



APRIL PARK AND RECREATION MINUTES 2021
PARKS / CEMETERY / AQUATICS / CAMPGROUND / TRAILS

Park and Recreation

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Quorum not met

Call to Order: 5:18pm

Roll Call: Burkhart, Cantrell, Gearhart, Johnson, Jorgensen, Meska, Stasi, Stewart, Taylor

Attending: Burkhart, Cantrell, Gearhart, Johnson, Meska, Stasi

Absent: Jorgensen, Stewart, Taylor

Guest: Jake Blitsch – Blitsch discussed the upcoming block sign project at Woodlawn Cemetery. Blitsch stated that they would like to complete street signs at another time. The posts have been ordered and delivered and will be waiting on the signs through Iowa Prison Industries. Blitsch stated that the posts ran \$900 and the signs are \$800.

Approval of Minutes

- Consideration of a motion approving the minutes of the March 15th, 2021 meeting

Motion: - 2nd: -

Aye: - Nay: -

Park and Recreation Master Plan

- 6 - 10 years - tabled

Cemetery – Block 18/walking bridge removal, 5th ave intersection changes

Motion: - 2nd: -

Aye: - Nay: -

Johnson explained that the footbridge in 18 is not much more than two 24” culverts with some concrete dumped on top of them. Two handrails are constructed out of 2x4’s that were damaged in the tornado and replaced but not safe or appealing. Johnson offered the option of removing the bridge to begin with for safety concerns. That the bridge is rather unnecessary for a short area with bridges on either ends of the block.

Johnson discussed with the board about rerouting the 5th ave road at Woodlawn Cemetery. Currently there is an old planter that had a small tree and overgrown bushes in it before the tornado took them out last March 28th. Johnson proposed eliminating the four separate corner roads and turn the intersection into a normal intersection. This would create cost savings eliminate unnecessary road maintenance, make it easier for snow removal and funeral processions could utilize this road to access the north blocks.

Recreation Report

Burkhart stated that the first weekend of soccer was held and there are 20 teams. Men’s and Women’s softball meeting coming up soon. Burkhart was not sure if there will



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be enough Women's teams to hold a league; Burkhart stated that she would talk with other communities. Rosters for little league and form will be going out soon, diamond schedules and coaches packets going out. Burkhart stated that t-ball and blast ball forms signups are this week. Burkhart stated that she is still looking for diamond maintenance person, coaches and umpires. At the Wellness Center, they are seeing more people returning to the facility, Burkhart stated they are hiring four new staff members. Burkhart said that they have a tennis instructor hired and will hold a clinic this summer.

Aquatics Update

Johnson and Perkins assembled the new tables that were purchased for the aquatic center improvements as part of the bond project. The employees removed the fencing around the front area to make way for trail improvements. This spring the employees attached the slide that was purchased for the zero entry area for the small kids. The parks employees replaced the mulch in the front areas, as it needed to be dug down and freshened up. Johnson stated that Eastern Iowa Surveillance installed a new system with 10 cameras throughout the facility. Johnson has been busy purchasing supplies for the facility including new signage, AED pads/batteries, etc. Johnson stated that the facility is going to look better than ever with all the improvements that they made this past year including the three permabrellas, slide top canopy and guard chair umbrellas. Johnson stated that Peggy Sherrets has been hired to manage the aquatic facility this season and is busy recruiting lifeguards as it has been slow. Johnson stated that most all communities are having many issues recruiting guards to staff their facilities even those that were able to open last season. Johnson stated that they have posted several times on Facebook, posted in the paper, hung fliers in most areas, gone to the high school recruiting staff at lunchtime and emailing/texting past employees. Johnson stated that he has heard many other communities that they are having difficulties finding staff to staff their facilities.

Tree Board Update

Johnson stated that the Oelwein Tree board was the recipient of the Outstanding Group Award from the Iowa Urban Tree Council on April 8th 2021. Johnson stated that the council gives this award to one organization a year in the state of Iowa. Johnson stated that their Trees Forever representative, Patty Reisinger, nominated them for this award and showed them the plaque that he received in the mail.

Johnson stated that the Tree Board has been awarded the Tree City Award again for their work last year planting trees and taking care of the past-planted trees. Johnson stated that they found out they were awarded the Growth Award this year as well. The award is given to organizations that expand their services and introduce new programming for that year. Johnson stated that only 12 communities were given this award in the state this past year. Johnson stated that they turned in the Arbor Day proclamation to City Hall for the next



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council meeting, which is a requirement for the Tree City award each year. Johnson stated that the Arbor Day Planting would be held on April 30th. Johnson stated that they received new tree city signs to put up and flag with an award to commemorate 20 years as a Tree City.

