

SUPERINTENDENT'S JUNE 2021 REPORT

COMMUNICATIONS TO BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Park Superintendent's Monthly Report Summary

Although it is still officially Spring, it is after Memorial Day and the temperatures feel like Summer. There are significantly increased planned activities happening and it seems that many who reconnected with Parks last year are still showing up. This is very exciting, but comes with new challenges of balancing the public space as well. With PHMDC orders lifted, starting June 2, many people are feeling more comfortable about gathering with friends, family and other users. As a result, shelter reservations and special events are in full swing, with many short notice reservations being made. Dog Park, Disc Golf and Lake Access permits continue to be purchased online and staff are mailing permits as quickly as possible. Aquatics staff have been hired and are preparing for another successful season, with the Goodman Pool opening June 11, and BB Clarke and Vilas Beaches will be staffed starting June 12. Splash Parks also plan to open, starting June 4. The Glenway project continues to move forward with significant work happening on the course and lots of discussion about native restoration efforts as they are starting as well. Overall, golf courses have maintained a very strong level of play with rounds topping 42,000 already this year. This puts us in a position to achieve more than 100K rounds in a year with a course mostly closed. Ride the Drive is happening on June 6th and is the first Parks sponsored larger special event in over 20 months. The event was split into four locations to promote smaller events and be prepared for complying with unknown PHMDC orders. With orders expired, our team has a more predictable future planning horizon for events, both events we are leading and those we are regulating.

Future Commission Items

- Parks Division Equity Plan – Staff continue implementation of the Parks Equity Team's Equity in Action Plan. A key part of the implementation of this plan is to engage with the Commission on this plan and the corresponding work that will be happening. This is anticipated to occur in July.
- Golf Enterprise Update – Staff will be working to provide both the Commission and the Golf Subcommittee and update on the Enterprise Fund and operations. The current target for this informational update is in July.
- Update on WPCRC expansion plans – Funding for design and development work is included in the Parks Division's 2022 Capital Budget request, with construction funding in 2023. Staff anticipates briefing the Commission on this important project in the Fall of 2021.
- Capital Budget and Operating Budget Update – The Capital Budget request has been submitted and the team is working on the operating budget submission to the Mayor now. An overview of the submissions will be provided to the Commission in the next few months.

Personnel Updates

- Roberta Sladky, Olbrich Gardens Director, has retired from Madison Parks.
- Rick Trapanese, Parks Maintenance Mechanic, has retired from Madison Parks.
- Parks welcomes back Zac Eckberg, a former Arborist in Forestry (for Streets). He is now the East Parks Operations Leadworker.

Section reports

Community Services Monthly Highlights

Aquatics

The Goodman Pool is being filled this week and Lifeguard will soon be starting their annual training. We have about 65 Aquatics staff this year and are looking forward to providing a safe space for the public to relax on a warm day. The Pool season will be as busy as ever with swimming lessons, swim team and the lap swimming programs running this year. The Goodman Pool opens for the season on June 11th.

Rangers

Park Rangers are very busy this month with the return of park shelter reservations. The high amount of use in our parks that we saw last year appears to have sustained as more people have discovered just how great the Madison Parks system is. We are seeing high use at our boat launches and in the waterfront parks as residents and visitors relax next to our treasured lakes.

Community Events

Community Events are BACK! Once PHMDC announced they would be lifting all COVID Health Orders as of June 2, we were inundated with requests and applications for returning and new events and activities. People are ready to gather together at concerts and festivals! They were sorely missed last year.

We are continuing to work with various departments to find creative and effective ways to assist local businesses to recover from the economic impact of COVID-19. Developing the "Open Space" permit, streamlining the application process for Day Camps and Classes and the ability to approve events administratively, has made Madison Parks more accessible to more people and more and different uses of our parks. We're hoping for similar success with the Carts in Parks pilot program.

Customer Services

Shelter Reservations - With PHMDC orders no longer in effect, starting June 2, 2021, more customers are feeling comfortable reserving shelters for their special occasions. Due to short notice reservations, customers cannot reserve online and this is keeping customer service staff very busy on the phones each day.

Recreation Services

First major event since the pandemic with the largest need for Ride the Drive volunteers to date. 4 neighborhood parks, 292 volunteers, 5 City of Madison agencies working collaboratively to offer a great community event.

