

MINUTES
JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS COMMITTEE

Jefferson County Courthouse
311 South Center Avenue, Rm 202
Jefferson WI 53549

February 2, 2015 @ 9:30 a.m.

Committee: Augie Tietz, Chairman, Mike Kelly, Vice Chair, Matt Foelker, Secretary, Walt Christensen, Laura Payne

1. Call to Order

Tietz called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Tietz, Foelker, Payne, Christensen, Kelly (@ 9:40 a.m.)

Others: Nehmer, Nimm, Wiesmann, Wehmeier, Ward, Schroeder

3. Certification of Compliance with the Open Meetings Law

Meeting Posted and in Compliance

4. Review of the Agenda

Agenda approved

5. Public Comment (members of the Public who wish to address the Committee on specific agenda items must register their request at this time)

No comment

6. Approval of the December 1, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Foelker motioned to approve. Christensen seconded. Passes on a 4/0 voice vote.

7. Communications

- a. County Bicycle Maps Available – Daily Jefferson County Union
- b. County Dog Park Calendars Available – Daily Jefferson County Union
- c. Newsmakers – Daily Jefferson County Union
- d. Huskie Huddle/Malamute Mingle – Daily Jefferson County Union
- e. A Glacial Heritage Area Educational Event – Friends of GHA
- f. Winter Walk – Daily Jefferson County Union
- g. Friends of Rose Lake Duck House Material Donation
- h. Waterloo Regional Trailhead Facility Recognition Plaque

8. Discussion and Possible Decision on Grooming Services Contract with the Jefferson County Snowmobile Alliance

Nehmer stated that there is an annual contract with JCSA effective 12/1-11/30, yearly. It was January and the department had not received contract so we spoke with Ward and Wehmeier.

Wehmeier – had opportunity to meet with Ward, Bennett and others regarding Workman's Comp Insurance, trying to identify how it is dealt with under Work Comp law. Very unclear. Every county handles it differently. Met with WIMIC, reviewed the workforce development criteria and it is still unclear. Currently the insurance is grant reimbursable and approximately \$900. The JCSA has stated that they are "true" volunteers.

Wehmeier noted there are 2 questions to be asked: 1. Should we continue the requirement for Workman's Comp Insurance (risk mitigation) and, 2. If we deem appropriate to have the insurance, how shall it be paid for?

Ward – indicated that in some circumstances it is very clear there are employees, other circumstances where it is very clear there are volunteers. However, when money is involved, when hours worked are submitted for funding by the JCSA the opinion is to air on the side of caution. The insurance is to be paid for and provided by the JCSA. We (the County) do not need to assume the risk to cover work related type injuries. Injury could result in large amount of dollars to the county. Asking for, and recommending that the agreement to carry Workman's Comp Insurance remain in place.

Christensen – noted that if the insurance agency didn't think they were employees that they wouldn't insure.

Wehmeier – 18 clubs with various amount of hours submitted.

Weismann – questioned if the insurance is a reimbursable grant line item.

Nehmer – stated that yes, it is a 100% reimbursable cost.

Foelker – noted that \$900 is a fair price.

Christensen – stated that if we have been requiring the insurance, then precedence has been set. If required in past, what happens if we pull back and a case went to court? What would happen if someone got hurt and sued the county?

Ward – if the club members are deemed employees, then a claim could be made against the county insurance policy, if the injured came after the county.

Ward – as government entity, we have a limited general liability \$50,000 cap.

Wehmeier – noted the group did offer to sign an affidavit stating they were volunteers.

Foelker motioned to move forward with contract as is written. Christensen seconded.

Kelly – asked why the club against the contract.

Jeff Ziebell (JCSA) – stated that the \$900 is money we do not need to spend. \$900 is a lot of money.

For the JCSA to come up with \$900 is a challenge.

Bennett (JCSA) – questioned whether the parks department has workman's comp for the volunteers that worked on the cabin?

Wiesmann – volunteer waivers were in place and no funds are/were exchanged for the cabin project.

???(JCSA Member) – “an employee is someone that receives money. I have yet to receive one red cent for working on the trails.”

The motion to move forward with the Grooming Services Contract as written carries with a 4/1 (Kelly) voice vote.

Wehmeier – grants only available to the counties to provide grooming and trail maintenance and the county has various things the county can do for the administrative fee. The DNR also has their fees – are there some provisions that perhaps we can off-set the cost of the insurance? Could we reduce our administrative fee to help off-set the \$900 fee?

Christensen – the \$900 can be taken from the grant? How does that affect the budget balance?

Tietz – are we willing to help with all or part of the \$900? Either we reduce our admin fee or unsure of another way?

Nehmer – the county gets 50% of the grant in advance. At season end, we submit the alliance hours and then receive the other 50%.

