

Parks Committee Minutes
Jefferson County
Jefferson County Courthouse
311 S. Center Avenue, Room 202
Jefferson, WI 53549

Date: Monday, December 7, 2015

Time: 9:30 a.m.

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

1. **Call to order**

Tietz called the meeting to order at 9:31 am

2. **Roll call (establish a quorum)**

Present: Tietz, Foelker, Christensen, Kelly, Payne

Staff: Nehmer, Wiesmann, Nimm, Grabow, Ward, Wehmeier, Schroeder

Others: Anne Drehfal, Alexa Zoellner (Jefferson County Daily Union), Frankie Fuller (Friends of GHA), Jim B (Dane County), Bob Bennett (JCSA), Linda Bennett (JCSA), Matt Anderson (JCSA), Matt Kramer (JCSA), Darryl Ginsg (JCSA), Eugene Pagel (JCSA), John Lawson (JCSA), John Wagi (JCSA), Duane Forester (JCSA), Jeff Jones (JCSA), Sam Landes (Assoc WI Snow Clubs), David Habeck (JCSA), Deb Metzker (JCSA),

3. **Certification of compliance with the Open Meetings Law**

Meeting posted according to Open Meetings Law

4. **Approval of the agenda**

Approved as written

5. **Approval of Park Committee minutes for November 2, 2015**

Christensen motioned to approve. Foelker seconded. Motion passes 5/0.

6. **Communications**

- County Parks Gets Conservation Grant
- Interurban Lake Country
- Grant could be used to help build 10-mile bike trail from Oconomowoc to Watertown
- Grant Award Gets Bike Trail Rolling

7. **Public comment (Members of the public who wish to address the Committee on specific agenda items must register their request at this time)**

No public comments.

8. **Discussion and Possible Action on Crawfish River Park Plan**

Nehmer introduced Steve Grabow, UW-Extension.

Grabow – noted that the proceedings report is in the agenda packets and is part of the master planning process. In summary there were community participants and staff along with 3 landscape architects who served as part of the planning process with a summary on page 3 of the process. Design Charrette approach – interactive way of gaining insight from key advisors. The preferred Master Plan outcome is seemingly inclusive of the components necessary to capture the activity and amenity requests for the park. Grabow reviewed the Master Plan drawing, explaining it as an in-house design project and noting that adjustments may be necessary. The plan includes:

- Primary recreation trail with access of GRT.
- Proposed Foot Bridge that would also serve the snowmobile trail.
- Three campsites
- Two kayak and canoe access sites
- Small picnic area

- Ten-space proposed parking lot
- Small proposed shelter
- Pit toilet
- Picnic area
- Secondary walking trails
- Long term – potential recreation bridge across the Crawfish River and shore fishing along the river.

Tietz motioned to approve the Master Plan and move forward. Christensen seconded.

Foelker questioned how the parks department will move forward the development of the park with funding and labor.

Kelly questioned the status of access to HWY 18 and questioned how the plan moves forward if parking is not allowed by DOT. Kelly also noted his concern about the hazards of parking on HWY 18 and loading/unloading of cars.

Grabow noted that the plan won't change, and cars are allowed to park on the HWY at this time. Parking limitations were known when the plan was developed.

Kelly questioned if the JCSA had been consulted about where the trail runs through the park.

Nehmer said he had discussed the plan with Dave Habeck.

Motion passes on a 5/0 vote.

