

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS COMMITTEE MINUTES

JEFFERSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE
311 South Center Avenue, Room 202
Jefferson WI 53549

February 3, 2014 @1:00 p.m.

Committee: Glen Borland, Mike Kelly, Ed Morse, Augie Tietz

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman, Tietz at 1:00 p.m.
2. **Roll Call:** Committee members present: Kelly, Nass and Tietz. Others present: Joe Nehmer, Kevin Wiesmann, Kim Buchholz, Ben Wehmeier, John Molinaro, Phil Ristow, Bob Bennett (JCSA), Cheryl Housley, WI DNR, Pam Phalen, WI DNR, Rachel Fuhrman. Borland, excused absence.
3. **Certification of Compliance with the Open Meetings Law:** - In compliance.
4. **Review of the Agenda:** Approved as written.
5. **Public Comment:** None
6. **Approval of the January 6, 2014 Meeting Minutes:**
Motion to approve the January 6, 2014 minutes with the addition of word “funded” added in number 9 was made by Tietz, seconded by Kelly. Nass abstained. Molinaro voted. Motion carried, 3-0.
7. **Communications:**
Buchholz stated that these items were distributed in the packet. The originals were circulated around the meeting room for member’s information.
 - a. Crawfish River Park Meets Goal, Daily Union, January 6, 2014
 - i. Ristow commented that we have received the deed. The property now belongs to Jefferson County.
 - b. Picture of Dorothy Carnes Park, Daily Union
 - c. Roahens Commission Sculpture for Fort Bike Trail, Daily Union, 1/27/14
 - d. “My Favorite Tree” Pictures
 - e. Jefferson County Bike Club Donation, January 18, 2014
 - f. Photo on Outboarders’ Donation, Watertown Daily Times, 1/13/14
 - g. Jefferson Community Foundation Raising Funds for New Park, Rock River Reflections newsletter
 - h. Glacial Heritage Area Winter Fair, Rock River Reflections newsletter
 - i. Glacial Heritage Area Winter Fair Invite
 - j. Jefferson County Parks on Youtube

8. **Discussion and Possible Decision on Administrative Fees Charged to the Snowmobile Program Grant:**

Nehmer reviewed the committee meeting minutes from September 6, 2011 that were included in the agenda packet.

The department also checked with other counties as well as the WI DNR; all are charging an administrative fee to the program. Kelly encouraged partnership with the Snowmobile Alliance and shared his concerns for continuing to charge a fee to the program. Kelly asked if there were additional items that the county could do to assist with the map production. The snowmobile map is updated and reprinted every two years; it is coordinated and paid for by the Alliance. Kelly also asked if the department could partner with the Alliance to GPS the trails so that they could be better utilized.

The question that needs to be answered today is whether the committee would like the department to continue charging an administrative fee to the program? Discussion occurred.

Nass made a motion to continue to charge an administrative fee to the snowmobile program, seconded by Tietz. Motion approved; 4-0.

Note: Morse joined the meeting at 1:15 p.m. during this agenda item discussion.

9. **Discussion and Possible Decision on Former Watertown Outboarders' Property:**

Nehmer introduced Cheryl Housley and Pam Phalen with the WI DNR. Housley summarized the planning meeting information that has taken place. The WI DNR has cleaned up the property. The Outboarders' have donated \$25,000 for a pier on the property. They are currently working with a DNR engineer on the design of the pier and are looking to collaborate with the County on their pier projects. Housley indicated that there are currently some hazards on the property and therefore it is not open to the public. The electrical service lines hang rather low. The WI DNR also no longer allows the snowmobile trail to go through the property because they do not want the snowmobilers accessing the river from the property.

The WI DNR has provided the county with a draft MOU for management of the site. They would like to see that in place for the site. WI DNR has concerns about the long-term use of the building due to the state of the building as well as its location within the floodplain. All the reclamation work on the property needs to be completed by June 30, 2016. They have reviewed the GHA MOU and will continue to do so. The Natural Resources Board was clear that there should be an implementation plan.

Tietz asked who would manage the property, the County or WI DNR? Housley commented that the WI DNR does not have staff to manage the building.

