

SUPERINTENDENT'S JULY 2024 REPORT

COMMUNICATIONS TO BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Park Superintendent's Monthly Report Summary

The summer season is in full swing across the Parks system. Reservations, permits, and athletic events are happening every day in numerous parks. The larger community event season is going strong as we start July, with Concerts on the Square and Cap City Band concerts seasons already started. Breese has hosted 2 concerts already as well. The Night Mares softball season has started and attendance has been solid for a first year program. July will see dozens more events occurring across the system, including Opera in the Park and La Fete De Marquette. Parks will host Ride the Drive downtown on August 11th and we are working to secure additional volunteers to make the event a safe and fun-filled day for everyone.

The weather in June was a bit of a challenge for Parks as there has been consistent precipitation with a larger than normal amount of severe weather bringing that rain. We have faced a higher than normal amount of tree damage due to these storms. The wet June has also pushed lake levels higher than normal summer maximums. Lake Monona is getting to the point where it is possible that a slow no wake order will be instituted for the entire lake. The Lake was so high recently that you could canoe/kayak over the Wingra dam. This lake level starts to put pressure on the City for preparation for lake level flooding. Though this is not likely, it is possible and we must remain diligent.

Despite the rainy weather, the Goodman Pool, Golf and Olbrich are all doing well this year on attendance and usage. The Goodman Pool and the splash parks have been a welcome respite with some of the very hot days over the last month. Olbrich Gardens continues to work on a number of projects, including the Thai Pavilion restoration, while hosting thousands of visitors a week. The golf courses remain 7-9% ahead of last year's rounds and revenue numbers through early July. Revenue has eclipsed \$2.8M, which should mean that a \$5M year is very possible at this time. As an enterprise, it is very helpful if the golf program can continue to generate a positive change in net position while going through the evolution and change needed at Yahara.

Future Commission Items

- Budget briefing – We are working on how to best engage the BPC as a policy making body related to budget considerations. There are a number of potential areas of important consideration, including service reductions and revenue generation opportunities to explore. There is also consideration of special charges and a tax levy referendum being contemplated by the Common Council at this time. The Common Council has hosted five community engagement meetings on the topic of the budget and has four more scheduled over the next month. With a normal meeting scheduled for August, the plan is to provide a briefing of the submission for Operating at that time.
- Marshall Houses – Parks staff continues to work with Real Estate and the City Attorney's Office to engage with the property owners of the historic homes in Marshall Park. The goal is to bring an update and potential options for moving forward to the Commission in the next couple of months.
- Olin Houses – We will be working on a management plan for the Olin Houses as we acquire them. We own three of the houses at this point and would like to have a management strategy in place moving forward. We anticipate buying more of these and it would be good to begin developing the plan for holding strategy. We are hopeful to have a plan in place by the Fall.

- Parks Division Work Plan / Roadmap – Staff will present the Division’s roadmap to the Board, likely in May or June. The work plan provides an overview of significant change initiatives that the Division is undertaking and/or working on in 2024. The roadmap elements each have an assigned manager who are leading the work associated with that element.
- Fees and Charges – Staff are beginning to work on the fee schedules for next year and will be beginning the formal process with Facilities Programs and Fees over the next two months. The BPC will begin to see fees in October.

Personnel Updates

Promotions/Hires:

Spencer Werner has been provisionally appointed from his current role as East Parks General Supervisor to Interim Facilities Maintenance Supervisor. His appointment was effective starting June 24, 2024.

Jay Schotzko has been provisionally appointed from his current role as East Parks Operations Leadworker to Interim East Parks General Supervisor. His appointment was effective starting June 24, 2024.

Departures:

Jon Landsverk has resigned from Facilities Maintenance Supervisor. His last day was June 14, 2024.

Parks Operations

Conservation:

- Storm response – cleared 78 trees from trails.
- Invasive species control including reed canary grass, bird’s foot trefoil, crown vetch, Himalayan pokeweed, and Dame’s rocket.
- Supported volunteer work at Edna Taylor, Owen, and Turville Point

Construction:

- Perform playground route maintenance
- Started construction of the new playground at Richmond Hill
- Installed new benches at Tenney Park and bike racks at Quann Dog Park
- Repair all turf damage at Hoyt park from waterline replacement
- Began work of the new concrete tee pads and boulder retaining walls for the disc golf course at Elver park.
- Restored the accessible glide ship at Elver park playground.

