

**REGULAR MEETING
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
City of Oakdale
March 19, 2019**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Oakdale Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Tuesday, March 19, 2019, at Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Avenue, Oakdale, Minnesota. The meeting was called to order by Chair Bethke at 7:00 PM.

CALL OF ROLL

On a call of roll, the following were present:

Chair: Maxine Bethke

Vice Chair: Janet Cunningham

Commissioners: Jane Klein
Paul Lockhart
Jason Kuchenmeister
James Roettger

Also Present: Colleen Swedberg, City Council
Bonnie Wilson, Oakdale Wellness 50+
Colleen Hermann, Oakdale Wellness 50+
Jeff Koesling, Parks Superintendent
Julie Williams, Recreation Superintendent

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Regular Meeting, February 19, 2019

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER KUCHENMEISTER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LOCKHART TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING OF FEBRUARY 19, 2019 AS PRESENTED.

6 AYES 0 NAYS

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE – Colleen Swedberg

Councilmember Swedberg reported that a replacement member for the Parks and Recreation Commission will likely be joining in May. Interviews will take place next week and the first part of April.

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Councilmember Swedberg reminded the commission that the Landscape Revival Event will take place June 8, from 9 AM to 1 PM at the City Hall Parking Lot.

OAKDALE WELLNESS 50+ – Bonnie Wilson and Colleen Hermann

Bonnie Wilson introduced Oakdale Wellness 50+. They are a group with the purpose of educating people (in Oakdale mainly) about healthy activities, eating, and mental health. The aim is to make wellness fun. The City of Oakdale Parks and Recreation has supported the group of ten volunteers since they started five years ago. Support from Julie Williams, Oakdale Recreation staff, the City Council and Washington County, a few other entities, and use of the Discovery Center space are key to Oakdale Wellness 50+ taking off and becoming the strongest wellness group in the state. Most activities take place at the Oakdale Discovery Center with a few taking place at the Oakdale Library. Wellness 50+ has a page in each Oakdale Update mailed to the residents.

Bonnie Wilson invited the commissioners to join in the group's latest endeavor, a new Oakdale Walks program. A big kick off party will take place April 13 at the Oakdale Discovery Center that will include prize giveaways. Prizes are being acquired by Commissioner Cunningham for the event. She introduced Colleen Hermann, a Wellness 50+ member and fitness expert. She will be at the event demonstrating exercises that help you get ready for walking and leading a trial walk through the nature preserve.

Colleen Hermann presented details on the walk program. The team challenge is nine weeks and will include teams of no more than six members each. They will travel 651 miles at least in a virtual walk around Minnesota. One mile in the walk equates to 15 minutes of exercise. Any exercise counts beyond normal activity. Participants track their own miles using the honor system, with bonus points given for participating in charity or Wellness 50+ events. The program is flexible and inclusive; there are no age or residency restrictions. A family can participate together.

Depending on how many participants there are and their interests, the group hopes to have a number of activities planned throughout the nine weeks. This may include organized walks at the Discovery Center or other locations.

Bonnie Wilson encouraged the commissioners to participate. Teams can register at the launch event or by emailing oakdalewellness50@yahoo.com.

Chair Bethke instructed the commissioners interested in participating to contact Commissioner Cunningham.

PARKS UPDATE – Jeff Koesling

Plowing – Parks Superintendent Koesling reported that crews were still pushing snow last Tuesday from the previous weekend's storm.

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Ice Rinks – After talking to Julie Williams and Recreation Coordinator Nathan Timmons, it was decided that the March 9 snowstorm would end the rink season; later than ever. There were a lot of closed dates. With crews busy plowing, they had to get to rinks when they could. This would sometimes be the same day as a snow event, but sometimes not. The season was good overall.

Recreation Superintendent Williams will bring the ice rink attendance report next month.

