



City of Madison

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

Meeting Minutes - Approved BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Wednesday, January 11, 2012

6:30 PM

Goodman Maintenance Facility
1402 Wingra Creek Parkway

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The regular meeting of the Madison Board of Park Commissioners was held on Wednesday, January 11, 2012 at the Goodman Maintenance Facility, 1402 Wingra Creek Parkway.

President Wallner called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. A quorum was present and the meeting was properly noticed.

Members present: Bill Barker, Ald. Joe Clausius, Alder Mark Clear, Madelyn Leopold, Nancy Ragland, Emanuel Scarbrough, and David Wallner.

Parks staff present: Superintendent Kevin Briski, Eric Knepp, Charlie Romines, Russ Hefty, and LaVonne LaFave.

City staff present: Joe Stepnik, Real Estate Agent, Planning Dept.

II. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

President of the Park Commission

President Wallner opened the floor for nominations for President. A motion was made by Scarbrough/Clausius to nominate David Wallner as President. A motion was made by Clausius/Clear to close the nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for David Wallner. MOTION CARRIED with Wallner abstaining.

Vice President of the Park Commission

President Wallner opened the floor for nominations for Vice-President. A motion was made by Barker/Scarbrough to nominate Madelyn Leopold as Vice President. A motion was made by Clausius/Clear to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Madelyn Leopold. MOTION CARRIED with Leopold abstaining.

President Wallner stated that he appreciated all of the Commission's hard work this past year and recognized new Commissioners Ald. Mark Clear and Nancy Ragland.

Appointments to Committees

President Wallner announced the appointments to the standing committees of the Park Commission would be made in February and asked members to contact him if they had a preference. He then announced that he was recommending the citizen appointment of Sean Gere to the Habitat Stewardship Committee.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Leopold/Ragland to approve the December 14, 2011 Minutes of the regular meeting of the Park Commission as corrected. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Registered speaker:

NAME	Issue
Ron Shutvet	Comments on Invasive Species Control

A motion was made by Ragland/Barker to refer to the Habitat Stewardship Subcommittee the issue of invasive species control, developing a database of best practices for control, increasing volunteer help and allowing citizens who have been certified in pesticide use to use pesticides on invasives. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.** Leopold suggested that the recommendations the Commission had previously heard from former Planning and Development Manager, Si Widstrand, be included in that discussion. Superintendent Briski noted that the Division does have an active volunteer program. Also, Widstrand's comments dealt with training general Parks staff on conservation methods that would be used in general park areas following initial efforts by volunteers to deal with these types of issues.

V. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

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

VI. REPORTS

A. Long Range Planning Subcommittee

[November 7, 2011]: <http://legistar.cityofmadison.com/calendar/#current>
http://legistar.cityofmadison.com/meetings/2011/11/10752_M_LONG_RANGE_PLANNING_SUBCOMMITTEE_11-11-07_Meeting_Minutes.pdf

A motion was made by Leopold/Scarborough to accept the Minutes of the November 7, 2011 meeting of the Long Range Planning Subcommittee. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

B. Olbrich Botanical Society Minutes of November 15, 2011 Meeting

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

C. President of the Park Commission

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

D. Superintendent of Parks

1. Written Report of Supervisor's December Activities

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

2. Informational Items

Superintendent Briski announced that a Retirement Party for Ms. LaFave is planned for Friday, January 13, in Room 108 of the City County Building from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. and everyone is invited.

The Common Council adopted a Resolution that authorizes the Parks Superintendent to enter into Let's Play Spruce Up Grants with KaBoom!.

Unfortunately the outside weather has been warm and this has not been a good winter season for Parks. Staff were commended for trying to make ice in 50° weather. Parks has a group of really dedicated staff who want people to enjoy Parks resources. Rinks have thus far been open only two days. Snow is anticipated tonight and we hope to have facilities open for people to enjoy winter. Staff will be making snow Thursday and Friday at Elver.

In response to a question regarding the Cannonball Run bike trail, this is a city Engineering project and it is anticipated that it should be finished by late summer.

The dredging at Spring Harbor and Marshall Parks is complete and a picture was displayed showing approximately 30 ice fishermen in Spring Harbor Bay.

