

## Community Services Report April 2023 – Terrence Thompson

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

The Community Events team is preparing for another busy event season. The influx of applications and requests is on par with 2022, where we issued 36% more event permits than the previous year. This time of year requires constant communication with new and annual requests planning changes to their events. We spend a lot of time providing information to event organizers so they are aware of application requirements, ordinance or policy requirements, location availability, amenities, and estimated permit fees before they apply. Providing as much information in advance as possible helps create a more efficient and transparent permit process, a more successful and safe event, and an event organizer who feels supported by the City.

The online Park Event permit application is running smoothly. We have received positive feedback from multiple users. At the end of the event season, we plan to send out surveys to get more feedback on the new online process to see if there are any process improvements we need to consider.

The Community Events team is very excited to welcome and support the new Parks Alive Coordinator and the new Volunteer Coordinator as they join the Parks Division at the start of our busy season.

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

The beginning of the year for WPCRC has been filled with transition, expansion, and progress. We are delighted to welcome Marquis Sanders to his new role as the WPCRC Program Coordinator. Marquis is a Northside native and a Madison East High School graduate. Marquis joins us with an array of community experience, working for over 13 years in career and college readiness programming, youth education, mentorship, and various recreational capacities. His tenure of service includes working at several local community organizations, including; East Madison Community Center, The Goodman Center, The Urban League of Greater Madison, and Common Wealth Development. Marquis is a graduate of Tennessee State University and UW-Wisconsin-Whitewater.

The WPCRC's 18th Annual Spring Fest Arts and Crafts Fair offers opportunities to purchase original crafts and artwork from local and statewide artisans. So save the date and join us on May 6 from 9am-3pm.



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

**Events:** Spring volunteer events are upon us!

- Dog Park cleanup occurred on 4/21/23 and had 23 volunteers at 4 dog parks, including Quann, Sycamore, Warner, and North Star.
- Earth Day Challenge scheduled for 4/22/23 currently has 465 people registered, and we are receiving more registrations each day. 65 Parks are participating this year.
- The Bird & Nature Festival is scheduled for 4/23/23 at Warner Park from 1-4pm. Open Door Sanctuary will bring live birds of prey to see up close, many tabling partners with their displays and information, and hands-on learning.
- The flower garden program has 16 Parks involved in this program. Plant pick-up day will be on 5/17/23.

**Aquatics:** Summer preparations for the Goodman Pool and Beaches are underway. Summer is rapidly approaching, and we are looking at a shortage of lifeguards again this year. In response to the anticipated lifeguard shortage, we will offer a lifeguard class to certify new employees, planned for early June. We still need to hire a few more attendants. The Goodman Pool opens 6/9 for the summer season.

