers are now requesting the use of Hiestand Park. A Parks staff team has reviewed the route; a map showing it was distributed. The route will go around the soccer fields, doesn't go into the conservation area and uses the hillside. The organizers have contacted both the Alder and the Disc Golf Association and both endorse the event.

The sponsors will post signs at the park, on their website and in other cyclocross publications that the park can only be used for cyclocross those two days in December. All practice will need to occur elsewhere.

Registered Speakers, both in support
Christopher Berge
Luke Batchelor-Clark

Commissioners stated their review of event proposals takes into consideration other uses in a park and that is why they are so adamant in their concerns. They look at the totality of the event; they want to make sure that the turf will not be torn up, and they want what is best for both the people of Madison and the park. Concern was expressed regarding riders who go out to practice before or after the race is over. Commissioners emphasized the need for sponsors to remind riders that use of the course other than during the race must be restricted. Commissioners are not concerned about damage from the event itself and felt the event last year was well run and the organizers were responsible. It is the unauthorized practices that are troublesome. It is the city's responsibility to put up signs in parks where bikes are prohibited.

A motion was made by Barker/Scarborough to approve the request by Team Magnus/Luke Batchelor-Clark and Christopher Berge to hold the second Wizzard Cross at Hiestand Park on December 3-4, 2011, subject to sponsors' compliance with all conditions. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. [22349](#)

Goose Management Report

Attachments: [Goose management report 2011.pdf](#)
[Vilas Park Waterfowl Management Plan4-26-11.pdf](#)

Superintendent Briski reported that this is an item that the Park Commission has previously reviewed. Russ Hefty, the Conservation Supervisor, was directed to review the issue and provide plans and options for consideration for geese management on parklands.

Hefty explained that the resident or giant Canada Geese are the subject of this report. They are a separate race of geese that are much larger than those that fly to and from Canada. The geese that nest in Hudson Bay weigh about 8 to 10# while the resident/giant Canada Geese that nest here weigh about 16#. It was discovered there were large groups not only in Warner Park but in lower Wingra Creek and Vilas Park. This issue addresses our responsibilities as stewards to the land that includes both people and the wildlife. There are areas in our parks with large amounts of goose feces that make any other use unavailable. There are conflicts on bike paths. The goose situation at Vilas Park has caused the beach to be closed numerous times. That, in turn, has

produced inappropriate use of that area by groups of people using drugs and drinking, becoming issues for police.

Various strategies have been carried out to discourage geese, including shoreline plantings and oiling eggs. Last year at Warner Park, 20 nests were located on the big island in the lagoon and the eggs were oiled. This year, 26 nests were located and the eggs oiled. It is anticipated that oiling eggs will be done again next year because it takes three years for geese to mature and nest. Oiling eggs will eventually stem the growth of the population, if all the nests can be found, but it doesn't deal with adults who can live for up to 20 years. Staff would need to be 100% successful in oiling every egg for 20 years in order to lower the population, assuming that no new geese would be attracted to the location.

Various experts such as Scott Craven of the UW Wildlife Ecology Dept. and Larry Gillette of the Three Rivers Park District in the Twin Cities have said that to have a successful goose management program requires the use of all the tools available. That includes harassment, vegetation modification, and the use of roundups to take away the adults if you want to lower the population of adult geese in a reasonable timeframe.

There are also areas at Yahara Hills Golf Course that provide habitat for nesting and then the geese move to different areas within the course to graze. The Middleton Golf Course uses dogs to haze geese but they do not have the problem of nesting habitat.

At Vilas Park, staff found both nests and broods on the adjoining Arboretum and Edgewood properties. There is also a goose population in the lower Wingra Creek area in the marsh near the Alliant Energy Center and Department of Transportation. Parks has no control over those habitats. We are only the recipients of the geese when they are chased out by various activities and the geese then remain for the balance of the year grazing at Vilas and Olin Parks.

One recommendation is to continue to monitor the geese throughout the summer and look at the other techniques that might possibly include a roundup in the fall. A clarification was made that roundups need to occur in late June or early July when geese molt their flight feathers. A roundup is not conducted at a site where eggs have been oiled that year because experts state that when nests fail, the birds leave the area just before they molt. It is possible that geese are coming into the area from other nesting locations because juveniles were found at Warner last year following the oiling of eggs. Warner will be monitored this year to determine if juvenile geese are again found that may have floated in from elsewhere. It was recommended that no roundup occur at Warner in 2011 because eggs were oiled there.