Trails – Mr. Koesling will not be clearing asphalt trails if more snow comes this spring. The reason is that the late snow last April damaged 200 yards of trail on Hadley Avenue between 40th Street and the Discovery Center. The machine had sunk with the frost coming out of the ground. It was good they were reconstructing the area. The sidewalks will probably still be cleared in a snow event because they are made of cement rather than asphalt. That will be Public Works Director Bachmeier's call. The blowers alone are 1,600 pounds, on top of the machine on the trail too.

Oakfield Park Playground – Mr. Koesling updated the commission that the Oakfield Park playground equipment was ordered. It will arrive shortly.

Commissioner Lockhart asked the age of the current set at Oakfield Park.

Mr. Koesling estimated mid to late 80's. It has old style metal bars.

Walton Park Warming House – Mr. Koesling has begun talks with a company out of Chippewa Falls that has done warming houses for other cities in the area. A schematic was received for a precast building. We are waiting to see if the prices comes in within our budget. The project can also be done in-house. It depends on what we want. We want the warming house to match the surrounding buildings.

Chair Bethke requested hockey rink attendance numbers for the last five to ten years to find the average use, when the high year and low year was, and if the numbers are going down. The warming house should be multi-use if numbers decrease and with the way winters are going.

Commissioner Lockhart noted the hockey rink project is slated for 2022 in the Capital Improvement Plan.

Commissioner Klein recommended reporting on the last five years and sharing the information with the community development group for their park use plan. She asked for the rinks to be ranked by use, from most to least in popularity.

Mrs. Williams will create a report for the commission. She cautioned the commission that the Walton Hockey Rink is a challenge to maintain ice on, so the use is not always high because skaters can't get on the rink. Skaters play hockey at the Northdale rink.

Mr. Koesling agreed that the condition the Walton hockey rink is in presents challenges. If the Walton Hockey Rink were usable the way that the Northdale Hockey Rink is, the Walton location would be packed. However, if beautiful ice is at Walton Hockey on Monday, if the sun came out on Tuesday morning then there will be concrete in the center. The issue is not from a lack of flooding, but in the way the rink was constructed.

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RECREATION UPDATE – Julie Williams

Annual Indoor Garage Sale – On Saturday from 9 AM to 1 PM, an anticipated 500 shoppers will be coming through. All unwanted merchandise, usually 50 - 75 boxes, is donated to the Disabled Veterans of America.

Artist of the Month – Marilyn Stevens has returned to the art gallery with her paintings of oil, acrylics, and watercolor. She takes pictures that she bases her paintings on.

Family Skating Day – There was not a huge turnout on Saturday, March 9. It was a snowy day. This event can have a huge turnout one year and not the next.

Making Maple Syrup Class – This class was held on March 9 and does well, though we couldn't get to the trees this year due to the deep snow. Instructor Gerry made due and brought the annual class indoors this year.

Indoor Market – The season wrapped up last Saturday. It was a good successful year minus the snow dates that kept shoppers and some vendors away. Marketing incentives included free face paintings for kids and a tote giveaway at the last market. Totes sported the new Farmers Market logo to promote shoppers to transition to the farmer's market that opens in June.

Commissioner Cunningham requested that the Farmers Market hours be changed to end at 6:30 PM so that shoppers could finish at the market and attend the Wednesday night concert after.

Recreation Superintendent Williams responded that the time can be discussed with the vendors to see if they are willing to stay later on concert dates. She will speak to Recreation Coordinator Nathan Timmons about the possibility.

Snow Sculpture Contest – Only seven submissions have been received; shockingly with all of the snowfall. The theme this year is superheroes. The submissions are great. Snow is melting quickly and the deadline is March 29. The winner receives a \$100 Marcus Theaters gift card.

Special Edition Summer Recreation Newsletter – All youth programming is included in the early newsletter that will be available online and in-house in early April. The first day for registration will be April 25.

Snowshoe Season – A lot of snow was lost and the season is wrapping up. Over 50 rentals were good for the program this year. There are around 15 pairs of snowshoes at the Oakdale Discovery Center in kids and adult sizes. The snow had gotten so deep this year it was challenging for snowshoers at times.

