



Public Works
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OLMSTED COUNTY PARKS COMMISSION

October 16, 2018

2122 Campus Dr SE, Conference Room A

Members Present

Jim Foote
Mary Bearden
Jeff Ihrke
Joel Dunnette
Chris Schad
Phil Wheeler
Gregg Wright
Sophie Truesdale
Claire McLellan-Cassivi

Members Absent

Dawn Littleton
Leslie McGillivray-Rivas

Staff

Karlin Ziegler
Lori Collins

Guests

Mission

The mission of Olmsted County Park Commission is to make recommendations for public County land based on the preservation, quality, and safe environment for proposed or established parks or recreational areas for Olmsted County.

Call to Order – Mary Bearden – Chair called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

Public Comment – None

Introductions – Round robin

Approval of Minutes – Motion by Joel to approve August minutes, Jeff seconded. Motion carried.

Old Business

- Discussion on district vs county representation – after discussion on the By-Laws a couple of wording changes were agreed upon in reference to having diversity on the board i.e. at least one from an urban, one from a city, different ages, and different genders on the board. The commission will agree with whatever our attorney comes up with for wording. If the County Commissioner becomes a non-voting member then reduce the board to 8 members. Mary reiterated that attendance is crucial and the by-laws state that if a member misses more than four meetings in any calendar year they may be removed from the Commission. The commission discussed the enforcement of this rule. In Article IV, Officers, Section 4 change to say the

- County staff shall keep the minutes and records of the Commission; with the assistance of the Parks Commission Secretary as is necessary. Phil made a motion to adopt new language that removes the representation requirements in each district, Chris seconded. Motion carried. Motion was made by Chris to recommend that the County Board Commissioner representation on the Parks Commission be a non-voting member, Phil seconded. Motion carried. Phil made a motion to recommend eliminating the current at large position to bring the Commission to 8 members if the appointed County Board member becomes a non-voting member, Jim seconded. Motion carried. Karlin brought up changing the mileage as we are the only commission that pays for mileage.
- Karlin informed the Commission that the County Board approved PVN to do the conversion process for Olmsted County and determine land replacement property in the County.

New Business

- In Depth Budget Discussion – Karlin explained the need for another Naturalist at Oxbow. She explained that the Naturalist's responsibilities include: being an educator, greater park responsibilities, zoo keeper, and 75% of the training for volunteers, seasonals and interns. The zoo is regulated by the USDA, USDI, Minnesota Board of Animal Health and the DNR and the paperwork takes a lot of staff time. With the additional/increased fees for Doc's Recovery House, classes and shelter rental these monies will cover 75% of the new staff member's wages. Chris made a motion to recommend the endorsement of the BDR for 1 FTE and Joel seconded. Motion carried. Karlin explained that Parks is trying to increase the number of seasonals to get back to the 2015 number of seasonals. After discussion Joel made a motion to support the increase in staffing to the 2015 level and Phil seconded. Motion carried. After discussion Phil made a motion to approve the BDR parks equipment budget request and Mary seconded. Motion carried.
- In Depth Nature Center Discussion – There will be a COW (Committee of the Whole) on December 6th and FOX and Parks Commission members are welcome to attend. 3 options will be presented to the County Board – 1. Expand current building 2. Build new building 3. Create a regional event center. Chris made a motion to recommend endorsement of the request for Nature Center design funding by HKgi and Jeff seconded. Motion carried.

Chairperson Report – None

Superintendent

- Capital improvement planning
- Master Planning
- Biermann House RFP process for conversion consultant – extended closing date until August 15th
- Conservation Building committee and staffing during the fair
- Land survey on tax forfeited parcel near Oronoco to determine conservation status

Staff, Friends and Board Reports

Campus Shop

- Work at Chester Woods constructing camper cabin
- Pruned trees at 2118 & 2117, watered trees around campus
- Weed control around campus and poison hemlock spraying at OWEF

Chester Woods

- Camper cabin construction and landscaping
- Installation of picnic shelter signs for rentals
- Prairie seed collection and invasive species control for wild cucumber
- Prep for fiber optic installation into the park and campground

Oxbow

- Continued installation of public fencing in the zoo
- Invasives control of wild cucumber
- Stone work on the prairie dog/badger exhibit
- Black bear annual check-up – she's all good!
- Nature Center design meetings with HKgi

Commission Members Reports and Comments – Jim reminded everyone of the Chester Woods Work Day on Saturday, October 27th with a potluck.

Lori will send out a survey on the date for next month's meeting as the 20th is the week of Thanksgiving.

Next Meeting – November 20, 2018, 5:00 pm at 2122 Campus Dr SE, Conference Room A.

Adjournment – Motion by Joel, second by Jeff to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 6:41 p.m.