Tree board members include - Jeff Milks, Bill Brownell, Ron Lenth, Kyle Scheel, and Robbie McKeeman with recently retired from the board Tom Fick.

Trails Update

- Segment 1 - Johnson stated that they received another donation of \$4,000 from Brandi and Gerald Hershey, owners of Pizza Ranch. Johnson stated that they are going to be able to do more in person pictures and be able to give donors more recognition as things are getting back to a more normal state. Johnson reminded the board that the contractors dropped all the City trees to comply with the long-eared bat rule. The contractors have returned and are cleaning up the trees. Alliant is busy burying an electrical line to make way for the trail as a part of the 28e agreement the city has with them. Once the stumps have been removed, they will start grading and work on the trail will begin.
- Segment 2 – Johnson stated that planning has being going on for segment two to have it ready for possible grant funding. Johnson stated that he talked with Deloris Richardson about possibilities with their regards to the retaining wall that has become a safety issue to the public. Easements from property owners has been difficult but committee members are plugging away. Johnson talked about the Barker property as a possible acquirement for trail development. Johnson talked about options with the trail in Woodlawn Cemetery with the board.

Parks/Cemetery Report

Johnson gave an update on the Red Gate Park project. Johnson stated that the foundations have been poured and walls poured as well. The plumbers started today on the rough plumbing in the bathroom. Johnson stated that the employees took out the rest of the old swing set that could not be salvaged. The department installed the new swing set and the new stainless steel slide that they were award money from the RJ McElroy Foundation to purchase. Johnson reminded the board that the new shelter structure would cover the existing concrete pad and the new bathroom.

Johnson stated that the City acquired a few more properties over the winter months for the parks department to take care of so the employees spent a day cleaning up those properties. Johnson stated that the new campground doors have been installed and that new electronic door locks have been used as well. Johnson stated that this would eliminate a lot of hassle with the host collecting keys from guests. Johnson stated that the memorial



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bench at the sports complex has been installed and the other memorial bench at Plaza Park will be installed shortly. Johnson attended a park planning class online that discussed trends and adaptations of park departments for the future. Johnson stated that a tree on the SW corner of City Park was cleaned up and disposed of, partially used for campground firewood. Johnson said that they have been maintaining road at parks and cemetery, including grading and patching potholes. Johnson stated that they replaced a headstone that was knocked over by someone at Woodlawn Cemetery. Johnson stated that they received another grant from the Diamond Vogel paint company to use at Levin Park and at Reidy Park. Johnson stated that the employees have taken picnic tables out to all the parks after Jay painted and fixed them up this winter season. The employees placed dirt around some of the park shelters so that they can be more handicap accessible. Johnson stated that he is still short a employee in the park and one in the cemetery departments. They have acquired two more employees that past week and the campground host has started his services. Johnson stated that they reinstalled the grill at Platt Park with the shelter project that they have been working on. The sidewalk will be finished when they pour cemetery foundations in the next couple of weeks. The ad in the paper has been posted for orders for headstone foundations as they have received a half dozen so far, final submission date is Friday the 23rd. The employees have run the water line for the drinking fountain at city park and picnic tables placed neatly in the shelter as well. The park employees took the soccer nets and garbage cans to the complex this week. Johnson ordered Turface for the baseball diamonds and marking paint and chalk for the rec programs. Johnson stated that the park employees are busy taking mulch to the downtown area this week to have it ready for warm weather.

Johnson stated that there would be a couple days of volunteering coming up. Starting on April 21st Upper Iowa University is sending a group down to City Park to help paint picnic tables. On April 25th the Antioch Church will be walking through Woodlawn Cemetery picking up any old unattached decorations, straightening roadside markers and addressing any other issues they see. They will then go to Wings for lunch and further cleaning if needed. On May 7 from 8-12 United Way will bring in over 30 volunteers to complete projects. Johnson has been working with Joe Bouska aligning several people with projects. City Park, Ken's Electric will be working on disc golf course work, Mercy will be sending people to clean and power wash the aquatics facility. Lumber Ridge will put new boards and paint the benches at the log cabin. Veridian Bank will be painting signs, benches, and playground equipment at Platt Park. Transco will be spreading mulch at Red Gate Park. All schools will be taking kids along the trails and picking up branches and garbage.

Board Member Updates - None

Adjournment – 6:15pm

Next Meeting: May 17th, 2021