The staff report mentions surrounding municipalities in its final recommendations. Middleton hazes geese with dogs, but they don't have nesting areas so geese are primarily present there during the spring and fall migration. There are more than 60 communities throughout Wisconsin that have worked with the USDA Wildlife Services to conduct roundups after other methods to reduce populations failed.

Dan Hirchert reported he is a wildlife biologist who worked with the Vilas Park Waterfowl Management Advisory Group to study the goose problem and water

quality issues at Vilas Park. The almost extinct Giant Canada Geese are a “success” story that is now producing goose problems from New York to California. The giant Canada goose population in Wisconsin is 82% above the goal set by the Wisconsin DNR.

The biggest issue at Vilas relates to the beach closings. Last year, the beach was closed 43 days which is a significant portion of our Wisconsin summer. Additionally, many park users weren’t able to use soccer fields for practice or play; people couldn’t use grassy areas for picnicking and other outdoor recreational activities. There are goose droppings on walkways and paths causing conflicts with bikers and walkers who slip on the accumulations. There are issues with establishing native vegetation at the water’s edge and maintaining those plantings.

However, the other large issue at Vilas is that the water has been classified by the EPA as a degraded impaired waterway due to the various e coli bacteria that can be traced back to the accumulations of goose feces.

The Vilas Report identifies education as one of their top priorities. It is common to see people feeding waterfowl along the shore. This brings large quantities of geese into the area and allows for the easy transmission of disease. There is signage posted prohibiting the feeding of waterfowl, but it is ignored.

Other techniques are habitat modification by providing buffers of taller vegetation around the water, dog harassment and population management. Without being able to address the adult population, it is unlikely they will be able to reach their goal of 4 to 25 adult geese. Last summer there were 130 geese. Oiling or habitat techniques alone make it unlikely they will reach their goal.

Harassing the geese may get them to move along but it is likely they will go to the next closest area that meets their needs. It could be a golf course or the next closest park. This just moves the problem down the line, many times to other city property. A responsible plan deals with the problem at the site and in order to do that, all available tools need to be considered.

Kirsti Sorsa of the Madison-Dane County Public Health Department indicated her concern regarding geese is public health and insuring water safety. Water can serve as a breeding culture and transmit disease. She monitors water quality at all city beaches to minimize the likelihood of water borne illnesses. E coli is used to indicate whether bacteria is present that has been shown to cause illness. Large amounts of feces from geese contain organisms such as Campylobacter, Listeria, and Salmonella which can all cause various illnesses. The feces also release nutrients into the water that can cause blue green algae blooms that are also potentially dangerous. Last year Vilas was closed for 43 days in order to prevent any possibility of illness there. It is not just a public health issue but there is also a loss of economic benefits for businesses.

Registered Speakers:

NAME

Marlene Hardick - OPPOSE Roundup
Jens Luebow - OPPOSE Roundup
Lori Chadli representing Wild Warner - OPPOSE Roundup
Alyson Bodai rep Humane Society of the U.S. - OPPOSE Roundup
Dolores Kester - OPPOSE Roundup
Ted O'Donnell - OPPOSE Roundup
Megan Porter - OPPOSE Roundup
Trish O'Kane - OPPOSE Roundup
Greg Skatrud - OPPOSE Roundup
Dave Gartner – not present read his comments - OPPOSE Roundup
Theron Ris - OPPOSE Roundup
Tyler Leeper – SUPPORTS Roundup
Stacy Taeuber - OPPOSE Roundup
Ostara Oberg – not here provided drawing - OPPOSE Roundup
Jim Carrie - OPPOSE Roundup
Boaz Fink - OPPOSE Roundup
Joe Abisaid – not present read his comments OPPOSE Roundup
Timothy Garrett - OPPOSE Roundup

A fifteen minute recess was taken. The Commission returned to session at 9:10 p.m.