9. **Discussion and Possible Action on Proposed Natural Materials Art Installation at Dorothy Carnes Park**

Anne Drehfal introduced herself and noted that she is interested in collaborating with the Parks to do a Natural (Non-Permanent) Sculpture in Dorothy Carnes Park. Drehfal showed examples of similar artwork at the Farley Center (Green Cemetery) and at the Raven Trail (Woodruff, WI). Drehfal noted that art in a natural space makes a dynamic experience and opens eyes to the beauty of the surrounding environment. She is proposing a small project at DCP noting the benefits of drawing new people into park and region. She envisions unobtrusive and off trail displays, creating a venue in Jefferson County to support the arts. No funds will be necessary. The display will be volunteer labor and bio-degradable materials. It was noted that this could be a way of connecting local schools and students to art and nature. Drehfal would like to install the artwork in the wooded west side (west of Rose Lake). Timeline proposed to be June-October (same calendar year, 2016). She would host an artist tour and reception and will request support from Jefferson County and Friends of Rose Lake. There will be limits to natural and biodegradable materials and limitations on size of sculpture.

Tietz questioned why DCP and not Korth Park noting a concern about keeping DCP in its natural state.

Drehfal – live near the park, Korth isn't as natural at DCP

Payne questioned if there are Artists lined-up and noted that this is a great idea.

Christensen noted he thinks of this as a valid use of a park suggesting a limited number of artists and questioning the issuance of permits to keep color, size and scale in check with the natural surroundings.

Tietz noted that we should consider preventing activity during spring migration.

Wiesmann noted that this area of the park is designated as State Natural Area and he is unsure of any deed restrictions. He also noted that the Friends of Rose Lake and are supportive.

Kelly stated that this is a neat idea and expressed concern for length of display and the ability to weather without degradation of display.

Foelker noted this is a public park, and the committee will have to consider public feedback.

Schroeder noted that an agreement should be in place prior to installation. If public does not like the artwork, it be removed immediately. If in anyway interfering with intended use of park, exhibit will be removed.

Christensen noted that perhaps the project could be located in a less active loop.

Fuller stated the Friends of the GHA are supportive.

Nehmer questioned restrictions.

Wehmeier stated that the County should review applications prior to install.

Nehmer questioned where if the examples were on public lands.

Wehmeier suggested a MOU highlighting issues/concerns as well as a Hold Harmless agreement.

Drehfal questioned if April was reasonable timeline for review of artwork.

Wiesmann requested Drehfal contact landowners (from examples) for Best Management of Proactive.

Payne motioned to move forward with applications for review and to authorize admin to create a MOU.

12. **Discussion on Cappie's Landing**

Nehmer – agreement signed by both County and DNR. Signed access Easement is in process.

13. Discussion on Glacial Heritage Area (GHA) –Friends of GHA

Fuller noted the Friends are working on web redevelopment with DNR and Eric Compass as well as developing interactive recreation map. They are planning a winter fair educational event traditionally held at the Waterloo Regional Trailhead Facility. The Christmas bird count is approaching. The Friends offered the JCSA opportunities to post information on about Fundraisers on their web page.

14. Discussion on Interurban Trail

Tietz noted that he is speaking with We Energies and the City of Watertown. He is working on a contract to open the Interurban Trail from Humbolt St. to River Rd. The City of Watertown is hoping to open and maintain that section of trail in 2016. Ward is working on the contract.

15. Discussion on Donations Received

Information is in the packet.

16. Review of Financial Statements (October, 2015) and Department Update – Parks Department

Nehmer noted that finances are on track. There has been a cost savings by not having replaced the Admin Asst. The Department is working with the County Administrator through the process.

17. Discussion and Possible Action on January, 2016 Parks Committee Meeting

Nehmer questioned if the committee wishes to meet in January.

Tietz stated that Nehmer should contact Tietz one week prior. If action is necessary the committee shall meet. If no action necessary, the committee will not meet.

18. Discussion on Holzhueter Implementation Plan Process

Nehmer noted that County Staff met with DNR, Attorney Ward and Dalhart Holzhueter to discuss the easement associated with the in-holding. At this time the easement ownership is under review and is easily confused. Maps at both DNR and Jefferson County illustrate that the inholding owns the easement.

Ward stated that if DNR owns, then DNR can do as it wishes. Based on final confirmation from DNR lawyers, it is our opinion that the DNR owns the easement.