Finally the real estate purchase for the addition to Merrill Springs Park was completed in December by the City.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Amending the Park Division's 2012 Operating Budget and authorizing the Parks Superintendent to apply for and enter into Partners for Fish and Wildlife Habitat Development Agreements with the United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service for in-kind supplies and materials to be utilized in City of Madison Parks. (Various ADs)

Resolution ID#24916 Amending the Park Division's 2012 Operating Budget and authorizing the Parks Superintendent to apply for and enter into Partners for Fish and Wildlife Habitat Development Agreements with the United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service for in-kind supplies and materials to be utilized in City of Madison Parks. (Various ADs)

A motion was made by Leopold/Ragland to approve Resolution ID#24916 Amending the Park Division's 2012 Operating Budget and authorizing the Parks Superintendent to apply for and enter into Partners for Fish and Wildlife Habitat Development Agreements with the United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service for in-kind supplies and materials to be utilized in City of Madison Parks. (Various ADs) MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- B. Request from Mendota Rowing Club to host the Madison Sprints 2012 on Lake Wingra from Vilas and Wingra Parks on June 2, 2012

Request from Mendota Rowing Club to host the Madison Sprints 2012 on Lake Wingra from Vilas and Wingra Parks on June 2, 2012.

A motion was made by Ragland/Clear to approve Request from Mendota Rowing Club to host the Madison Sprints 2012 on Lake Wingra from Vilas and Wingra Parks on June 2, 2012. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

Adopting the Madison Cultural Plan

A motion was made by Clear, seconded by Clausius, to Return to Lead with the Recommendation for Approval to the CULTURAL PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

Resolution ID#24233 Adopting the Madison Cultural Plan

Registered speakers, all in support:

NAME

Steve Goldberg

Karin Wolf

Anne Katz, Chair of Comm.

Ron Shutvet

Members of the Cultural Plan Steering Committee presented the proposal for Madison's first Cultural Plan as drafted by a consultant. The Plan asks citizens to redefine the concept of culture in Madison. It includes parks, beaches and open spaces as part of Madison's culture. The goal is to strengthen all the various pieces and the ways they fit together to provide a cultural asset for the Madison area. The Plan is also being reviewed by eight other committees in the city. The Plan addresses the importance of the lake shores and lakes, public gardens and parks, acknowledging that they are a big part of Madison and its quality of life. Members of the Steering Committee would like to see these pieces integrated better.

The Report outlines several recommendations that relate to parks and are under the purview of the Park Commission. Specifically, there is a discussion regarding Fairs, Festivals and Special Events that would optimize use of streets and parks. They believe that the city should re-evaluate its current approach to events, and increase arts and culture in city facilities, by looking at the way other communities handle permitting, restrictions, and requirements. Partnering with MSCR at the Warner Park Community Recreation Center and hosting performing arts events and festivals at Breese were mentioned. At Central Park a proposed amphitheatre could be managed by a professional music promoter.

Another recommendation addresses neighborhood spaces and the ability of neighborhood residents and associations to participate in the development of their neighborhood plans. It was noted there are some neighborhoods that need attention because they are neglected. But, because the residents may be struggling just to get by, they are less likely to get involved in discussions relating to designs, preservation or sustainability. It was noted that the Committee plans a series of four public meetings throughout the city to obtain community responses.

Commissioners spoke about neighborhoods and how Madison defines itself by those neighborhoods. Some have the resources to do things for the

individuals who reside in them and other neighborhoods are barely surviving and don't have the resources for these types of things. The question is how to engage them so they are enriched not only by cultures outside of their immediate neighborhoods but by their own culture. Is there a way those neighborhoods can get compensated for what they do? There is a huge disconnect within the creative sector when artists don't have jobs or other income and the Commission wondered whether there was a way they could be compensated for their art so they don't have to worry about finances.

The Cultural Planning Committee mentioned other communities in the state that are much more cohesive in bringing culture to their neighborhoods by using their parks, streets, etc. They believe that Madison can become even better at this. The sizes of these communities varied greatly. The Chair of that Committee stated that this plan takes a "big picture look" at what we have and ways to provide access so that everyone in the community can participate. This plan will help figure out where there are deficiencies and how to try to spread resources. It will provide a means of determining what strengths are there and where to put resources into areas that are deficient.

The Committee agreed that food is viewed as an aspect of culture because people express themselves creatively through food, whether it is growing it or cooking it. Madison has many activities that center on different aspects of food such as community gardens, the Farmers Market, etc.

The Park Commission stated that while they agree there are opportunities for Breese Stevens they recently learned there is a deed restriction on that parcel that requires only sports events to take place there. They are investigating whether or not that restriction can be lifted or even if removing the restriction is appropriate. It was noted that these types of problems illustrate the complexities of the recommendations in the plan.

