

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S DECEMBER 2018 REPORT**

### **COMMUNICATIONS TO BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**

#### Park Superintendent's Monthly Report Summary

This month's report is the third month of our work to modify the reporting structure to provide important information to the Commission and public, while also focusing on efficient utilization of staff time. The new format includes monthly staffing updates for all permanent staff as well as a section focusing on future items likely coming to the Commission over the next few months. Key section updates will be provided by all sections each month, with a major branch or two of the Parks Division providing a more detailed update. This month's more detailed updates are from Park Operations. Staff looks forward to continuing to work with the Commission on the report to maximize benefits for the public.

#### Permanent Staffing Changes:

- Peter Castro was promoted to a Parks Maintenance Worker position from his prior work as an Hourly Park Ranger. Peter is currently assigned to the Mall Concourse.

#### Future Commission Items

- Urban Forestry Taskforce – The Urban Forestry Taskforce is likely to have a completed report with recommendations in early 2019.
- IPM Taskforce – The IPM taskforce has begun meeting and will have recommendations for consideration in 2019.
- Golf – As the 2018 Golf season concludes, staff is working to prepare a report to update the Commission, Golf Subcommittee, the Council, and the public
- Dog Policy – Parks staff feels that updates need to occur prior to the spring of 2019 in relationship to policies regarding dogs in parks. Staff is working on some early concepts to review with the Commission, Long Range Planning subcommittee, and the public.
- Off-Leash Dog Parks – Staff is working to determine potential off-leash improvements in the priority areas of the West side, Atwood/East Isthmus, and Far East/Grandview. The Approved Master Plan for North Star Park will address the deficiency in Grandview. Staff are working on concepts for the other two priority areas and anticipate moving forward with engagement processes in 2019.

#### Section Updates

##### Community Services

- Front Desk/Customer Service - 2019 Shelter Reservation Lottery Day was a success. Staff distributed applications between 7:30am and 7:59am and the drawing began promptly at 8:00am. Sixty shelter reservations were entered in just over two hours. A survey will be sent to those that participated in the process, which will result in data that will help us to improve in the future.
- WPCRC - Game Night + WI the Best Pop Up Shop. WPCRC kicked off Thanksgiving weekend with a night of socializing and shopping as Northsiders enjoyed their favorite childhood games while shopping for exclusive designs from DLK Printing.
- Park and Street Use Event Permits - Staff has been working on amendments to the Street Use Ordinance (MGO 10.056) to support a newly developed Downtown Zone

Policy. These amendments and the policy are part of a Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative (RESJI) analysis of the street use events process, which is ongoing. The amendments and policy provide the Street Use Staff Commission additional criteria for reviewing street use permit applications. The new policies allow the Commission to more directly consider such factors as the number of other events in the city on a day or weekend, police and fire staffing issues related to those events, impact on residents, businesses, traffic and Metro Transit. Another amendment to the ordinance allows Fire or Police to terminate the permit for an event that hasn't started in the face of "imminent danger or threat to public safety." This amendment addresses issues that came about during the August flooding.

- Recreation Services - Fall Hayrides with Madison Parks are a great fall activity with family and friends. This year Parks hosted the following events with the attendance numbers noted, Downtown Family Halloween (500), Cherokee Marsh Hikes & Hayrides (115), and the Holiday Fantasy in Lights at Olin Park (1,135).
- Aquatics and Rangers - Summer Disc Golf Courses closed November 25 to make way for winter fun. The winter disc golf course at Yahara Hills opened November 2 for its 3rd season of operations. Since it has been so popular with the community, additional amenities were installed to provide a better experience for the user. In November, new tee pad signs and new astroturf tee pads were installed.

#### Olbrich Botanical Gardens

- Helical pier installation is ongoing for the foundations of the Learning Center and the new greenhouse range. The contractor expects to begin pouring the concrete caps on the piers to begin the foundation system in December.
- Terry Hodge began his role as the Conservatory and Orchid Horticulturist, replacing Cindy Cary. This position is an Olbrich Botanical Society position.
- Horticulture (outdoor gardens) staff -- with some participation from other departments -- have nearly completed the Holiday Express Flower and Train Show installation. The theme for the show is *I Spy*. The month-long December show is a tradition for many families as are the Holiday Concerts held at 2 pm every Sunday in December. Go to <http://www.olbrich.org/events/holidayconcert.cfm> for a list of performers. A new 'selfie station' is a focal point in the lobby
- Long-time Horticulture Librarian, Lynn Jacobson, retired after 17.5 years of service and dedication to the Schumacher Horticultural Library at Olbrich Botanical Gardens. OBS Education staff have begun the recruitment process.

#### Planning and Development

- The Elver Park Inclusive Playground is complete and open. Please stop by before the snow sticks to take a look at our newest playground.
- The cold weather closed us down early at the Warner Boat Launch reconstruction site. However, we have figured out a way to keep the lot open for the ice fishing season and expect to have the entire project done by the 2019 Fishing Opening Weekend. (First Saturday in May.)
- The consultant interviews for the Vilas Park Master Plan will be held over the next few weeks and we hope to have the planning process under way by early 2019.
- Our public meetings regarding playground design and park master planning continue, feel free to attend if you would like to see planners in action.