Nehmer also noted the process for the public comments by DNR during the open comment period has not been defined.

10. Discussion and Possible Action on Snowmobile Bridge Inspection(s)

Moved up to item 10.

Nehmer noted that two significant bridges have been constructed with DNR snowmobile funds and it is difficult to get guidance on bridge inspections. The Johnson Creek Bridge is approx. 15-16 years old (two steel I-Beams at approx. 50 ft with decking) and the Hubbleton bridge is approximately 6 years and has not yet been inspected. The inspections are eligible for funding through the DNR maintenance program. When asked, the State only provided two examples of inspections and noted that snowmobile maintenance funds were used. Costs are estimated for Hubbleton at \$700 (every 5 years) and the Johnson Creek Bridge at ½ or less than \$700. The question before the committee to consider is, bridge inspections are done how often and who pays for them? The two bridges are owned by the County.

Christensen questioned who the principal users are and who would benefit from keeping bridges in tact?

Nehmer noted that the Johnson Creek Bridge is used by snowmobiles, and the Hubbleton bridge is used by the snowmobiles and other users. Funding for the Hubbleton Bridge came from DNR and RecTrails.

Christensen questioned if inspections are a line item in the budget.

Wehmeier noted it is an operational item, reallocate for 2016.

Payne questioned if the Hubbleton Bridge was constructed specifically for the snowmobile program.

Bennett stated that the Hubbleton Bridge is a multi-use bridge and bikers won't pay to use or inspect. During the bridge construction, the last \$10,000 for construction came from the JCSA. Bennett asked why the JCSA should pay to inspect when others use and don't pay.

Christensen questioned how much other use the bridge has.

Wehmeier noted it depends on snow cover.

Kelly stated the need to inspect to prevent deterioration.

Christensen asked if the clubs/alliance would be willing to contribute.

Bennet asked what would the others users anti-up and asked why are we (JCSA) being singled out to pay for some or all of it, noting that if there were no recreation bridge at Hubbleton, there would be the HWY 19 Bridge. Wehmeier noted budgeting for inspection every five years for both bridges.

Payne questioned the maintenance and usage agreements in place at the time the bridge was constructed.

Dave Habeck noted there is no salt use on snowmobile bridges and questioned the need for inspections every five years.

Christensen asked if County Board needs to approve the spending for the inspections.

Wehmeier – no. Finance committee approval.

Schroeder asked if inspections were considered as Maintenance of the trails.

Nehmer stated that he is hopeful that in the future there will be more information as to who is doing what elsewhere in the state.

Wiesmann questioned Bennett on the new legislation for increased fees and how it will change allocations for mileage.

Bennett stated that the CAP Step Program will put funds into the snowmobile fund. At this time, JCSA receives \$250 per mile grooming for state funded trails; this is only 60% of actual costs. The hope is that the \$250 will increase to actual with this new program.

Tietz motioned to inspect the bridges with county paying ½ and the club/alliance pay the other ½ with the estimated costs at \$1,000 for both bridges (\$700 at Hubbleton & \$300 at Johnson Creek). Christensen seconded.

Christensen questioned there is \$500 in Levey funds and \$500 from some other source.

Tietz stated \$500 could come from the maintenance fund.

Christensen stated the payment should come from the maintenance part of the grant funding.

Kelly noted the understanding that the bridge deck at Hubbleton was resurfaced using JCSA funds and questioned if the county should credit the JCSA for part of the expense.

Matt Kramer asked if Hubbleton should be closed in the spring considering the JCSA is paying for the inspection, with \$500 coming from the maintenance money.

Bennett asked what the bicyclists will pay for.

Tietz noted the county share of \$500 covers the other users.

Motion passes on a 5/0 vote.

11. Discussion and Possible Action on Snowmobile Trail Crossings of the Glacial River Trail

Moved to item 11.