Clear stated that the previous evening, the Economic Development Committee had a subcommittee meeting on the Downtown Plan. They discussed the expansion of Law Park and whether that would be an appropriate location to provide a performance venue by increasing the amount of fill. It was then mentioned that possibly the sound would carry across the lake and there might be other neighborhoods complaining about the sound. Superintendent Briski stated that Law Park or any other Park space mentioned in the Cultural Plan is subject to Park Commission review and approval. As an editorial note, there is no amphitheater planned for Central Park, just a performance space.

With regard to working with MSCR, there is a statement about perhaps moving art and cultural recreational programs to the city and he wondered if it was the City Arts or perhaps Parks. It was noted that the plan doesn't identify any particular city agency. That would need to be determined if that recommendation would move forward. The Arts Commission is not certain they would endorse that recommendation. Superintendent Briski reported that Parks manages the Street Use Team that approves all street events ranging from garage sales to neighborhood parties to Rhythm & Booms to the Taste of Madison.

Commissioners requested that Ms. Wolf let the Park Commission know about the upcoming public meetings on the Plan.

A statement was made that many of these recommendations involve the parks. Commissioners wondered whether there would be another agency or commission to review proposals or how would they be tied in to current procedures. Ms. Wolf stated that one of the discrepancies is in the fees and permitting process and suggested the possibility of an ad hoc committee to look at a team approach for review. There is currently an inter-agency process to review proposals, but they are looking for a group to explore opportunities that are overlooked.

A motion was made by Clear/Clausius to approve Resolution ID#24233 Adopting the Madison Cultural Plan incorporating the comments made by the Park Commission and Parks staff. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

C. Deer Management Proposal

Russ Hefty, Parks Conservation Resources Supervisor, presented an overview and recommendation. Urban deer present a challenge for many communities chiefly because of the elimination of predators that would typically manage a deer population in urban areas. The goal when the conservation parks were established 40 years ago, was to preserve, enhance and maintain diversity within those parks. Deer have become a major player in that environment because they have adapted to living in urban areas. In 1993, a farmer near Cherokee Marsh came before the Park Commission requesting that deer be moved from the park to his property so he could shoot them to prevent their damaging his crops. The Park Commission at that time declined. In 1995, people in the Cherokee neighborhood came to the Park Commission because they were concerned about deer grazing in their yards and again the Park Commission took no immediate action. However, they did establish a task force and it was determined that it was a park issue and the deer were compromising the diversity of the park. In 1996, a deer control policy was approved for Cherokee Marsh and in 1997 control measures were implemented to lower the deer population. The plants are now recovering from the over browsing that had occurred. There are still deer in the park but not in the same quantities.

The current issue is in Sandburg Park, an approximately 30 acre park on the Northeast side. Ten years ago deer weren't seen in that park. In the last five to seven years it was more common and now you cannot walk through the park without encountering deer. Staff have been getting calls and e-mails from neighbors who are concerned about their yards due to deer browsing. They are also concerned about traffic safety as well as the possibility of Lyme disease. UW Entomology Professor Susan Paskewitz is an expert on this issue. She has found the species of tick that transmits Lyme disease to be present in the park. While that species is present, it doesn't automatically mean they are carriers.

Parks staff work with the airport on deer management issues and it is their responsibility to keep records on deer in the vicinity of their runways. In fact, annually in March the airport does an aerial survey to count deer in the vicinity of their runways. Last March they did a flyover of Sandburg Woods and counted 24 deer there. The goal set by the DNR for deer in the Madison metro area is 10 deer per square mile.

Hefty then displayed browsed shrubs that were approximately two feet tall and explained that they should be six to eight to ten feet tall. Because of the deer browsing they are not able to reach those heights. At Owen Conservation Park these browse lines are not evident because coyotes have kept deer in check. Because of the small size of Sandburg Park, it is unlikely that coyotes could be of any assistance since they need larger territories that are away from the public. It is Parks responsibility to exercise stewardship to maintain the Park's ecology and plant diversity.

Registered speakers:

NAME	Support	Oppose
Don Bates of DNR	Available for questions	
Deanna Devaul		XX
Larvelle Herber – not speaking		XX
Gene Herber		XX
Al Phelan	XX	
Ron Shutvet	XX	
Lynn Pauly		XX
Eric Bielh	XX	
Mary Ferris		XX
Stacy Taeuber		XX

Bates of the DNR stated that relocation of deer has been ineffective and very expensive when done in other communities and they do not recommend that method of deer management.