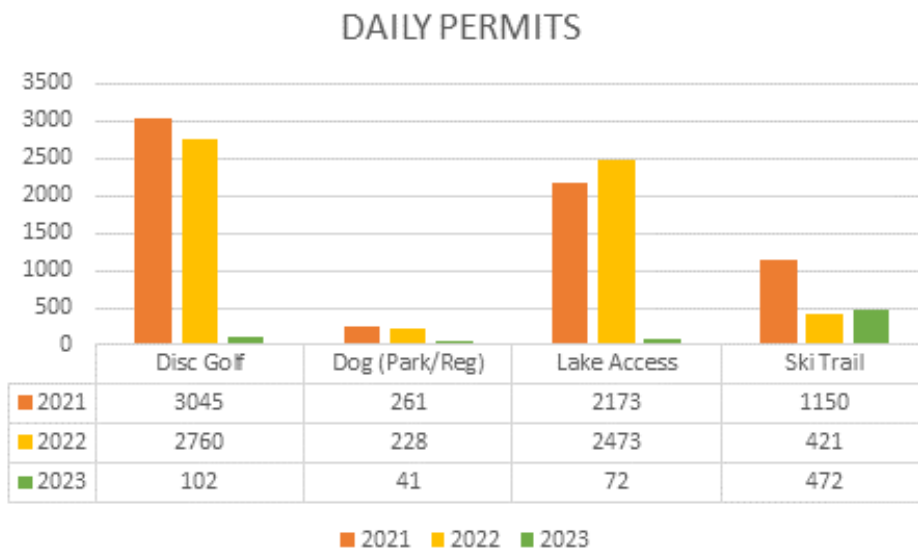
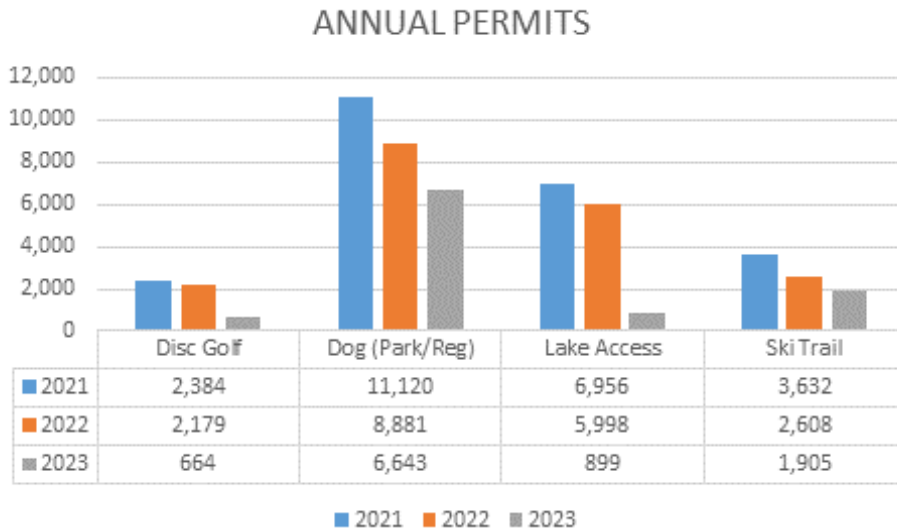
Thank you to the Warner Dog Park Volunteers!



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

Two shelters, Gates of Heaven and Highland Manor, are available to reserve year-round, and each has been reserved numerous times this year. From January 1 through March 31, Gates of Heaven had 15 reservations, and Highland Manor had 47. Saturday, April 22, marks the first date our remaining shelters are available for the public to reserve. There are already 14 reservations scheduled on this first date, and with the number of calls to customer service staff increasing daily, we anticipate a busy reservation season ahead. Approved athletic agreement holders have already submitted their 2023 reservations, and March 15 marked the first date that others began submitting athletic reservation requests.

**Permit Update:** Disc Golf, Dog, Lake Access, and Ski Permits sales continue, and the number of sold permits indicates that Parks has numerous users who enjoy our amenities throughout the year.



**Watercraft Storage Update:** Requests for watercraft storage have significantly increased over the years. Storage agreements run from April 1-March 31. There are currently 429 total spaces with racks located at 17 different parks. Additionally, 2022 agreement holders were contacted several times since mid-January to renew or remove their watercraft by March 31. On April 3, front staff and a Ranger tagged watercraft that had not been renewed for 2023, and the annual task of contacting these expired agreement holders began.





**Rangers (Jason Vroman):**

**Ranger Staffing Update:** Ranger Intern Dawson Tysver completed his internship on 4/7/23. He did a great job completing tasks such as organizing and leading the Parks Hiring Fair at Warner Park Community Recreation Center and researching the Commercial Use policies of relevant municipalities in the country. Rangers have also hired 5 new hourly staff. Matt Norton, Loius Brien, Nick Hellrood, Ryan Stasinski, and Sean Wenkman will begin training on 4/10/23. The Volunteer Coordinator Position is posted and closes on 4/10/23. We anticipate having interviews at the end of April and early May.

**Community Engagement Highlights:** Rangers continue to find innovative ways to increase access to Parks around the City of Madison. For example, Rangers Michaela Daly and Will Goss have been working with the Madison Public Library to implement the first Disc Golf Lending Program. Rangers provided sets of discs to each of the 9 libraries in the City with the intent for Library patrons to use their library cards to check out the kits for a week and will be able to play at any of the City of Madison or Dane County courses.



Rangers participated in our first annual Dog Park cooperative meeting, where we met with all the municipalities that support the dog permit programs in Dane County. This effort is intended to serve our common park users by coordinating efforts and using the same messaging amongst agencies to communicate all necessary information. Also, to coordinate and better understand agency roles and responsibilities, Rangers met with all the Natural Resource Management Enforcement agencies within Dane County, including Dane County Parks, DNR, State Parks, Animal Services, City of Fitchburg, and Dane County Sheriff's Office.