Nehmer – noted that approx. 4 years ago, at the request of ways to find revenue, the department reported to the committee that charging the admin fee is a source of revenue for the department. Voluntarily, the department capped the admin fee not to exceed 5%. Would the committee split the admin fee, cap at x%, or do away with the admin fee all together? M Nimm and I did an audit of the DNR files. Of the 72 counties, we could establish if 66 did or did not charge an admin fee. 4 counties have not yet responded. Of the 66 counties, 59% yes 41% no, average charge = \$1400, our charge is \$1100.

Kelly – we are fortunate to have a strong JCSA. We should support in any way we can. When trying to get people to support the GHA and promote tourism in the county. I would like to see, in lieu of an admin fee that we cover the insurance cost of \$900.

Kelly - Motioned to absorb the \$900 (for the Workman's Compensation Insurance) from the administration fee. Christensen seconded.

Christensen – what's in the fee balance if we take the \$900 from the admin fee?

Kelly – keep track of staff hours, but benefits the county if we absorb

Payne – charge us and then reimburse?

Nehmer – noted the field staff are doing trail inspection.

Christensen – hours?

Wiesmann – depends on season – 24-30hrs, plus annual meeting, plus admin fee for billing and final paperwork submittal. Parks department charges up to 5% of the total grant. In the past 3 years, the department has billed an average of \$1,100 against the grant.

Nehmer – noted the county has 182.7 miles of trail and \$2,283.75 would be the 5% cap and asked how much the committee want to charge for administrative expenses and if the department is to subtract the \$900?

Kelly – if trail inspection is integral, at a minimum it should come from the grant. It's a fuzzy area, unsure of how to address.

Nehmer – the committee could say it wants the department to take x% a year, or the committee could say the department will not charge any administrative expenses to the grant.

Nehmer – big picture, since 1981, all the funds that have passed through the grant and aid program equals approximately \$1.4m. Jefferson County Parks charges result in about \$4k of the \$1.4m.

Foelker rescinded his second and **Kelly** changed the motion to say the parks department will replace the administrative charge with workman's compensation insurance costs. **Christensen** seconded. Motion passes 5/0

Bennett – stated he did a presentation on the economic impact of snowmobiling in Jefferson County. He noted that just over \$20k was spent on snowmobiles and clothing resulting in a large monetary impact for the county. \$250/mile covers about 60% cost to maintain trails. The Alliance purchased another groomer for \$100k. The groomer is paid for through fundraisers and raffles. 3250 registered sleds in Jefferson County.

9. **Discussion and Possible Decision on Annual Snowmobile Resolution (2015-2016)**

Nehmer – DNR requires yearly by program. Does the board wish to continue in the program? If so, the department will work with Ward and take to Co Board.

Kelly motioned to pass the resolution and continue the program. **Foelker** seconded. Motion passes on a 5/0 voice vote.

10. **Discussion and Possible Decision on Glacial River Trail Maintenance and Off-Season Use**

Nehmer – we have had requests to plow the GRT in an area just north of the Rock County line. Historically there has been debate about maintaining the trail and have had no trail maintenance during the off-season. We have limited staff, but we have requests. Guidance on what to do with our time.

Foelker – could have big hours and equipment costs

Tietz – noted the difficulty in agreeing to maintain a portion of the trail.

Christensen – questioned if there is cross country skiing on the trail.

Wiesmann – made mention of Fat Bikes

Kelly – noted that we do not have a funding source to pay for off-season trail maintenance.

Christensen – noted that those requesting off-season maintenance in the future are to contact supervisors to make request.

No action.

11. **Discussion and Possible Decision on Rental Request of the Mason Log Home**

Nehmer – noted that a County Supervisor inquired about renting the Log Home for an employee group (out of Madison) and asked the committee if we wish to rent for meetings?

Wiesmann – noted that there are doors to be hung with no estimated time of arrival on equipment. The cabin could accommodate, but not until everything is done.

Tietz - questioned the potential charges for renting the facility and noted that it is a historic facility.

Wiesmann – noted that it is not really intended for open floor meeting space. There is no electrical and no lighting. The windows will open, but no light. 19x15 inside.

Christensen – suggested that perhaps a tent would be a better option.

Payne – questioned the need for tables and chairs if rented.

Christensen – asked if there are plans for another shelter?

No action taken.

12. **Discussion and Possible Decision on Purchase of 2015 Ford Super Cab 4WD**

Wiesmann – noted the vendor is under state contract and the truck is similar to what we've had before. Purchases of over \$25,000 must go to the Co Board.

Foelker motioned to approve the purchase of the 2015 Ford Super Cab 4WD, **Christensen** seconded.

Christensen – questioned the principle use.

Wiesmann – noted the primary uses are that the truck pulls mowers, trailers and groomers and has a standard box

Motion carries on a 5/0 voice vote.