Sundae Bingo – On Sunday, April 14, from 1 to 3 PM, we thank Trustone Financial, who will partner and sponsor the event by supplying and serving ice cream.

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Junior Master Gardeners: Seed Starting – On Saturday, April 6, the popular spring program will be presented by Commissioner and Washington County Master Gardener Jane Klein. It is free and for kids.

Community Walk – Starting April 1, the trails may still be a little icy when the regular walkers return to start getting their miles in.

Yoga Meditation Workshop – This class is part of the new yoga meditation series. It will take place on Sunday, April 14 from 6:30 to 7 PM at the Oakdale Discovery Center. There was a great turnout for the first workshop that we hope to have again for the second.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Playground Installation Years – Chair Bethke encouraged commissioners to consider the list of playgrounds and their installation year to be proactive in planning the budget and Capital Improvement Plan. She noted three were installed in 1998 and three in 1999.

Commissioner Klein asked if there are comprehensive plans that are specific to the park. The demographics of the neighborhood are important. The locations with the most children need to be invested in.

Mr. Koesling replied that Community Development will have an intern sent out to monitor parks this summer and see what the usage is.

Chair Bethke described the Master Plan she had received from Mr. Bachmeier with schematic drawings showing what has been done and where. She also has map books from Mr. Koesling. She suggested Eagle Ridge Park, an undeveloped park with a 7.25 acre retention pond, to not be mowed by the city. A buffer between the pond and lawn deters geese, and neighbors will not complain about droppings.

Commissioner Klein added that Eagle Ridge has nothing there, kids rarely play there, and it is currently used as extra yard for the two houses on either side of it. The neighborhood does not enjoy or use it, it is city mowed, and only two homes get use out of it. She recalled that when she moved into the neighborhood, the neighbors were told of how the park would be developed, including having a walking trail. This never happened and the neighbors gathered money for a gazebo, bench, and other items, but it never took off.

Commissioner Swedberg informed the commissioners that the city council will have an intern, and other people, visit parks at different times throughout the day this summer to record who is using the park, what they are utilizing, and at what time. A park will be studied for a week to two weeks. The intern will talk to the park users and ask what they'd like to see at that park.

Commissioner Klein advised that because families, demographics, who lives where, and housing are changing, it is critical to look forward. Funds need to go where the bang for the buck lands. When parks are repurposed, they are not taken away from the residents.

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Farmers Market – Commissioner Roettger related the Farmers Market back to his day job working for the State of Minnesota. A new Farmers Market vendor licensing cycle will begin April 1. Vendors should be able to show a state license or registration upon market arrival. A Cottage Food function defines what vendors are allowed to produce or not. Food safety is important and questions regarding regulations and restrictions can be directed to the Department of Agriculture at 651-201-6027.

Oakdale Update Information Deadline – Mrs. Williams clarified for Commissioner Cunningham that the April 19 deadline for the newsletter mailed to residents in May is the newsletter that includes youth and adult programs combined. This is the one that will include Wellness 50+ programs. It is not the same as the special early newsletter that focuses on youth programs.

Ticks – Commissioner Klein warned about wood tick season with the thaw. Remember to repel ticks, use spray, and do a tick check.

Pete Graske 2019 Arbor Day Tree Giveaway – Commissioner Klein informed that on Saturday, April 27, numbers will be given at 9 AM and trees at 10 AM.

Oakfield Park Spring Planting Phase 2 – Commissioner Klein invited volunteers to sign up to plant trees off Helmo Avenue on May 4 at 8 AM. Details are on the website.

Quorum – Chair Bethke noted that there is a new number of commissioners and the number for a quorum needs to be recalculated.

Mrs. Williams will speak to Sue Barry about the number needed for a quorum.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER CUNNINGHAM, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LOCKHART TO ADJOURN THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION, DATED MARCH 19, 2019, AT 7:48 P.M.

6 AYES 0 NAYS

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Linzmeyer