

PARKS SUPERINTENDENT'S DECEMBER 2022 REPORT

COMMUNICATIONS TO BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Park Superintendent's Monthly Report Summary

Winter is quickly approaching and the team is ready for it. There will be many opportunities for people to enjoy our park system throughout the winter and the expectation is a high level of utilization will occur this year. Staff continues to work with partners to develop and improve the performance of the system in all seasons. One example of that for this winter will be migrating our focus on the east side for skiing towards Door Creek. With the support of our partners at MadNorski, we will be providing enhanced groomed ski trails at the park this year. Staff have also worked with numerous groups to prepare for the skating season through our Adopt-A-Ice partnership.

The Madison Parks Foundation has continued to support the Parks system through fundraising for a variety of initiatives and projects. Notably, MPF has completed its fundraising for the Fully Accessible Playgrounds projects and have raised a significant amount towards supporting the KNOW program at Warner in 2022.

The Lake Monona Waterfront project continues to progress and the team continues working closely with multiple City agencies to keep coordination and communication moving with the John Nolen reconstruction project. All three participants in the Design Challenge will present their final conceptual designs on January 26th at a public meeting. The Ad Hoc Committee will then consider public input on those designs and work towards making a recommendation in March/April of 2023.

The City Council adopted a 2023 Operating and Capital Budget in November. Overall, the budgets include significant investments in the park system and its future. The addition of the Parks Alive! Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator, facility maintenance staff, and in the golf team are all notable and important. These investments are in addition to the Public Works Laborer program the team continues to prepare for in collaboration with our partner Public Works agencies.

Future Commission Items

- Golf Enterprise Update – The Golf Team is working to prepare a report to the Golf Subcommittee, Facilities Programs and Fees Subcommittee, and the Board of Park Commissioners on the past 2 years of operations as well as an outlook on future opportunities to continue to implement the Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks' recommendations. Given recent staff departures and budget actions, the goal is to present additional information to the BPC in the first quarter of 2023.
- Land Management Plan Update – The Parks Division team will be working over the coming months to conceptualize opportunities to improve land management standards and the corresponding plan moving forward. The Plan has done a lot of good to move the system forward, but the team feels it is reasonable and appropriate to focus resources on continuous improvement efforts in this area by working with Habitat Stewardship Subcommittee over the coming three months. An anticipated timeframe for the Commission to review a draft update to the Plan is later this winter.
- Subcommittee Structure and Roles – based on the conversation at the September meeting, staff continues to do work related to the future of the BPC's subcommittee structure. This work is rooted in the Task Force on Governmental Structure report. The goal is to present additional information to the BPC in January.

Personnel Updates

Promotions/Hires:

- Charlotte Blotz was promoted from Land Stewardship Technician in West Parks to West Parks Operations Leadworker. She starts her new position on December 12, 2022.
- Jay Schotzko has moved from West Parks Operations Leadworker to East Parks Operations Leadworker. He starts in his new location on December 12, 2022.
- Megan McCrumb was hired as Park Ecology Leadworker in Central Parks. She will start with Parks on December 12, 2022.

Departures:

- Theran Steindl will be leaving his position as Golf Clubhouse Supervisor in the Parks Division's Golf Program. His last day with the Parks will be December 9, 2022.

Section reports

Planning and Development

2022 Construction Season Winds Down:

- With the colder weather and the asphalt plants closing, Planning and Development staff have halted construction work for the season. Most projects were completed, a few will be wrapped up next spring. These include Aldo Leopold Shred to School Trail and the All Inclusive Playground at Warner Park.

Work Planning for 2023 Begins in Earnest:

- With the adoption of the 2023 CIP by the City Council, Planning and Development staff have begun to put together our work plans for 2023. Staff will draft the exact schedules for the many capital projects that will go through the Board of Public Works process in the coming year, as well as several important planning processes for 2023. Please stay tuned for additional details in early 2023.

Community Services Report December 2022 – Terrence Thompson

Community Events (Kelly Post):

- 2022 special events in Madison have returned after navigating the uncertainty of stay-at-home orders, public gathering limits, and other restrictions in 2020 and 2021. The Community Event team saw a return to the normal number of permits for Street Use events. The number of Park Event permits had a significant increase from pre-pandemic numbers. We attribute this statistical development to the rise in importance of outdoor events and to Madison Parks offering more specialized park event permits (Open Space permits, Classes in Parks permits, and Day Camps in Parks permits.)

2022 Permitted Event days/month and totals:

2022 Permitted Event Days	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	2022 totals	2021 totals	2020 totals	2019 totals
Street Use Events	3	9	3	9	22	55	73	77	50	30	7	2	222	185	18	364
Park Events*	4	8	2	16	39	132	164	152	54	45	23	33	672	416	122	357
Block Parties	0	0	0	1	3	9	20	19	25	25	0	0	102	79	9	88
DT Performance Spaces**	0	3	0	6	14	33	30	20	23	29	0	0	158	134	6	155
TOTAL	7	20	5	32	78	229	287	268	152	129	30	35	1154	814	159	964

*includes Special Event permits, Community Park Event permits, Classes in Parks, Day Camps in Parks, Open Space Park permits, Commercial Shoot

**includes BID programming

2022-2017 Number of Permits issued:

# of permits issued	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Street Use Events	137	77	52	151	140	136
Park Events	262	189	60	175	134	155
Block Parties	101	88	9	91	90	90

- 2022 Carts in Parks: The Carts in Parks program had another successful year connecting local entrepreneurs and small businesses with Community Events in Parks and offering locations for daily food cart vending in Parks.
 - Daily Vending – we had 14 food carts participate at approved locations in Madison Parks.
 - Qualifying Park Events – we connected over 26 food vendors to 72 events, including city-sponsored events, community events, and Parks Alive events.
- The Community Events team will kick off 2023 by offering an online Park Event application. We look forward to having a fully staffed team working out of our beautiful new Park's offices and continuing to build relationships with the hundreds of event organizers who host public events in the City of Madison.