13. **Update on Watertown Outboarders Implementation Plan**

Nehmer – noted that the document is still under review in Madison

Matthews – GHA Coordinator, DNR staff – stated that he has been told it is still the preference of the

department to transfer property to Jefferson County, but DNR attorneys want to make sure it's consistent. The plan has been forwarded to a planner who is taking a look at it. This is the first implementation plan in the GHA and DNR officials want to make sure it's done correctly. Once complete, it will serve as the model implementation plan. The planner is hoping to have it done next week to forward for review.

Kelly – noted that it is frustrating to have a property we can't use.

Tietz – hope to have done before the weather gets nice.

14. **Update on Group Permits**

Nehmer – stated that the department requires group permits when groups of more than 20 people gather in one place, but are not renting a pavilion.

- a. Lake Mills Wellness Coalition
- b. "2 Rivers Night Event"
- c. "The Cold Hearted"
- d. Ares/Races Exercise – Rock Lake upper, overnight June 27-28, have not charged a fee in the past.

Christensen – nature of the Ares/Races Exercise event

Nehmer – noted that this is a field exercise

Schroeder – stated that he has attended past events. The event is quite impressive and the group is very appreciative of having the park to use.

15. **Update on Easement(s) at Dorothy Carnes Park**

Wiesmann – the Dorothy Carnes Park parcel is about 248 acres. Part of the park is under an NRCS Easement with restrictions. Issues have been identified with easement lines and non-compliant areas. A wire fence to be removed, but will be paid for by NRCS. The department will also finalize and put into writing the management plan.

Nehmer – noted a recollection of easement boundaries with ½ of the paved portion of Jones lane in the easement. The department took fee title and easement lines were negotiated with individuals who are no longer involved. We are now relocating trails and benches with perhaps a one or two few acre swap.

16. **Update on Dorothy Carnes Park East Parking Lot Design Engineering Services RFP**

Wiesmann – stated that a class 1 notice was published announcing a Request for Proposals for the Engineering of the parking lot. The staff has reviewed proposals and recommends RA Smith. The project may be at the one acre disturbance and storm water may have to be included. A portion grant eligible.

Kelly – noted that there are two lower bids than the one recommended. \$5000 difference.

17. **Update on County Conservation Aids for Dorothy Carnes Park/Rose Lake State Natural Area**

Wiesmann – noted that the grant funds are used for prairie restoration.

Nehmer – the grant funds originate from old county "bounty" \$ used to benefit fish and wildlife, based on acreage of county.

18. **Update on Citation(s) Issued at Jefferson County Dog Park**

Nehmer – stated that 4 citations were issued with the assistance of B Ward. Of the citations that made it to court, the department listened to the concerns of those cited. Mostly work out a plea.

19. **Update on Dog Park Registrations 2003-2014**

Nehmer noted that there were 1772 registrations in 2014 and that since the opening of the park, there has been a consistent increase in registrations.

20. **Update on Parks Employee Confrontation/Harassment in Crawfish River Park**

Nehmer – stated that a parks employee was exposed to undesirable citizen behavior at Crawfish River Park. The individual was aggressive and cursed at our employee. The department is working with the Sheriff's department and HR for training.

Christensen - questioned why the citizen was upset.

21. **Update on Handicapped Fishing Wharf (Blackhawk Island)**
Wiesmann – noted that the project is moving forward and permits are in hand. The wharf is ready to go. Installing in spring, weather permitting.
22. **Update on Holzhueter Implementation Plan Process**
Nehmer – noted that in 2011 the plan was first attempted and stopped. Tried again in 2012 & 2013. We are now working with Margaret Burlingham.
23. **Update on Glacial Heritage Area (GHA) Project**
No updates. Will be attending MJS Sport Show & Canoecopia.
24. **Update on Fundraising for Interurban Trail**
Nimm – noted that she has submitted the (required) letter of interest to People for Bikes and has also submitted a grant application to We Energies Foundation.
Nehmer – met with individuals expressing an interest of participating as a funding partner. Individual expressed in potentially paying the full cost of \$5m to construct the trail. The department is looking to raise \$750k.
Tietz – will be meeting with the Watertown TV channel.
25. **Update on Fundraising for Pohlmann Park**
Wiesmann – noted that scout Austin Messerschmitt has raised \$2,437 for the park. The funds will be used to purchase a memorial bench, 2 other benches & a handicap accessible Cozy Cocoon.
26. **Update on 2014 Parks Department Budget**
Nehmer – noted that he and Nimm are working on carry-over requests.
27. **Update on 2015 Parks Department Budget**
No update
28. **Set next meeting date March 2, 2015 @ 9:30 am and possible agenda items.**
29. **Adjourn**
Foelker motioned to adjourn at 10:58 a.m., Christensen seconded. Motion carries on a 5/0 voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary S Nimm

Program Assistant, Parks