

**SUPERINTENDENT'S NOVEMBER 2022 REPORT  
COMMUNICATIONS TO BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
Park Superintendent's Monthly Report Summary**

October ended up being quite a temperate one and the Fall colors have extended into November. Despite the weather still showing hints of a summer gone, the team is very focused forward on winter operations planning. The Board will hear about winter plans for recreation at the meeting, but behind the recreational opportunities is a lot of effort and planning to provide those quality opportunities and meet the needs of the entire City as it relates to route based work for snow/ice control and removal. The mild Fall has kept all four golf courses humming with activity and rounds have risen to over 131,000 again this year, with a record breaking revenue collection on tap as we wind down the season. Combined with the work at The Glen to diversity our programming offerings, it is safe to say that the year was a smashing success and more people than probably ever have enjoyed these public lands this year.

The Lake Monona Waterfront project continues to progress and the team is 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 initial design information on Monday, November 7<sup>th</sup>. There are many interested people as to what will be presented and this is certainly an exciting time for the project.

The Mayor's Operating budget was released in early October. The budget includes reallocation of existing resources to create a GIS/Asset Management position within Parks, it also funds a Parks Alive! Coordinator. There was also an inclusion of an additional Facility Maintenance Worker to support the new building in Olin Park. Additionally, the budget includes the creation of a Public Works Laborer position group. This unit of workers would be focused on general public works related work, such as median mowing and snow removal. The group would be allocated across various agencies, primarily Parks and Streets, to support the needs of the City. This is a jointly funded venture between Parks, Engineering, and Streets. Overall, the Parks budget is a good one, though there are ongoing conversations regarding Ranger and Volunteer Coordination staffing levels.

**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. Staff are working with elected policymakers to secure funding to support a staffing plan to manage through the next 3-5 years, which will certainly have lots of change.
- 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.

- Operating and Capital Budget Briefing – The team is working to prepare a presentation to the Board on the Capital and Operating Budgets for 2023, as well as the intermediate/long-term outlook. This will include an overview of impact fee funding and the process for updating the impact fee ordinance. The goal is to present information on this prior to 2024 Budget formulation.
- Subcommittee Structure and Roles – based on the conversation at the September meeting, staff expects to do more work related to the future of the BPC’s subcommittee structure. This work is rooted in the Task Force on Governmental Structure report.

## Personnel Updates

### Promotions/Hires:

- Shelby Deakin was hired as the Parks Division’s new Purchasing Specialist. She started her new position on October 17, 2022.
- Michaela Daly was hired as a new Permanent Parks Ranger. She started her new position on October 17, 2022.

### Departures:

- Pat Hario will be retiring from her position as Administrative Assistant who specialized in purchasing, accounts receivables and contracts for the Parks Division. The Parks Division’s Management Team wants to express deepest gratitude to Pat Hario for over 30 years of service to the Parks Division and over 40 years of service to the City of Madison. Her last date in the office will be October 28, 2022. We all wish Pat the happiest of retirements!

## Section reports

### **Park Operations – Greg Genin**

#### **Conservation:**

- Spent considerable time working to control invasive species this month, including porcelain-berry at Owen, Norway maples at Sandburg Woods, and lamium at Prairie Ridge, Heritage Sanctuary, and other sites.
- Volunteers from Trek Bicycle Corporation assisted staff with buckthorn removal at Turville Point on October 21.

#### **Construction:**

- Completed several projects including site preparation and installation of new donor benches at Olin and Everglade parks, re-grading the east side of Sunridge Park to divert water from adjacent properties, adding new horseshoe pits to Yahara Place Park, and removing old asphalt from the Dean House parking lot, in preparation for re-surfacing.
- The team added more than 600 yards of playground mulch to nine playgrounds this month.

#### **Facilities:**

- Performed seasonal closing and winterizing of facilities such as irrigation systems, fountains, and shelters, and began removing piers for the season.
- Completed capital improvement projects including painting at Brittingham and Wingra park facilities, and continued painting the Olin facility.

### **General Parks:**

- Supported several events including the Wisconsin Veterans Museum's 20<sup>th</sup> annual Talking Spirits tours at Forest Hill, the public hayrides at Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park and Capitol Square, and the cyclocross event at Reindahl Park
- Operations staff from each area teamed up to install native vegetation mats at Bear Mound, Hudson, and Merrill Springs parks, and the South Brearly street-end. This is a pilot project to evaluate the process, cost, and viability of the product, including the use of it in highly eroded areas. Volunteers helped with regular watering of the mats after installation.
- The Landscape Maintenance Workers completed the fall tree planting, planting approximately 150 trees. A total of approximately 390 trees park trees were planted in 2022.
- Staff completed seasonal transition work including installing shelter sides, mowing managed natural areas, and mulching leaves.
- Volunteers with Four Lakes Scuba Club removed trash along the Yahara River.