Warner Park Community Recreation Center (Zach Watson):

- The WPCRC hosted the 1st annual Spooky Halloween Family Fun Night on October 28th, where we welcomed more than 300 community members. The event featured a trunk or treat with the Madison Police Department and the Park Rangers, hay rides, a bonfire with s'mores, food carts, story time with the Library, and family fun inside the WPCRC. With the event's success, we plan to make it an annual event.
- The KNOW Program partnership with the Madison Parks Foundation was awarded \$94,000 for the 4th quarter of the 100 Men of Dane County Grant series. The 4th Quarter grant presentation occurred on Thursday, November 17th, at Buck & Honey's in Monona, and we are excited to expand programming opportunities for Northside teens and families.

Recreation Services & Aquatics (Tracey Hartley & Shane Martin)

- Planning for the All City Swim meet and partnering with MSCR to teach lifeguard classes in Spring 2023 are underway.
- We are continuing to interview and hire winter attendants. New this year, all staff will be trained in CPR, First Aid, and AED. We are preparing all locations for the upcoming winter season and planning and scheduling events, including Groove & Glides, Snowshoe events, Skate Cinema, Learning Series, and the Winter Prom.

Customer Service (Joanne Austin):

- We began accepting 2023 shelter reservations on Tuesday, November 8, 2022. There were 128 total reservations processed that day, with 47 placed online and 81 over the phone.
- Annual permits for 2023 became available for purchase starting November 1, 2022. Active Military and Veteran annual permits are new this year at a reduced rate. We sent email notifications to previous customers, letting them know these permits are now available.

Rangers (Jason Vroman):

- The new permanent Ranger, Michaela Daly, has almost completed her field training and should be on her own the first week of December. This will give the Rangers a full permanent staff for the first time in over a year!
- Rangers have been assisting in several community problem-solving initiatives, including Starkweather Creek, Demetral, and Warner Beach. We are meeting with the community, stakeholders, Alders, and Parks staff to come up with a problem-solving plan to help alleviate various issues that have been reported at these locations.

Olbrich Botanical Gardens

- **Volunteer Program** – Volunteers are busy at Olbrich Gardens! Here are a few highlights and updates from our volunteer program.



Figure 1: Staff from Exact Sciences help move tropical plants to the hoop houses for the winter.

- **Exact Science Volunteers** – Staff from Exact Sciences are given the option to volunteer on work time as part of their Volunteer Time Off Program. This collaboration started in 2018 and has grown stronger over the past 4 years. Their 2022 contributions include 117 hours of gardening assistance, 107 hours assisting with GLEAM, 75 hours carving pumpkins for Crackle: Fire & Froth, and one staff member currently serves on the OBS Board.



Figure 2: Volunteers attend the Fall Vol-A-Pa-Loo-Za at Olbrich Gardens.

- **Vol-A-Pa-Loo-Za** – This fall, volunteers gathered to learn about Bolz Conservatory and greenhouse operations. Each staff member of the Conservatory staff presented on their role and work. The presentations were recorded by the Madison City Channel and are available for all to enjoy at this [link](#).



Figure 3: Staff from the Thai Consulate, UW, and Olbrich Gardens meet to discuss the Royal Thai Pavilion.



Figure 4: Beth Dunn, Director of Government Relations led a tour of Chicago Botanic Gardens.

- **Thai Consulate Visit** – On Friday, November 4, 2022 staff from Olbrich Gardens visited the Thai Consulate in Chicago, IL. The goal of this visit was to continue to grow the relationship between the Thai Consulate and Olbrich Gardens. The visit also included a tour of the Chicago Botanic Gardens. Olbrich Gardens' staff shared the joy of public gardens by visiting one of the premier public gardens in the United States with the Thai Consulate staff.



Figure 5: Wisconsin Public Officials visit Olbrich Botanical Gardens.

- **Wisconsin Secretary Visit** – In 2022, the Olbrich Botanical Society was awarded a grant for \$146,000 from the Wisconsin Department of Tourism (American Rescue Plan Act funding). This grant funds accessibility upgrades at Olbrich Gardens such as pathway improvements, tram circle shade structure, landscape lighting, and a new wider accessible exit turnstile. On October 31, 2022 Department of Administration Secretary-designee Kathy Blumenfeld, Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection Secretary Randy Romanski, Department of Tourism Secretary-designee Anne Sayers and Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway visited Olbrich Gardens to see the progress made on the grant funded projects. This visit was covered by numerous media outlets including WKOW's report found online at this [link](#).