Facilities

- Power washed and painted the newly acquired Bedford St. Building.
- Cleared drains at Breese Stevens Field which experienced a flash flood during heavy rain.
- Auto locks were installed at the Elver Park Shelter and staff installed an outlet required for their operation.
- Repaired the Mallards backstop net.

General Parks

- Mow and string trim parks.
- Continued storm damage clean up.
- Athletic field preparation including softball, baseball, and soccer.
- Support Community Service events like Parks Alive and movies.

Mall Concourse

- Pulled spring flowers, Olbrich planted summer annuals with Mall assistance.
- Power washed sidewalks daily.
- Watering landscape beds and flower planters.

Community Services Report July 2024 – Terrence Thompson

Community Events & Customer Service

Events (Kelly Post)

- The Community Events team has processed over 81 Street Use permits and over 160 Park Event permits.
- As we approach the heights of our busy season, we are examining our processes to ensure we are working as smart and efficiently as possible. We have already made small improvements that have helped tremendously.
- Considering the upward trend in event permits since 2017, with the exception of the years impacted by the pandemic, we are adapting to the changing circumstances. We will be evaluating if the current volume of permits is sustainable and assessing the event data in the fall to identify trends or patterns over the last 7 years to determine if policy changes are necessary.

Parks Alive (Debra Alleyne)

Madison Arts Commission

- We worked with Public Arts Administrator Karin Wolf on a grant from the Evjue Foundation to secure funding for arts and cultural activities at Parks Alive. The Madison Arts Commission, in celebration of its 50th anniversary, has approved the funding to be used to hire local visual and performing artists and organizations to enhance Parks Alive offerings. So far, we have:
 - teaching artists from *Madison Circus Space* attend Parks Alive to teach participants juggling, slacklining, and dancing
 - Artists from *Air Craft* teaching aerial silk performance
 - Café Coda's Coda Mobile scheduled for 6 parks to have a community talent show and live music

Customer Service (Joanne Austin)

Shelter and Athletic Reservations:

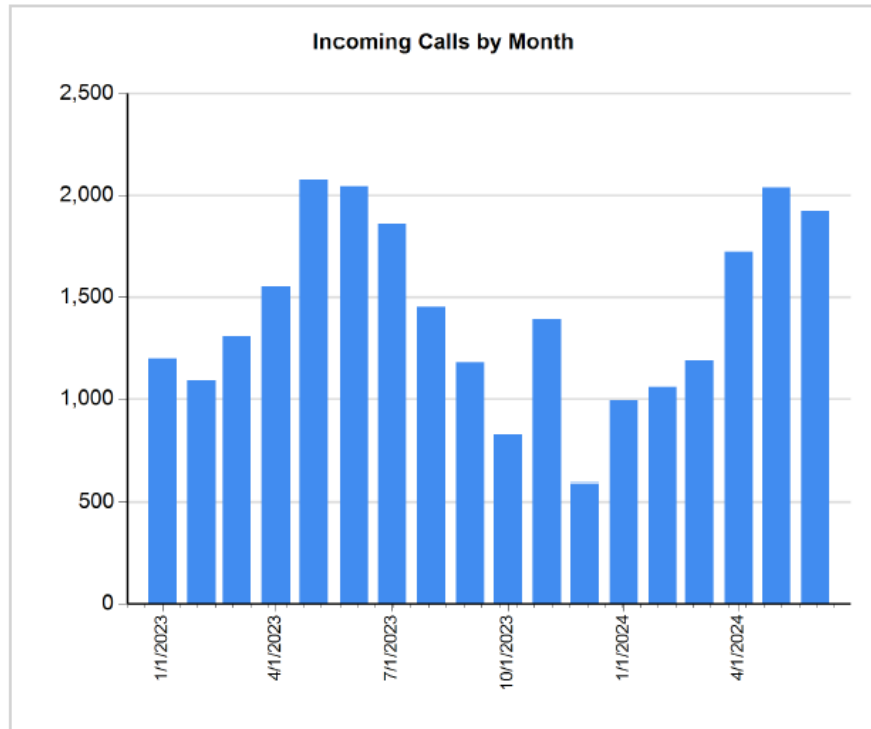
- Shelter and athletic reservations are main contributors to bringing people to our parks. In June, there were 2,103 reservations, broken down into 766 for courts, 887 for fields, 65 for picnic shelters, and 385 for main shelters. The demand is exceptionally high in June due to end-of-school-year gatherings, birthday parties, weddings, and graduation celebrations. We have transitioned to using RecTrac software for athletic reservations,

allowing us to notify user groups of field cancellations each day easily. Additionally, RecTrac has a connection interface with MUSCO Lighting, so fields with lights will be automatically scheduled for reservations after dusk.