Members present: Bill Barker, Ald. Joe Clausius, Ald. Mark Clear, Emanuel Scarbrough, Madelyn Leopold

NAME

Kathie Free - OPPOSE Roundup
Christa Seidl – not present read her comments - OPPOSE Roundup
Erinn Kunik – not present read her comments - OPPOSE Roundup
Stefanie Greiner – not present read her comments - OPPOSE Roundup
Caitlin Klein – not present read her comments - OPPOSE Roundup
Lydia Getman - OPPOSE Roundup
Lynn Pauly - OPPOSE Roundup
Sarah Foster - OPPOSE Roundup
Anneliese Emerson - OPPOSE Roundup
Rick Bogle representing Alliance for Animals - OPPOSE Roundup
James Tye – SUPPORT Roundup
Julie Wilke - OPPOSE Roundup
Jack Kloppenburg - OPPOSE Roundup
Chris Ohm - OPPOSE Roundup
Jon Standridge – SUPPORT Roundup
Cheryl Balazs - OPPOSE Roundup
Peter Cannon - OPPOSE Roundup
Reg Reis - OPPOSE Roundup

Following the speakers, Commissioners had questions of staff. Kirsti Sorsa, of Public Health, explained her role was to test beach water for e coli bacteria and if it was over a set threshold to close the affected beach. Water is then tested daily until the level drops below the threshold. Public Health personnel make note of the amount of feces found near the beaches when they are testing. She also clarified that Public Health applies clean water standards not drinking water standards. She acknowledged that it was possible that the e coli could

come from other sources but they do correlations with all the different factors.

Hefty stated that the Report he wrote is available on line in Legistar and is available to the public. The Report divides the recommendations into six different locations throughout the city. In all six, the recommendation is for nonlethal methods with the exception of Lower Wingra Creek. It was noted that the recommendations in the Report closely mirror the Geesepeace approach at Rockford. Hefty indicated he spoke with the person who is in charge of that program many times. Their cost during the first five years was \$35,000 annually but they have not kept track of costs in the last 5 years. The person reported it is a lot of work to chase down all of these eggs and there are some parks where, despite their best efforts, geese are still problematic and they are nesting further and further back in the marshes. It is extremely time consuming and difficult to find all the nests.

Commissioners noted this will be an ongoing problem that isn't going to be solved in a year. The results mentioned in the report may take several years. If the desire is to have a population reduced by significant amounts in a relatively short period of time, non-lethal methods won't be sufficient. Six different locations were mentioned in the recommendations but non-lethal means were only advocated for lower Wingra Creek. The Vilas Report also supports removal because 1) there is the immediate issue of the beach closures and 2) we have no control over where the geese are producing (nesting). Whereas, at Warner, there is control because the nests are located on city lands and the eggs can be oiled.

The Report indicates that Conservation staff treated 96 eggs at Warner last year and yet in June 89 juvenile geese were counted. It isn't known whether nests were missed. This year 26 nests were found and eggs oiled. Staff will closely monitor to see what kind of reduction in goslings is evident. If another 50+ goslings are found, it would suggest that geese are both being produced at Warner and that they are floating in from some other site that's away from the park. That information won't be available until late June. Goslings can float from as far as 2 miles away from where they actually nest.

Clausius indicated he was willing to support the report provided the reference to using lethal means at lower Wingra Creek was deleted. He wants to try non-lethal means first.

It was noted that some airports are planting different types of grasses. Airports do not plow under their current grasses; they convert to fescues when they are disturbing the ground for projects. If those grasses were planted in our park system it isn't known whether they would be conducive to the activities those parks are used for nor could costs be approximated. It was reported that geese weren't observed flying to the airport but flying across the flight path so having a different type of grass at the airport would not affect geese. It was suggested that if the fescue grass were planted in parks it would deter the geese from grazing in them. The other issue that staff is concerned about, especially at Warner, is the natural wetland and even if the grass in the park is unpalatable, the island has native sedges which are very desirable. That could actually make the geese spend more time on the island where they would graze on that vegetation, causing it to become even more impoverished. A solution needs to be found before the diversity of those native grasses is gone.

Conservation staff are trying to restore aquatic plants up in Cherokee Marsh but there are very few species that aren't highly palatable for geese grazing. Staff is going to try to establish some American Lotus in the bay near the soccer fields to try to make that area less attractive. It is not known whether the geese will immediately graze off those first leaves when they come up.

Commissioners expressed concern about the amount of time that Conservation staff are spending on this issue. Non-lethal control is very labor intensive and efforts to obtain more resources for conservation parks have not been successful. Non-lethal methods will further take resources away that could be used to restore plant and animal biodiversity over thousands of acres. Concern was also mentioned about the public health issues, beach closings and the impact on small business owners.

Currently it's not so much that geese are crowding out other species but that they are degrading the habitat. The geese population is growing significantly faster than other species. The concern is that with so many geese degrading the habitat, it is unknown what impact is caused to the nesting viability for lots of other bird species. If the island at Warner is completely denuded down to nothing but cattails and mud, what negative impact will that have on the American bittern nesting potential, which is a threatened bird. If it takes 10 years to reduce geese populations using non-lethal means there will be a negative impact on the entire ecosystem.

