

**DRAFT Jefferson County Parks Department: Parks, Recreation and Open Space
Plan Update**

PROCEEDINGS REPORT

Public Workshop February 17, 2020 6:30 – 8:00 pm

UW-Extension, Rooms 8 & 9

**Project Sponsor/Liaison/Facilitator: Parks Superintendent Kevin Wiesmann
Consultant: Margaret Burlingham (LanDesign)**

Participants:

Frankie Fuller, Friends of the Glacial Heritage Area
Traci Wilson, Fort HealthCare/Community Health Coalition
Jim Schroeder, County Board Chairman
Ben Wehmeier, County Administrator
Steve Nass, County Supervisor
Mary Truman, Jefferson County Parks
Steve Sharp, Jefferson County Daily Union

Workshop Purposes and Objectives:

The purpose of this workshop was to present past Jefferson County Parks plans, dialogue around what users value most about their interaction with or for the Jefferson County Parks system, sharing on what they are most proud about the County Parks System, hopes they have for the future parks system, partnership opportunities, along with future actions and initiatives that are most important to them. These are key planning questions that could be asked in many ways. The Agenda below provided a framework for drawing out the communities' thoughts and ideas about an ideal future Jefferson County Parks system.

This process is part of a routine cycle of county plan reviews and updates going back to 1997. Perspectives will make a difference, and will help influence the future direction of the Jefferson County Parks.

Agenda

- A. Welcome and introductions
- B. Overview of the Jefferson County Parks System, planning, and accomplishments.
- C. Community and Public Input Session
 - What do you most appreciate, are proud of, and value most about the Jefferson County Parks System and implementation of past plans? (Celebration of Success and our Values)
 - What are new vision ideas that you think could lead to an improved or enhanced Parks System? (Future Hopes and Vision Ideas)
 - How would you like to see the Parks System move forward, and which initiatives or actions are most important to you? (Future Actions and Strategies)
 - Additional comments
- D. Next Steps

Meeting Introduction

Kevin Weismann presented a PowerPoint, with additional comments by Margaret Burlingham, on past Jefferson County Parks planning efforts and park initiatives over the last seven years since the most recent update of the Jefferson County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan. The Parks System covers about 1060 acres and 180 miles of on and off-road bicycle trails. Major initiatives over the past seven years have included completing the Glacial Heritage Area Plan; acquisition of Cappie's Landing, the Hwy 16 Wayside, Crawfish River Park, a 2 acre addition to Indian Mounds County Park, a 5.6 acre addition to the Garman Nature Preserve, 18 acre mountain bike park along the Glacial River Trail, and an Accessible Fishing Pier on Blackhawk Island; completion of Phase 1 of the Interurban Trail, sculpture along the Glacial River Trail, Master Plan approval for Holzhueter State Park, new parking and cabin restoration at Dorothy Carnes County Park (east side), and 9 holes of disc golf at Carlin-Weld Park. The population of Jefferson County has grown only 1.7 percent between 2010 and 2018, from 83,683 to 85,129. This lull in growth rate may present an opportunity to add unique natural areas to the parks system. The previous 10 years, from 2000-2010, the population grew a total of 10.5 percent. More public input opportunities will be planned.

Public Comments on the questions in section C of the agenda

- Add camping along waterways in appropriate places.
- Create a monetary fund for land acquisition to be able to act quickly if opportunities present themselves.
- The Jefferson County Parks system has gone 0 to 80 in 20 years and is said to be unique in North America with paddling, bicycling, hiking and camping.
- The investment and hard work put into the parks is appreciated.
- Create a bicycle trail connection from Whitewater to the Glacial River Trail.
- The parks make Jefferson County a great place to live.
- More mountain biking trails would be welcome.
- A park and boat landing at the old highway shop in Jefferson are being developed in concert with the City of Jefferson.
- Interest in completion of the Interurban Trail to Waukesha and further east.
- The Trieloff Property on Rock Lake may be an addition, at least the part that will be used to straighten CTH N.
- Health groups could partner with activities in the parks to get people outside.
- Have outdoor activities for kids in the parks like Whitewater does, hide a squirrel doll in the park and give kids clues they can follow on their phone.
- Jefferson County has a diversity of parks that make it unique, something for everyone.
- A nice four-season shelter is needed for weddings and conferences, perhaps at Korth Park.
- Rest stops with water and restrooms are needed along the Glacial River Trail and Interurban Trail. There are no amenities between cities.
- Parks and trails are lacking in the northeastern part of Jefferson County. The Town of

Ixonia has the most population growth.

- Better access to Crawfish River Park from Hwy 18.
- Cross-country skiing and groomed trails are available at Dorothy Carnes Park east and west, Korth, Carlin-Weld and sometime Garman but the trail is very steep.
- Would like to partner with McKay Nursery to expand Garman trails in the winter.
- Rental of canoes, kayaks, skis and snowshoes would be welcome and an opportunity to partner with local businesses perhaps from a structure within a park. Renting canoes for a family from current vendors can be cost prohibitive.

Written Comments

Due to inclement weather, attendance was limited. Park users county-wide were informed that an interactive questionnaire was available on line. The responses received are below.

Add later.