Nehmer commented that he has conducted a literature search. The County is looking at the site as more of a County Park site while the WI DNR is looking at the property as a river access site. A river access site includes a road, parking, boat launch, shoreline restoration, restoration of the lagoon area, and green space. Some discussion occurred as to whether the building could be moved to a different location either on the property or off property. The committee has looked at the property and there are a lot of options on the table.

Further discussion occurred. The WI DNR has started the permit process to allow two-way traffic on the entrance road. Wehmeier asked if a request for information could be sought by the county to determine if an interest exists within the community and what type of business ventures may be appropriate for the building. Housley commented that the use needs to have reasonable parameters. Phalen commented that the WI DNR needs to determine what the allowable uses of the building would be with its location within the flood plain. Molinaro commented that this may provide a revenue stream for the department. Ristow commented that in order for the County to continue with the building there would need to be a business venture that would be more than break even. Molinaro asked the department to invite a member of the Outboarders' to address the committee as to how they operated the building.

Nehmer asked the WI DNR to research the viable uses of the building and report back to the department on what options are available. Nehmer and the committee thanked Housley and Phalen for coming to the meeting.

10. Discussion and Possible Decision on Fat Tire Bike Usage in the Parks System:

Wiesmann distributed a draft Fat Tire Bike policy to committee members. Wiesmann further explained that this policy allows the department to start using fat tire bikes on our trail system. Wiesmann did a test run at Carnes Park and has researched the use through a literature search as well as contacting other departments and the WI DNR. The department feels that this is a feasible option as a recreational activity within our parks system. Nehmer described the trail corridor would be groomed for Nordic skiing on the left and then groomed for all others – fat tire bikes, snowshoeing and hiking – on the right. Dane County has trails groomed in this manner that seems to be working. Dane County is also seeing increased usage of fat tire bikes.

Kelly expressed concern over ruining the trails. Wiesmann explained that he believes the majority of the use will stem from rentals at the local bike shop. Trail deterioration will be monitored and communicated at the park as well as with the local bike shop for rentals. Discussion occurred. The Department is recommending that we proceed with the policy and feel it out for a year to determine the popularity and demand.

Nass made a motion to approve the Fat Tire Bike Policy at this point and have it reviewed in one year, seconded by Kelly. Motion approved, unanimous.

11. **Discussion and Possible Decision on Amendment of the Dog Park Rules to Allow Rabies Vaccination/License Waiver as a Condition of Park Access:**

Nehmer explained that the department has received a request from Rachel Fuhrman to allow her dog to utilize the dog park although he is not vaccinated rabies due to a medical condition. Nehmer introduced Rachel Fuhrman to the committee. Fuhrman explained that she does have a rabies waiver from her veterinarian. Fuhrman is a trainer at Best Paws and always recommends the dog park. She thanked the committee for the park. She stated that rabies waivers are very rare; this is only the second one she is aware of within her career. She explained that the licensing of the dog is up to the municipality. She is currently having issues with licensing her dog with the City of Muskego.

Ristow stated that he believes the City of Muskego is misreading the law. Ristow distributed an email from Laura Challoner, the dog park attendant. The law states that a veterinarian can waive the rabies vaccine and they have that right. Fuhrman has that waiver. Challoner, our dog park attendant, is recommending that we allow Rachel and her dog to obtain a dog tag to utilize the park.

Kelly stated that he spoke with another vet and they were not of the same opinion and this was not a good idea.

Motion by Nass, seconded by Morse, to allow the rabies waiver. Discussion occurred. Kelly stated that this decision is setting precedence.

Nass amended the motion. Motion by Nass, seconded by Morse, to allow this waiver of license requirement in this particular instance due to receipt of a letter signed by a veterinarian stating the dog cannot be vaccinated for rabies. Motion approved. Kelly voted no.

12. **Update on 2013 Parks Department Budget:**

Nehmer reviewed the status of the 2013 budget. Everything looks good. Comment was made that within the snowmobile grant business unit a journal entry needs to be completed so that all expenses are shown correctly.

13. **Update on Glacial Heritage Area (GHA) Project:**

Nehmer reviewed the handouts that were distributed to the committee in their agenda packet. Discussion occurred.

14. **Set Tentative Meeting Dates/Times for Next Meeting:** March 3, 2014 at 1 p.m.

15. **Adjourn:**

Motion was made by Nass, seconded by Morse, to adjourn the meeting at 2:35 p.m. Motion carried.