



Minutes

Park & Rec Meeting
City Hall – Council Chambers
Monday September 18th, 2023 - 5:15 PM

Park and Recreation www.oelweinparks.org

Call to Order: 5:16 pm

Roll Call: Bouska, Burkhart, Gearhart, Johnson, Jorgensen, Garrigus, Meska, Stasi

Attending: Bouska, Burkhart, Gearhart-arrived 5:20 & left at 5:50, Jorgensen, Garrigus, Meska, Stasi

Absent: None

Approval of Minutes:

- Consideration of a motion approving the minutes of the August 21st, 2023, meeting:

Motion:	Meska	2 nd :	Stasi
Aye:	All	Nay:	None

Citizen Comments: Anthony Ricchio talked to the board about the soccer club. Ricchio stated that a coach is resigning at the end of the season and would like the rec program to partner with the club. Ricchio stated that a parent is ready to step up and help take over the program. Ricchio stated that the cost of insurance is high for the club and with other costs and with the lack of volunteers Ricchio believes the program would work better with the city rec program.

Delong Memorial Bench: Johnson explained to the commission that he met with Florance Delong and she would like to purchase a memorial bench and place it along the trail system. Johnson stated that Delong would like to place the bench at Platt Park on the west side of the trail towards the south side of the wooded area.

- Consideration of a motion approving bench locations:

Motion:	Bouska	2 nd :	Stasi
Aye:	All	Nay:	None

Fee Discussion: Johnson presented the commission with all the fees for the campground, parks, cemetery, and aquatics. Conversation continued about the fees as Johnson provided comparable pricing from other communities.

Recreation Update: Burkhart stated that fall sports practices started which include flag football and volleyball. Burkhart said she has struggled finding coaches this fall, especially with flag football. Burkhart stated that flag football started their first games and volleyball will start their first games this weekend. Burkhart stated that her leg has slowed her down from getting things lined up for this fall. Burkhart stated that information for women’s volleyball has been sent out. The wellness center after school program is moving along with around 20 kids per night which runs until 5pm. Burkhart stated that they are working on staff training and fitness classes are going well. Burkhart stated that yoga in the park is this Saturday in platt park at 9am and talked about little husky basketball.

Aquatics Update: Johnson stated that with the season concluded that they have been busy winterizing the facility. Johnson stated that all the shade structures have been taken down, boards covered, gas shut off and water lines blown out. Johnson stated that they worked on removing the old piping once the facility had shut down for the year. Johnson said that all the overhead 10" pipe and fittings were carefully removed with no issues. Johnson stated that the next phase of the project was to remove the filter which needed to be cut up and removed piece by piece. The sand was removed using the city's vacuum truck which was the second and last time Johnson had to complete that task. Johnson said that Chris J. and Marc B. did a great job cutting the tank up with the gas torch and again removed the structure without issue. Johnson said this was a large project for the guys to complete and saved the city a lot of money by completing it themselves. Johnson said the employees did an outstanding job completing this project in a timely manner and worked through the extreme heat wave that came through in September.

Tree Board Update: Johnson stated that he and a couple of tree board members travelled to Decorah this past month to talk with their city arborist Sam Hogenson. They discussed projects that they are working on and swapped ideas on completing projects. Johnson stated that they travelled to a well site where Sam had constructed a gravel bed recently. Johnson explained that the benefit of a gravel bed is that they can purchase much less expensive dormant bare root trees in the spring and plant them in these gravel beds during the summer. These trees would be removed and planted in the fall for park and boulevard trees.

Johnson stated that they have two large tree plantings coming up in the next month. The first planting is through the community forestry grant they were awarded this past month. This grant is a matching federal grant of \$5k to purchase 70 trees to be planted at Platt Park and at the sports complex. This planting will take place on Wednesday Oct. 4th at 8am in Platt Park. The employees have taken a total of 68 dead ash trees out of this park alone. Johnson stated the second planting is the Trees Forever planting in which they received \$4k to purchase 38 trees to plant in the street boulevards. Johnson stated that this planting will be Wed. Oct. 18th meeting at 8am at the park maintenance shop. Johnson stated that they have been recruiting volunteers for this event and told the commission that if any of them are available they would appreciate any extra help and gave them all a paper with times, dates, and locations.

Parks/Cemetery Update: This month in the park departments the employees have been very busy with various projects. The cemetery crew have had seven full burials and a cremation to prepare this past month. The cemetery crew took down a couple of dead trees and swept the roads on a weekly basis. The employees replaced a few boards on the trail bridge near the complex this month and did some extra tree trimming at City Park. Nate completed some weed spraying and has been sweeping the trails weekly. With the extreme heat, the employees took off afternoons to play it safe for everyone. This month Johnson was awarded a \$455 grant to cover the cost of testing, for taking the certified park and recreation professional certification through the Iowa Park and Rec Association. Dion continues his watering downtown, trails swept, campground staying busy and Steve Horan taking care of shelter reservations.

Both departments were busy working in Wings Park this past month, clearing the waterway north of the arching trail bridge. The employees string trimmed the entire area then went in and cut out any of the scrub trees out of the area. The park employees spent some time weeding and cleaning depot park and watering trees. Carloyn and Craig R. are doing a great job keeping the campground looking great and Steve H. had four more shelter reservations to take care of this week plus bathrooms to clean.

The cemetery employees cleaned up the spoil piles and cleaned out some unwanted small trees growing out of a bush in Memorial A. This month employees moved a tree from Chrysler Park to Vets Park as it was in the way of the sewer project coming through. At Platt Park another large ash tree was brought down as we have been focusing on this park for ash tree removal. The employees took some time to clean vehicles inside and out. Mark took to the north facing side of the building with the power sprayer to keep it clean. On the west trail there was a dead ash tree from the timber area that dropped near Redgate Park that we cleared off. With the extremely dry weather we have been watering trees in parks, street trees and for other departments. The employees completed a playground project last month. The old safety fiber was removed, a new weed barrier was put down and rubber mulch was put down.

The cemetery employees have been working on placing prefab foundations to rotate our extra foundation stock. Notice was put in the paper for cemetery foundations this past week as we will complete our fall pour in the next couple of weeks. The park employees and cemetery employees have both been busy working on taking out dead ash trees out of the parks and grinding stumps. The employees installed foul poles this week in Wings Park, and an old random utility pole was removed this week from Wings Park as well.

Board Member Updates: None

Adjournment: 6:10 pm

Next Meeting: October 16th