

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

Park Superintendent's Monthly Report Summary

Parks staff had a busy January continuing to move forward with an ambitious workplan for 2019. This year's capital project list includes a large number of important projects and can be reviewed at <https://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/projects>. This page will continue to be updated as all projects move forward. In addition to the numerous capital projects, the parks staff team will be working to make continued improvements to our land management work.

No staffing changes occurred in January, but we have selected a new Parks Financial and Administrative Coordinator who will be starting late February. This will be the first time since January 2018 that the Management Team has been fully staffed.

This month's focus areas are Community Services and Olbrich Gardens. Both reports include lots of good information about the work of these two sections. At Warner Park Community Recreation Center, staff continue to work on serving the youth of the area and have made notable progress. Recreation Services has had a difficult winter recreation season with the weather not cooperating much outside of one good weekend. At Olbrich Gardens, the construction project for the greenhouses and learning center is progressing. Project staff will provide an update at the February BPC meeting as well.

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 – The 2018 Golf season was a very difficult one with the wettest year on record since the City has operated golf courses. Staff is working to prepare a report to update the Commission, Golf Subcommittee, the Council, and the public on the status of the Enterprise and anticipate completing this report by April, 2019.
- Dog Policy – The Long Range Planning Subcommittee will be working on reviewing dogs in parks policy during the first part of 2019. Staff is hopeful that any policy changes will be brought to the Commission in the first half of the year.
- 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.
- Capital and Operating Budgets – Parks staff will be working with President Leopold to discuss how to best present and take input from the Commission on the Division's budgets.
- Vilas Park Master Plan – The planning work for this iconic and historic Park will begin in 2019. The project is being led by Landscape Architect Kate Kane and has selected MSA to lead the effort. This plan is not anticipated to come to the Commission for approximately a year, but if Commissioners would like to know more about the project, they can contact Kate to discuss.

- 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 in March or April.
- Alliant Energy Center Master Plan / Destination District Plan – Parks staff is working with City Planning staff to prepare a presentation to the Commission on the County’s work and plans for the Alliant area. Staff anticipates presenting this information in April or May.

Section Updates

Park Operations

Conservation:

- Removed invasives at Edna Taylor and South Cherokee Marsh.
- Tested demo of Polecat snow gun at Elver to compare to our aged Areco guns.
- Started grooming ski trails the last 2 weeks of January.

Construction:

- Completed playground mulching at two parks and continued various soil removal projects. Also completed audits on the required 10 new playgrounds.
- Supported Streets in winter storm clean-up efforts and hauled snow from Mall.

Facilities:

- Continued seasonal work including HVAC inspections and repairs and repairs on piers, park signs and picnic tables.
- Inspected Tenney pontoon facilities for required repairs. No major repairs required.
- Responded to water and heating issues cause by extreme cold.

Forestry:

- Continued work on district pruning, ash removal, Engineering projects, work requests and 2019 planting routes.
- Preparing for EAB taskforce common council update that will be held on February 5.

General Parks (Central, East & West):

- Changing weather created varied work for the month:
 - Early month - unseasonal warm weather:
 - Worked on tree pruning, removal of invasives and general maintenance.
 - Ice rinks were a challenge to open. Greater success with Nice rinks.
 - Later month – record low temps and snow:
 - Snow routes, ice rinks and snow removal/hauling.
 - Most skate rinks were open.
 - Issues with ice at lagoon rinks with thin ice and slush due to snow cover.
 - Due to polar vortex, actions were taken to keep employees safe from freezing conditions, limiting some outside work.

Operations Staff Update:

- Spencer Werner accepted a promotion to the open East Parks Operations Leadworker position.

Planning & Development

- Vilas Park Master Plan – MSA Professional Services, Inc. was selected as consultant to lead the Vilas Park Master Plan through a competitive Request for Proposals process. MSA will be working with Urban Assets who will lead a robust public engagement process associated with the development of the master plan design. Work on the project is anticipated to begin in March and continue through early 2020.
- 2019 Door Creek Park Tennis Courts – Phase II contract is currently out to bid, and is anticipated to be opened on February 7. Work to complete an additional four (4) tennis courts at the park is anticipated to begin in March.
- Northland Manor Park Tennis Courts – a public meeting will be held on February 11 to discuss the demolition of the existing tennis courts at Northland Manor and proposed relocation of the courts within the park.
- Olbrich Park (at Walter Street) – work on the construction of the new restroom building continues, but has been slowed due to the recent heavy snow and extreme cold temperatures. The Parks-led site work contract which will include the new parking lot, paths, basketball court and stormwater detention features is anticipated to be bid in April. Construction will begin following completion of the building in June.
- 2019 Playgrounds – Group 1 contract includes playground replacements at Doncaster, Lucia Crest, Segoe, William Slater and Walnut Grove Parks and is anticipated to be bid in early March, with construction anticipated to begin in May.