Alder Clausius indicated this park is in his district. The park is approximately 30 acres in size and he inquired how many deer the park could support. Hefty responded that the park is not large enough to support resident deer, but could handle an occasional transient deer. The DNR population goal is 10 deer per square mile in the Madison Metro Zone. Sandburg Woods (30 acres) is approximately 1/20th of a square mile. In Sandburg Woods, 6 to 8 deer are regularly observed which equates to a population density of 120 to 160 deer per square mile. Clausius continued that his understanding is that herd management at Cherokee and the Arboretum is done on an as needed basis. Hefty added that the use of birth control is not feasible.

In response to a question, the DNR representative indicated they did not speak with the Humane Society of the U.S. regarding this issue. They have put radio collars on deer and determined that they move back into the area as soon as the chasing stops. Adult females are the leaders in the deer world and if they are removed the rest of the herd may move on. If deer are relocated they need to be moved more than 20 miles away or they will return because they imprint with an area.

Hefty then reported that in the past they have tried a deer drive with unarmed individuals in Cherokee Marsh during the deer season and the deer moved behind the individuals conducting the drive. The Arboretum has tried to drive deer into boxes and nets, but that didn't work because they ran back through the people or were able to flatten the nets.

Barker provided a brief chronology of ticks and Lyme disease. This species

moved into Madison approximately three years ago.

Hefty stated that the conditions in Sandburg Park are beneficial for deer because they are adaptable to the urban environment. They are not hunted in parks and have no fear of people.

Clausius interjected that what is requested is herd control, not totally wiping them out. The goal is to manage the herd so we have a diverse ecology.

Discussion turned to the deer chronic wasting disease. The DNR indicated that it can be transmitted by density. However, deer management will not control the disease, nor is it a major issue here. The deer haven't been tested. When a deer management program is in effect all deer taken are tested for CWD before the meat is given to food pantries.

Many communities use sharpshooting or controlled hunts outside of the regular deer season. It takes a lot of administrative time for these municipalities to coordinate these hunts. The adult females are the primary targets.

Clausius reported he is commenting as the alder for the district where this park is located. He held a neighborhood meeting that had 78 registered attendees. The consensus was that the deer herd was too large and residents questioned how it would be managed. Parks staff attended that meeting to discuss various solutions. Unfortunately the people identified in the newspaper article were not in attendance at that neighborhood meeting. Clausius then recounted a personal observation. As he was eating supper this evening he saw a buck, doe and two young in his backyard. He is recommending some type of herd management and believes that the program at Cherokee Marsh works.

A motion was made by Clausius/Clear to recommend that the Park Commission adopt a deer management proposal for Sandburg Woods similar to the program employed at Cherokee Marsh and the Arboretum.

Discussion ensued as to whether a general policy should be approved so staff would not be required to come back to the Park Commission each time a conservation park is overrun with deer, or it whether this proposal should only pertain to Sandburg Woods. Comments included the advantages of giving staff the ability to take action earlier and encouraging staff to look at situations in the various conservation parks before they reach that level. They also felt that staff should not have to get specific permission or go through a significant public process every time this situation arises.

A motion to amend the above motion was made by Barker/Leopold to change "Sandburg Woods" to "all Conservation Parks" and to encourage staff to use their discretion before it reaches a critical level.

Discussion then addressed whether large general parks such as Warner and Elver should be included in the motion. Members were divided on whether to include large general parks that have significant wooded areas in the motion. The object in conservation parks is to protect the native habitat and biodiversity. This would not always be the situation in general parks. Hefty reported that the reason certain parks are designated conservation parks is

that they have unique resources and if they didn't have those resources they would not be so designated. Barker felt that they should be advocating promoting biodiversity in all parks wherever possible. Barker then asked to delete the word "conservation" from his amendment because Parks should be striving for biodiversity in all parks. Leopold stated she would withdraw her second if the word conservation was removed because she would like the public to be able to weigh in if a deer management policy was proposed for a general park. She felt that this management focus is really for conservation parks. Some members agreed that this policy should only cover conservation parks. Hefty added that while some of the larger general parks might have some biodiversity, he believed the focus of the policy should be on conservation parks.

The motion was then restated: A motion to amend the above motion was made by Barker/Leopold to change "Sandburg Woods" to "all Conservation Parks" and to encourage staff to use their discretion before it reaches a critical level. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The motion as amended was then restated: A motion was made by Clausius/Clear to recommend that the Park Commission adopt a deer management proposal for all Conservation Parks similar to the program employed at Cherokee Marsh and the Arboretum. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

IX. ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT On motion of Clear/Scarborough the meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.