Permits - Lake Access, Dog and Disc Golf Permits continue to be purchased online and staff are diligently processing and mailing them to customers each week. The trend for obtaining annual permits continues to be on the rise, as park users are increasingly enjoying the great outdoors. We anticipate annual permit sales to surpass previous year totals, with disc golf already doing so.

Permit Type	Annual Permits				Daily Permits			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2018	2019	2020	2021
Disc Golf	1,426	1,470	1,908	1,975	4,767	5,284	3,279	830
Dog (Park/Reg)	8,833	7,974	9,241	8,422	570	590	200	105
Lake Access	2,879	3,004	6,728	3,783	4,109	4,561	2,044	453
Ski Trail	1,277	1,474	1,501	3,545	830	967	1,017	1,134

Planning and Development

Pump Track at Aldo Leopold

- Pump track construction will begin in August and will be completed in October.

Tenney Park

- The bridge at Johnson Street will have its retaining walls rebuilt in the coming months.
- The T. Wall Shelter is getting a new acoustic ceiling, which will solve the acoustic issues.
- Parks and Facility Engineering continue to work on the design for the new beach shelter.
- Tallgrass Restoration has an active contract to replace the native plantings along the lagoon shoreline that were damaged in the flood of 2018.
- The basketball court will be replaced later this year or early next year.
- Three bays of bicycle parking racks will be installed in the next few weeks, thanks to a kind donation by a park neighbor.

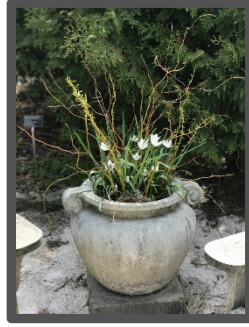
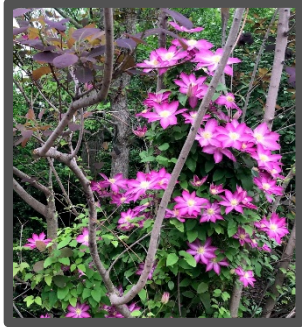
Eagle Trace Park

- This 9.75 acre park located at 10321 White Fox Lane is now open to the public.
- Park features include a playground, a basketball court, paved and dirt surface trails, and an open play area.

Olbrich Botanical Gardens

Attendance

Total attendance for April 2021 was 20,263, **more** than the previous five-year April average of 19,196 (although April 2021 brought the five-year average down considerably).



Outdoor Gardens

The relatively cool spring extended bloom times for the spring bulbs and early flowering trees. A hard frost did hit and impacted the early Magnolias –

browning out their flowers. This is not uncommon for non-native species in our climate. Containers are looking great – loaded with spring annuals. In the 4th week of May, it is safe to bring out the over-wintered tropicals into the Gardens and they're on the move.



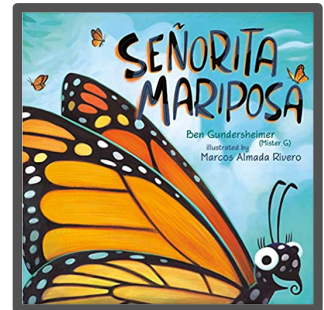
Bolz Conservatory/Production Greenhouse

Production is moving to 'hardening off'. An extensive hardening off spot has been constructed adjacent to the production greenhouse. Fall annuals will be seeded soon.

Programs & Exhibitions

The Mother's Day concert by Gin, Chocolate & Bottle Rockets sold out with capacity limited to 150. It was also live-streamed on Facebook. **Summer Concerts** are scheduled for Tuesdays, from 7 – 8 pm, June 15 – August 17 with tickets available online.

Pollinator activities in lieu of Blooming Butterflies include: 1) On-line Pollinator Plant Sale starts Monday, June 7 with curbside pick up later in June; 2) 'I Spy' Pollinators (in the Gardens) June 21 to July 11; Story Walk with dual language Senorita Mariposa July 12 to August 8; Pop Up Story Times on the Great Lawn TBD! **Summer Breeze** will take place June 24 & 25.



Education

Olbrich hosted over 30 adult and family classes mid-April to mid-May. 130 people joined the staff for **Edible Landscaping to Kitchen Gardens: Planning, Planting to Harvest** by Lisa Hilgenberg on April 20. This was the 4th program in the 5-part virtual lecture series, A Gardener's Call. The final lecture on May 27 featured Olbrich Botanical Gardens' staff wrapping up the learning experience and creating options for the Olbrich audience. June through December class schedule is posted online here:

<http://www.olbrich.org/education/>