

SUPERINTENDENT'S DECEMBER 2019 REPORT COMMUNICATIONS TO BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Park Superintendent's Monthly Report Summary

November showed signs of early winter and staff have been focused on final preparation for the winter recreation season. Snow has been made with our partners at Elver and staff are preparing skating rinks and skiing/snowshoeing trails for the winter. Our annual lottery day to start the reservation season for 2020 went well and staff are considering potential process and policy improvements that would likely be referred to the Facilities, Programs, and Fees Subcommittee in 2020.

Both the Operating and Capital Budgets were adopted by the Common Council. Two significant changes to the Parks Division from 2019 are the enhanced staffing to support the expansion of Olbrich Gardens from a facility and customer relations perspective (OBS is also providing additional staff for programming) and the creation of a program focused position at the Warner Park Community Recreation Center. Another significant change that was adopted by the Council was the transfer of Forestry to the Streets Division. Parks staff are supportive of this transfer as it will allow a heightened level of support for our urban forest.

The Capital Budget has significant numbers of projects to work on and staff is creating an enhanced work plan that will be shared with the Commission before the construction season starts. The Adopted Capital Budget does include the transfer of Forestry related items to Streets as well.

Permanent Staffing Changes

New Hire:

- Juan Ortiz, Shared Traffic Control Maintenance Worker (w/ TE)
 - Effective 11/18/2019, formerly worked for Streets as a seasonal laborer.

Provisional Appointment:

- Theran Steindl, Interim West Parks/Cemetery Supervisor
 - Effective 11/18/19

Future Commission Items

- IPM Taskforce – The IPM taskforce has started active work again after a brief pause to realign the group. Staff will present on the current status as a part of a land management update in the next couple of months.
- On-Leash Dogs in Parks – Staff is working on an initial recommendation for dog free parks to present to the Commission based on the recently adopted policy change.
- Performance Excellence Initiative – Staff is working on an informational presentation to share with the Commission on the City's Performance Excellence Initiative. This is anticipated to be ready for the Commission at the January meeting.
- Law Park Planning Efforts – Staff anticipates providing an update on the planning work for Law Park in January.
- Reindahl Park Imagination Center project – Staff is working with Library staff to determine the best course of action for presenting the Library led planning report to both the BPC and the Library Board. Currently, the concept is to hold a joint meeting for this purpose in March or April.

Section reports

Olbrich Botanical Gardens

- **Construction:** Staff got occupancy of the Greenhouse on 11/22 and moved plants in that afternoon. Learning Center furniture has arrived – could not delay shipment any longer, but, since the Learning Center is not complete, staff are looking for places to store the furniture items. Staff do not expect the Learning Center to be completed in time for classes in January; classes were relocated to other rooms for the month or canceled if nothing was available.
- **Programs:** Holiday Express Flower and Model Train Show opens December 7 with the theme of *Secret Life of Snowpals*. Holiday Concerts will take place every Sunday in December from 2 – 3 pm.
- **Education:** The Education Catalog will be out in mid-December with a full slate of adult and youth & family classes. Tropical Explorer for classrooms grades K – 5 begins in February.
- **Conservatory:** Kudos to Olbrich's Conservatory staff. They have managed two sites – 25 miles apart for the past 15 months. They have divided their time between the Bolz Conservatory and Fitchburg Farms where rented greenhouse space housed the permanent collection as well as winter/spring plant production. There have been many challenges growing plants in a portion of a commercial greenhouse range, which they have handled with ease.
- **Horticulture:** The hedge replacement is complete – this forms the 'walls' around the Sunken Garden 3 sides and also creates an allee between the Sunken Garden and the Donor's Arbor.

Community Services

Warner Park Community Recreation Center (WPCRC)

- The Madison Parks Foundation coordinated a donation of 120 pairs of shoes from the Opportunity 34 Foundation for the KNOW (Kids Need Opportunities at Warner) program. New or gently used basketball shoes were collected during their 2nd Annual 3ON3 Basketball Tournament on November 1-2, 2019. Participating school districts competed for a chance to win a \$2,500 scholarship by donating their shoes to the Rescued Soles Shoe Drive. Shoes were distributed to the KNOW participants during Family Fun Night and open gym November 6-20.

