

**REGULAR MEETING  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
City of Oakdale  
February 15, 2022**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A regular meeting of the Oakdale Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Tuesday, February 15, 2022, at Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Avenue, Oakdale, Minnesota. The meeting was called to order by Chair Lockhart at 7 PM.

**CALL OF ROLL**

On a call of roll, the following were present:

Chair: Paul Lockhart

Commissioners: Jan Cunningham  
Steve Meyer  
Freddie Jiles

Also Present: Jake Ingebrigtsen, City Council  
Jim Romanik, Public Works Manager  
Jeff Koesling, Parks Superintendent  
Julie Williams, Recreation Superintendent

Absent: Glen Giacoletto, Commission Member  
Mark Giannini, Commission Member

Quorum Present: YES  NO

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Regular Meeting Minutes, October 19, 2021**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER JILES, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER CUNNINGHAM TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 19, 2021 AS PRESENTED.**

**4 AYES      0 NAYS**

**NEW PUBLIC WORKS MANAGER INTRODUCTION – Jim Romanik**

The newly appointed Public Works Manager Jim Romanik introduced himself to the Parks Commission. He is looking forward to the new job and challenge, with the position set up with great programs by Brian Bachmeier for Jim Romanik to follow up on, and Jeff Koesling doing a great job over the years with parks.

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Jim started with the City of Oakdale in 1985 as a seasonal employee and work three years seasonally, beginning work full time with a position in the small, combined Streets and Parks Department in 1988. He served 17 years on the crew and was appointed Street and Fleet Superintendent in 2005. After another 17 years, he was appointed Public Works Manager on January 12.

He thanked retired Public Works Director Brian Bachmeier for his 33 years of tremendous service, dedicated time and effort.

Public Works Manager Jim Romanik grew up in Oakdale, attending Oakdale Elementary and Tartan High School. His interest in a parks career started as an eight year old when he wrote a letter to City Council requesting a Guthrie Park Hockey Rink on his block. While his request was shot down, he spent a lot of time at the Tartan Rink, played sports with the Oakdale Athletic Association (OAA), and enjoyed the parks tremendously.

He looks forward to the opportunity to work with the commission and city staff to keep the parks in great shape and making them enjoyable for the future.

Chair Paul Lockhart thanked Public Works Director Bachmeier for his years of service and being a good asset to the City; he will be missed.

Parks Superintendent Koesling came off the crew nine years ago, and shared that Manager Romanik has been the binding of the book between superintendents and that Superintendent Koesling wouldn't be where he is today without him. He is proud to work not only beside, but for him now. Superintendent Koesling thanked Mr. Bachmeier. He added that Mr. Romanik is always there to help and a better person could not have been selected for his position.

### COUNCIL UPDATE – Jake Ingebrigtsen

Remove Golfview from Park Upgrade Consideration – Councilmember Ingebrigtsen, noting the park upgrade selection would be tabled tonight and not a time sensitive issue, had some input to share about possible park upgrades. He told the Commission to remove Golfview from considered parks to recommend for an upgrade. He had talked to the City Administrator. There has been some internal discussion and developer interest surrounding the property. There is not a lot of information to provide without a formal ask, but there's increasing confidence one may be coming.

Chair Lockhart noted the large size of the park.

Mr. Koesling expanded that Golfview is a nice park with low volume use. While he isn't there at night, he has seen a couple daycare moms visit during the day. The flat area was designed for a soccer field but is used by OAA now only as an overflow field. Flag football has also been played. Basketball is used frequently. There is never an abundance of trash.

Baseball Field Shortage – Mr. Ingebrigtsen had two people ask about a shortage of baseball fields in the last two weeks, however had not heard of a shortage during his three years on the Council until now.

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Chair Lockhart explained that ball players may want to use the Walton Park pinwheel more often, however the OAA rules strictly do not allow youth play when alcohol concession is open. The Oakdale Adult Softball Association (OASA) uses two fields a night, three nights a week, and while there are open fields, the OAA sticks to the rule not to mix youth and alcohol. The OAA director works closely with Curt and Todd at the OASA, and has suggested that the adult players condense their schedule to use all four fields, allowing the OAA an extra day of youth play on the pinwheel. It is ultimately up to Curt, who runs a big program with the OASA.

Mr. Koesling added that adult softball participation has been declining over the past ten years.

### **PARKS UPDATE– Jeff Koesling**

Ice Rinks and Warming Houses – The ice season has been great. Not too high of temperatures have made good ice conditions. The forecast looks ideal for another couple weeks, though the sun is getting high and melting roads. There was trouble getting ice established at the beginning with fluctuating temperatures. Ice is desired by Christmas vacation, and was on the verge of that this year. The two temporary warming houses at Walton and Eastside Parks have a nice set up and have not incurred any damage. There was a power glitch impacting two rink shifts at Walton's location. Mr. Koesling thought it was a heater in the trailer causing a trip, but the electrician came out and discovered and replaced a bad GFI. Eastside Park could use a larger temporary warming house in the future.