Bennett stated the question is at Hwy 18/Hwy 26 By-Pass and the bike trail. The sleds run the trail approx. 250 yards and cross in three places. Bennett noted he was speaking on behalf of JCSA, 18 clubs, 852 members and 3,027 registered snowmobiles. He stated that if the clubs go away, there will be no trail system or economic activity as it is today. There are 350 trail miles in Jefferson County. 182 of those funded from a DNR grant and 168 miles of club trails. The trails are maintained by club members. JCSA has \$348,000 in equipment for grooming of the trails. No tax payer money is spent on the trails. Parks department does not sign or maintain the trails. There is a new trail in Waterloo, connecting to the Glacial Drumlin Trail. Trails are used by snowshoe users, hikers, etc. AWSC consists of more than 600 volunteer snowmobile clubs. The trails existed many years before the bypass. Tried to make suggestions and recommendations and were denied during the development project. AWSC members of JCSA feel we have a statutory right to operate within the WisDOT right-of-way. We were displaced and we are. We will consider maintenance of the specific crossings in the future as long as maintenance is considered and inspected at the beginning and the end of each season.

Wehmeier noted that motorized vehicles not are not allowed on the bike trails per the contract with WisDOT, including the crossings but there are various options to consider. WisDOT is open to considering crossings if the County requests. What do we do to protect the trail? Option 1 – annual assessment with opportunity for maintenance. Option 2 – proactive: epoxy or other? Estimating \$750 (ish) annually? Other coverage options might include plywood, conveyor belts, and epoxy.

Action item A: Exception for crossing at connection points?

Action item B: How to handle potential damage?

Tietz questioned asking DOT for permission to cross.

Kelly motioned to ask DOT for permission for crossings. Foelker seconded. Motion passes 5/0

Tietz questioned how to handle damages and inspections.

Wehmeier stated that the process would include joint inspection with all parties.

Christensen asked what causes the damage to the trails.

Bennett noted that some riders add picks/studs on their tracks which will scratch and scuff the road. Schroeder questioned if epoxy protects from the picks and noted that if the County can afford epoxy it should do that.

Wiesmann questioned the realistic volume on the trail.

Kelly noted to evaluate and inspect in Spring 2016.

Habeck noted that in most years there is enough snow cover to protect the trail.

Christensen suggested asking clubs members to ride with care in these areas and questioned what to do now until approval from the DOT.

Wehmeier noted that he will expedite the request.

Foelker suggested letting this go until spring 2016 to assess and get costs.

Wiesmann noted an interest in the park plan for a bridge and asked if this would be a preferred route.

Jeff Jones questioned if there was a bridge, will the snowmobile clubs have to upgrade and inspect.

Sam Landes (Executive Director WI snowmobile clubs) noted the challenge is that this is a non-self-funded trail and the clubs cannot apply for funding from the program.

Matt Kramer stated he is an avid bicyclist and claimed that the County's mowing equipment does more damage than snowmobiles do. Mr. Kramer also asked why the bikers not pay a fee to use the trail.

Tietz indicated that the County is not allowed to assign a fee for using the GRT via the agreement with the WisDOT.

Matt Kraemer stated that the JCSA is willing to support but the regular users not willing to maintain.

Christensen questioned if allowing the snowmobile access opens the door to other motorized recreational use.

Wehmeier stated the County request would be specific, per map, for this purpose only. Any other uses will not be permitted.

Wehmeier gave the clubs the ok to mark the trails and he will get approval with DOT after county board approval.

Sam Landes noted that in Dane county sleds can cross the trails.

Wiesmann noted the sleds also have to run trail along fence and ditch (at Crawfish River Park) because there is not enough space to run the trail.

Foelker motioned to review the condition of the trails in Spring, 2016 and then move forward. Christensen seconded. Motion passes on a 5/0 vote.

19. **Adjourn**

Foelker motioned to adjourn at 11:20am. Christensen seconded. Motion passes on a 5/0 vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary S Nimm
Program Assistant