

PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES
April 7th, 2009

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Way, Tate, Marcks, Herter, Romberg, Dean, Schultz

OTHERS PRESENT: Mayor Henke, Parks & Rec Director Hoerth, City Administrator Hager, Recreational Coordinator Miller, O'Connell

Chairman Way brought the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

Romberg moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Tate. Motion carried by all.

Way kicked off the meeting by introducing the new citizen members to the committee.

Kyle Fietzer attended the meeting to voice his opinion about the new \$5.00 per non-resident softball player fee for 2009. With the amount of non-resident players on a team the fees could be over \$400 per team. He was concerned that teams would not be able to find sponsors, forcing the teams to drop out. He was also concerned about the ability to find a last minute sub to play if the \$5.00 fee needed to be paid in advance. Way inquired about other cities and their fee structure. Miller researched the topic and found little consistency between the municipal softball league fees. Some have a single team fee, others have a team plus player fee, others charge a higher fee if over 50% of the team is non-resident players. Committee members voiced opinions whether or not the teams would drop with a higher fee or if more teams would join with lower fees. In the end the committee decided to keep the non-resident player fee but drop the team fee to decrease the overall cost to the participants.

Romberg moved and recommend to council to change the softball fee to a team fee of \$275 plus a \$5.00 non-resident player fee. Seconded by Marcks. Motion carried by all.

The city recently received information that Charter Communication has filed Chapter 11 and there is a group of municipalities forming to hire Boardman Law Firm LLP to look into the legality of Charter paying the PEG franchise fees. At this point in time the city was asked to sign a Statement of Interest letter to join this group. The estimated attorney costs will be about \$25,000 split between all the municipalities that join.

Romberg moved to sign the Statement of Interest letter and take the fee out of the cable fund. Seconded by Tate. Motion carried by all.

Hoerth reported that East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission has offered free assistance with updating the City's Open Space & Rec Plan. The committee decided

to accept the assistant as long as the assistance does not drag out the completion of the plan.

Romberg moved to accept the assistance of East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. Seconded by Tate. Motion carried by all.

The committee reviewed a draft ordinance amending rules for city parks. After discussion the committee wanted to add a provision requiring dog owners to pick up after dogs who defecate in the parks. Schultz also suggested that the city places a garbage can in the back loop of Hatten Park during the winter months so dog owners have a place to dispose of the waste.

Romberg moved and recommend to council to approve the ordinance as presented with the additional provision for owners of dogs who defecate in the parks. Seconded by Tate. Motion carried by all.

The committee briefly discussed the matter of renaming Loss Park and decided to carry the topic over to the next committee meeting.

Director's Report:

Dan Kepner started his 11th year with the city of New London on February 16th, 2009.

Hoerth reported on the upcoming Arbor Day celebration on Friday April 24th and the Arbor Day Proclamation will be signed at the next council meeting. Both are requirements for the annual Tree City USA Award.

Hoerth also gave an update on the Rec Software that the department just purchased. Training is complete and this week the baseball/softball coaches began registering their diamond practice online, which so far has worked very well.

The New London Fish & Game Club has informed the city that they will be donating \$5,000 towards one of the fishing piers in the new downtown trail.

Chairman's Report: No Report

Committee Member's Report: O'Connell inquired if the end of the west boat launch was filled in. Hoerth stated that the crews were waiting for the weather to warm up to complete the project and the river rose up before the crews began. The department will watch the river and once it is at a low level to access the bottom of that ramp, the work will be completed.

O'Connell also asked about the back loop of Hatten Park during the winter months. The crews pile up snow to the entrances of the back loop so vehicles cannot access it during the winter season, however a path is plowed so walkers can utilize it. O'Connell suggested putting up a chain instead of the snow piles so emergency vehicles can access

it in the event of an urgent situation. Hoerth thought this was a good idea and will implement this during the upcoming winter season.

The monthly pool & senior center reports were distributed to the committee.

Next Month Agenda Items: Reviewing Loss Park Name

Dean moved to adjourn, seconded by Romberg. The meeting adjourned at 6:55pm.

Chad R. Hoerth
Director of Park & Recreation