Superintendent Williams replied to Chair Lockhart's question, answering that the Tartan Area Youth Hockey Association did not rent ice this year. There was only one ice rental.

Superintendent Koesling replied to Chair Lockhart's question, that the Eastside Park light switch is located as a big red button inside a cage. When the button is pressed, lights go on for 45 minutes. A plastic sign was torn off and needs replacement for the rink lights. He replied to Chair Lockhart's additional question that the Walton Rink improvements worked, and ice hasn't beveled out.

Snow Removal – Parks crews help the Streets Department in snow events. Clearing snow on streets takes priority before trails are cleared. Public Works Manager Jim Romanik is also running the Streets Department until a new superintendent is hired.

Summer Seasonal Parks Staff – Mr. Koesling looks forward to hiring and is hopeful for a full summer seasonal staff this year. The department has struggled to hire seasonal positions with Covid-19. Last year had only three seasonal staff.

### **RECREATION UPDATE – Julie Williams**

Spring Newsletter – The newsletter went out in late December, and Oakdale Recreation has been busy taking registrations for programs taking place February through May.

AARP Tax Assistance Site – The Discovery Center appointment schedule is nearly full through April 14 for the popular tax preparation program taking place Mondays and Thursdays, 9 AM to noon.

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Indoor Market – There are a few new late season vendors including Silverboom Coffee, Lucky's Hot Sauce, and Perry Family Farm Veggies and Canned Goods to wrap up the season on Saturdays, February 19, March 5, and 19. Live music by Two Sisters will be featured for the February 19 and March 19 markets.

Snowshoe Rentals – The popular program has had over 55 rentals since December. Rates are \$5 per person for a two hour rental. Youth and adult sizes are available, and reservations are recommended for groups of six or more.

Ice Rinks and Warming Houses – The warming houses are located at Walton, Northdale, and Eastside Park. This has been a really good season. The goal is to stay open through February. Rink Attendant Supervisor Nathan Timmons will provide a final rink attendance report in March.

Artist of the Month – Marilyn Stevens participates annually in the featured artist and art fair programs at the Discovery Center. She sells ink drawings and watercolor paintings.

Snowshoe, Sip and Sample – Last Friday over 75 participants snowshoed the luminary lit trail, played in the vintage game room, and enjoyed hourly prize drawings at the annual event. Thanks to Hy-Vee for providing a variety of appetizers, beer, and wine samples.

Family Snowshoe and Bonfire – Wahoo Adventures who held the Friday event, returned Saturday for the very popular family moon light snowshoe event with over 103 registrations. Last year, the event was held outdoors with Covid-19 restrictions and had over 150 registrations. It came on as a strong program at the Oakdale Nature Preserve.

Best Snow Sculpture of Oakdale Contest – This year's snow sculpture theme is "Snow Castles." Oakdale Recreation will continue to take entries through March 31. The winner will receive a \$100 gift card to Target. Submissions are encouraged soon before we begin to lose snow.

Hiring Youth Summer Program Instructors – Mrs. Williams instructed job seekers to find applications and job descriptions posted online. Starting pay is \$14 per hour. Oakdale Recreation typically has not had difficulty finding staff for seasonal positions with staff returning every year. This year, six to seven are expected to return, and a few more are desired. Those interested can apply through March.

2021 Facility Rental Report – A report was shared for rentals of the Discovery Center and Picnic Shelters over the past year.

Chair Lockhart appreciated the report. The rental report can help inform the Commission when selecting park upgrades based on usage.

Commissioner Cunningham requested that renters of picnic shelters be prohibited from using sticky and explosive confetti. She recalled a mess she cleaned at Eastside when she volunteered for Park Clean Up.

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Superintendent Williams informed that use of silly string and confetti is prohibited by writing in the renter's contract, and acknowledged that the problem is persisting for Park Maintenance and looking into what more can be done.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Wellness 50+ - Commissioner Cunningham reported that Wellness 50+ is updating activities for their First Tuesday in Washington County Parks meet up program. The May 3 program is to be determined, instead of the pollinators theme. On March 29 there will be a Red Cross Blood Drive at the Discovery Center. Appointments must be scheduled by calling 1-800-733-2767. Upcoming events will be posted on the Wellness 50+ webpage.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER MEYER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER JILES TO ADJOURN THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION, DATED FEBRUARY 15, 2022, AT 7:25 PM.**

**4 AYES    0 NAYS**

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Linzmeyer