Incoming Calls to Customer Service:

- We are receiving a similar number of calls as we did at this time last year. In June 2024, our Customer Service staff spent 3,700 minutes on the phones, which is equivalent to 61 hours speaking with customers. It's important to note that we also interact with customers and park staff at the front counter and constantly respond to emails.

Period	Calls	Minutes
2023-01	1,198	1,668
2023-02	1,091	1,870
2023-03	1,309	2,560
2023-04	1,552	3,342
2023-05	2,079	4,423
2023-06	2,044	3,649
2023-07	1,861	3,266
2023-08	1,452	2,758
2023-09	1,180	2,309
2023-10	827	1,304
2023-11	1,394	1,610
2023-12	591	848
2024-01	993	1,318
2024-02	1,061	2,330
2024-03	1,190	2,520
2024-04	1,725	4,092
2024-05	2,039	4,058
2024-06	1,924	3,700



Recreation Services & Aquatics (Tracey Hartley & Shane Martin)

Aquatics

- We are one month into the 2024 Aquatic Season, and we are happy to report that we have a full staff of lifeguards and aquatic attendants. The new equipment we purchased is working out great! The new lifeguard stands provide excellent visibility for the lifeguards, and the new lockers look great. The public enjoys the new lockers, which now have the option to purchase a lock. We have encountered a few challenges with disturbances from youth outside the pool facility. However, the behavior policy we enacted has been effective in educating and enforcing good behavior, ensuring that all patrons enjoy their experiences at the Goodman Pool.

Rec Services

- Movies are underway! We have 37 movies scheduled this summer. We are also in the process of hiring additional Special Event Attendants. This month's Learning Series events include Learn to Fish and Standup Paddle Board.

Rangers & Volunteers

Rangers (Jason Vroman)

- The Rangers have been very busy! The parks are experiencing high usage, especially on weekends and holidays. Rangers are responding to service calls and taking time out of their busy schedules to attend various community events, such as Parks Alive and Summer Nights at Westmorland Park. These events provide opportunities for Rangers to proactively engage with park users and educate the community about the vital work that Rangers do.



- Rangers have been finding many camps on parkland and working with our local street outreach provider, Catalyst for Change, to connect folks to resources and find alternatives to living in Parks. Rangers have collaborated with Ops staff, MPD, and others to help with these situations. Cleaning them up is always a difficult task as there are often biohazards, personal belongings, and people who may refuse to leave. Rangers have to take all of this into account to create a safe park environment.



- While we are out and about, the Rangers aim to engage with various events, reservations, and individuals. Recently, there have been numerous unauthorized large events as well as many that have proper reservations and park permits. The Rangers are committed to creating a friendly atmosphere while also upholding park regulations and ensuring the safety of all park visitors.



Volunteers (John Weichelt)

- In June, 12 large groups and over 200 volunteers worked on conservation projects, such as trash removal, burdock control, native planting, and garlic mustard removal.
- Significant volunteer recruitment activities for Ride the Drive took place in June, including Bike Week booths, event attendance, and grassroots door-to-door outreach and follow-up.
- The City of Madison has formed a Volunteer Governance team consisting of representatives from HR, the Office of the City Attorney, Parks, and Olbrich Botanical Gardens to revamp the guidelines and policies of the city's volunteer programs. The group has met twice and is making significant progress toward its goals.

Warner Park Community Recreation Center (Zach Watson)

- We have received 5 bids for the WPCRC Expansion Project. The geothermal component has increased all bids by \$1 million, while all other items have come in 5-10% over budget.
- We have received the KNOW Program van from Fleet. We plan to add a wrap once the design has been approved by MPF and 100 Men of Dane County.