Recreation Services:

- *The Recreation Services will soon be ready for Winter Operations, and have been working to hire attendants, prepare facilities, schedule cross country skiing and skating events, and onboard Adopt-Ice Partners. We are excited to provide complimentary loaner skates at Warner, Westmorland, Rennebohm, and Olbrich Parks.*

Park Rangers

- The winter disc golf course at Yahara Hills opened November 1st and Hiestand and Elver Disc Golf courses closed November 20th. Park Rangers have are busy preparing for winter by sharpening ice skates at our winter shelters and training on their roles to support winter operations and adopt ice rink volunteers.

Aquatics

- We are working to update our scholarship disbursement process. Staff are continuing discussions with Friends of the Goodman Waves to plan for the All- City Dive meet and strengthen our partnership moving forward.

Park and Street Use Events:

- Currently, we are meeting with event organizers that had some issues with their events this year to make sure they address them in 2020. We are asking other City agencies, such as Police, Fire, Traffic Engineering and Metro, to attend these meetings as well, since some of these issues affect their areas of responsibility. We are also working on developing the Park Event ordinance, determining how the City will handle First Amendment protests, marches and rallies and looking at how to best deal with organizers/events that violate permit conditions.

Front Desk:

- Lottery Day, November 12, was a great success. This was the first date customers could reserve a shelter for the coming year. Most Lottery Day reservations tend to be for our most popular shelters (John Wall, Olin and Gates of Heaven). Sixty-four shelters were reserved during Lottery Day, with thirty-five being for these most popular locations. We are considering changes to this process, to best meet the needs of our customers.

Planning and Development

Glacier Hill Park

- Work by Contractor Madison Commercial Landscapes, Inc. is currently underway on the new, open-sided sun shelter at Glacier Hill Park. The foundations are in, the concrete pad is installed and the framework of the shelter has been constructed. The project is anticipated to be completed by December 31, 2019.

Summit West Maintenance Facility

- The resurfacing project for the Parks West Maintenance Facility south yard was begun by S&L Underground, Inc. in October 2019. This project will address repaving and drainage issues and includes a section of permeable concrete pavement and new curb and gutter. The grading, storm sewer and curb and gutter work have been completed. Due to the early arrival of winter, the contractor was not able to complete the asphalt work before it became too cold. The binder asphalt was placed, but the site will require an additional top coat of asphalt in spring 2020.

Tenney Park Shoreline Vegetation Improvements

- The prolonged flooding conditions from the 2018 flood damaged the native plants used as biostabilization along the shoreline. As part of the request for funding from FEMA, staff included repairs to this damaged shoreline including replanting the shoreline with species that are more tolerant of prolonged flooding conditions. Staff is preparing plans and specifications to replant native species along the shoreline to stabilize the shoreline.

Reynolds Park Bike Polo Lights

- Parks staff is coordinating with Water Utility to have four light poles installed on the roof of the existing water utility reservoir adjacent to Reynolds Park. The roof of this building

is currently jointly operated by Madison Parks and Madison Water Utility as a recreational facility offering bike polo and tennis courts. The four light poles will be located near the bike polo courts, and will include installing infrastructure for future lighting of the tennis court areas. The lighting levels will be typical for lighting for security purposes and will include fully shielded and full cutoff LED fixtures (based on neighborhood input and Aldermanic support, the polo court will not be illuminated to athletic lighting standards due to concerns from the neighborhood). In addition, a light will be added to the staircase leading down to ground level. This project will be out to bid this winter.

East Side Off-Leash Dog Exercise Area

- Parks staff continue to work with area alders in identifying potential east-side dog park locations. Staff anticipate holding a public meeting in early 2020 to review options with area residents and park users. Pending the final site selection, construction of the new off-leash dog park is scheduled to begin in 2020.

Playground Replacements 2020 Group 3

- Staff held the first playground workshop on November 7th for the playground replacements on the east side (Galaxy, Morrison, and Orlando Bell Parks). The workshops seek public input for playground surfacing type, equipment age range, equipment manufacturer, color preference and fundraising opportunities. Follow-up meetings with the individual neighborhoods to select the specific equipment for the park will be held in January and February 2020.