### **Mall Concourse:**

- Staff conducted fall clean-up work that included pulling or cutting back seasonal and perennial plantings, removing the visitor center booth from the top of State Street, and leaf cleanup. The team planted fall bulbs, including in two new areas on S. Carroll and W. Main Street.
- Events subsided for the year, but the UW home football games kept the crew busy with cleanup. Also, although there was no planned Halloween event, precautionary measures were taken to secure the service area throughout the month. Halloween activities occurred without issue.

### **Community Services Report August 2022 – Terrence Thompson**

#### **Community Events (Kelly Post):**

- We are preparing Carts in Parks data to present to the Facilities, Programs, and Fees Subcommittee (FPF) at the December meeting and to get feedback on our ideas for 2023. Additionally, we are analyzing our Day Camps and Classes permits, which were pilot programs in 2021 and 2022. In addition, we are researching how other municipalities handle commercial use of parklands to assess whether requesting these permits become a permanent option and whether the fees reflect the actual cost to the parks system. We plan to present our thoughts to the FPF in early 2023 for their input.

#### **Warner Park Community Recreation Center (Zach Watson):**

- The Engberg Anderson Architects design team is working with City staff to provide public engagement for the Warner Park Community Recreation Center (WPCRC) expansion project. The public engagement plan consists of an online survey in English, Spanish, and Hmong that is open through October 31, 2022, stakeholder meetings, and a postcard mailing outlining the project overview to city residents within a 2-mile radius of the WPCRC. The survey findings and stakeholder meetings will inform the design team and City staff about the WPCRC's user's needs. The results will be shared at the November 14 public information meeting.

#### **Recreation Services & Aquatics (Tracey Hartley)**

- Fall is here, and hayrides are underway. We offered Hayrides and Hikes at Cherokee Marsh on 10/22, with 354 people attending. Thanks to the Friends of Cherokee Marsh for hosting activities and hikes through the park. Hayrides, in collaboration with the downtown Business Improvement District Halloween event on 10/26 and the Warner Park Community Recreation Center Halloween Family Fun Night on 10/28, were well attended. Additionally, the Holiday Fantasy in Lights at Olin Park will offer public rides on 11/12 from 7pm-10pm and 11/13 from 4:30pm-8pm and provide reserved hayrides with campfire and s'mores for groups to book on 11/14-11/17. Public rides are \$3 per person, 2 and under free, and reserved rides are \$115.

### **Customer Service (Joanne Austin):**

- 2023 Annual Permits (Lake Access, Disc Golf, Cross Country Ski, and Dog Parks) will be available for purchase starting November 1. Previously, Madison Parks began selling these on November 15. However, we will be coordinating with Dane County Parks and begin selling them on November 1 and offering discounted annual rates for active military and veteran members.
- Customer service staff received computer and monitor upgrades. The new laptops will run faster than the old desktops, and the larger monitors will allow the viewing of full spreadsheets. Staff are very excited about this upgrade.
- Staff are diligently working to prepare for our move to the new Olin Park facility. Each year we have reduced paper document storage. With the upcoming move, we are scanning many existing documents to reduce what needs to be relocated and will continue to move toward paperless file storage.

### **Rangers (Jason Vroman):**

- Michaela Daly, our new permanent Ranger, started on 10/17 and has completed her first week of training. She is doing great and will be a great asset to the Ranger team.
- Rangers held our first annual Fall Staff Meeting. We took an MSCR pontoon boat ride around Lake Monona to get oriented to how our waterfront parks are situated along the shoreline. It was a fun trip and an excellent opportunity to connect while off-duty.
- Rangers continue to focus on connecting the unhoused community sleeping in parks with community resources as the temperatures begin to drop. In October, we contacted approximately 20 individuals, with about half wishing to be referred to resources like Catalyst for Change. Unfortunately, we are finding lots of abandoned property and trash in some areas. Rangers tagged and removed a large abandoned camp near the East Parks Office in an area known as Sycamore Woods.



## Olbrich Botanical Gardens October 2022 Monthly Update



- **GLEAM 2022** – This year's light exhibition includes 9 installations created by artists from Madison, Janesville, Boston, Toronto, and New Zealand. The exhibition runs August 27 – October 29, 2022. Attendance so far is on track to meet 2021's attendance of 33,000 people.



- **R. Richard Wagner Park** – Olbrich horticulturists and volunteers beautified the park in preparation for the re-naming ceremony planned for Friday, October 21, 2022. New plantings were installed around the new park sign and sculpture.





- **Fall Garden Bulb Planting –** Cool temperatures and snow flurries did not stop the horticulturists from planting thousands and thousands of bulbs in multiple garden areas. Thanks to a recent donation, two new drills were purchased. They enable staff to plant with more efficiency and ease.