Geesepeace does not recommend harassing geese with dogs between April through the molting season when young goslings are present because the adults aren't going to leave their young.

If a roundup enabled staff to get the population down to levels that could more easily be maintained, then the other techniques might stabilize the population. A roundup would not be needed every year once the population was under control. Another issue is that a small population hopefully would not attract other geese to the area.

If the Arboretum, Edgewood and Alliant do not cooperate in terms of oiling the eggs, the population at Vilas will continue to grow. The Arboretum has concerns about disruption to their natural areas and the effect on other species in their wetlands.

The 3 nesting pairs mentioned in the report as the optimal number for Vilas, actually refers to the adults and their goslings for a total of 24 or 25 geese and comes from a publication that was prepared by Jim Lorman and his students at Edgewood College when they studied geese in Vilas Park.

Discussion turned to dogs chasing geese. Many parks are posted so that individuals cannot walk dogs on sidewalks in parks. Is the Parks Division thinking about possibly allowing dogs to walk through our parks and chase geese rather than paying someone to bring in a dog to chase them? Issues connected with that proposal are picking up dog poop, people concerned about children playing soccer where dogs are running and some people who are afraid of dogs. Monona used dogs at Winnequah Park where dogs are not normally allowed and they found that it led to an increase in people walking dogs that aren't supposed to be there so it hasn't been totally successful.

Returning to the Report, a number of valid points were made regarding the need for possible lethal methods. If the goal is to deal with the issue of conflict at the beach and to get the population down in a reasonable timeframe, then lethal means need to be implemented at Olin.

Hefty then mentioned there were three major fish kills in the Warner lagoon the last three winters. A fish manager felt having all these geese and their feces being deposited and washed into the lagoon was a contributing factor to the fish kill. He stated the water was highly entropic.

Commissioners asked for clarification on what specific approval staff are asking for in order to proceed. If the goal is to have fewer conflicts and have beaches stay open, and the Commission wants it handled in the most expedient manner, then staff need to have all the tools available, and that includes a roundup. Staff is not saying that a roundup would occur immediately, but that it would be an option. There is a group interested in the water quality of the lakes that would be willing to fund a roundup to reduce the geese at problem locations.

Hefty reported that Jim Carrier of Wild Warner arranged for a meeting with some of their members but that additional people were there which negated the kind of small discussion he had hoped to have. He gave a brief presentation as did Scott Craven from the UW Wildlife Ecology Department. They received comments from the group for more than an hour. Hefty stated the comments he received at the first public meeting colored his report. Wild Warner wanted staff to commit to inserting in the report that there would be 5 to 7 years of nonlethal control and that the Park Commission would never see a lethal option on paper. The group was informed that it was his job to provide the Commission with all the information on all the techniques that were available and that the Commission would make the decision on the appropriate policy for staff. Hefty doesn't propose to prevent lethal means if that's what the Commission wants to do and, in fact, it's the most expedient way to initially bring down the population so that other measures can be implemented to keep it down.

Superintendent Briski confirmed that the first public meeting was devoted to Wild Warner and there have been a number of public meetings since then that were also attended by members of Wild Warner. Additional notices of those meetings were sent to Wild Warner. Materials that were presented at various Park Commission meetings were publicly accepted and forwarded to our Conservation Supervisor following each meeting. Hefty included that information in his report. Additionally, Superintendent Briski attended Wild Warner meetings to listen to their concerns, answer questions, and provide them with information.

Staff has spoken with both Geesepeace national staff and staff at their incubator sites and it is misleading to represent that we have not done so. We have requested their materials and incorporated that information into the report as well as information on the Geesepeace approach at Rockford. We have done what special interest groups have requested. We have also spoken with the national office of the Humane Society of the United States and reviewed their information. There has not been a shutout of those materials and it is unfair to this Commission and to the staff who are working diligently

on this issue to imply that hasn't happened.

A motion was made by Clausius/Clear to accept the staff report as prepared by Russ Hefty.

Commissioners stated this means staff will have all the tools to use as they see fit in controlling the goose population.

A request was made by Clear to amend the motion to make it explicitly clear that staff are authorized to use the appropriate tools as they find they are needed, including killing geese to keep the population under control to maintain public health and water quality. Amendment approved by Clausius.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Clear/Clausius the meeting adjourned at 10:46 p.m.