

CHISAGO COUNTY PARK BOARD  
OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
Thursday, May 19, 2016

At 3:00 pm, Thursday, May 19, 2016, Chairman Kaiser called the meeting of the Chisago County Park Board of Directors with the following members present: DuBose, Kaiser, Sicheneder; absent: Carlson, Sutcliffe. Also Present: Mike Robinson, County Commissioner; Park Director Laird Mork; Kurt Schneider, Environmental Services/Zoning Director; Ken Roberts, Chisago County Planner; and Deb Johnson, Meeting Recorder.

Director DuBose offered a motion to approve the Agenda for the Board of Directors meeting, second by Sicheneder and **carried unanimously**.

Director Sicheneder offered a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of April 21, 2016, second by DuBose and **carried unanimously**.

The Chisago Lakes Area America's Best Communities proposal has advanced to the final eight communities who will compete in April 2017. One of the ABC's initiatives is supporting a water trails project throughout the Chisago Lakes area lakes. No action taken.

The Park Director updated the Board on park operations maintenance issues. Repairs at Fish Lake include: install drain tile and additional recycle/gravel to the parking lot, correcting the shifting concrete at the shelter. Lack of STS crew has put lawn maintenance in all the parks behind schedule. The bank in Harris will be closing mid-June. After review of all options, a savings account will be opened at Associated Bank in North Branch. Discussion held on the status of the crack filling contract issued last year for the Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail. Due to the deficiency in the work, the park board wanted additional material added to the sections that were filled. As the County has been awarded a grant to repave no additional crack filling will be completed beyond that completed in Fall of 2015. A portion of the trail was completed along with the parking lots/stripping. It was the consensus not to have further work completed and make final payment on the contract based on the work completed. Grant funds have been awarded FY 2017 for complete resurfacing.

Discussion was held on the National Recreation Park Association Field Report and performance benchmarks. The report shows that communities generally have about 9.5 acres of park land per 1000 residents. Chisago County has 8.5 or 14 if you were to include trail lands. Communities generally spend 76.44 per capita, Chisago County spends under \$5.00 per capita.

If you include grant funding and or local match funding that the County is providing for projects that number would need to be adjusted. The report indicates generally there is 1 park for every 2,277 residents. This would equate to 23 parks. At the time of the report it was unclear if this includes state, city and township parks?

Park funding levels will affect the rate at which improvements might be accomplished. In comparison between Chisago County and other communities the report comparison identifies that Chisago County spends much less on parks and trails and programs than others. Director Dubose asked that a link to the report be provided to the park board members for closer review.

The University of Minnesota plans on completing a state wide survey of trail users in Minnesota. Due to lack of staff, they are asking if county staff would be available to assist with the survey on the Sunrise Prairie Trail. The University of MN would reimburse the county for staff time.

An update was given on the recent Water Trails Summit held in the Chisago Lakes Area by Director DuBose. The ABC group has contributed \$9,000 towards completion of the water trails. Director DuBose

volunteered to be part of the core group, along with John Olinger, Lindstrom City Administrator. The Rotary will assist with trailhead development for the project at the Chisago Lakes Chamber park. Discussion was held on options for primitive camp sites at KiChiSaga Park accessible via water only. Various options are being explored, including the use of the Conservation Corp next year, to assist with Sunrise River clearing. A plan would need to be approved by the County Board. No action was taken.

Discussion was held regarding the Schlimmer's Slough parcel on Green Lake. There is potential for purchase of the property through the Trust for Public Land using the Larsard Sam funds. There would be no requirement of county funding for the acquisition of the property. The Park Board believes this is natural area with good proximity to the population center that is worth protecting. Director DuBose offered a motion to support the Trust for Public Land's acquisition of Schlimmer's Slough parcel and accept the parcel for reserve land, and submit to the County Board for their approval. Second by Director Sicheneder and **carried unanimously**. Director DuBose left the meeting at 4:32pm.

The Park Director updated the Board on the Swedish Immigrant Trail East End Project. Next week the third bridge will be installed. Several areas of the trail require additional work due to settling or soft areas. Deadline for completion is June 24 according to the contract with Dresel and June 30<sup>th</sup> according to the contract with MN DNR. Discussion held on the MN State Park's transition plan, included fencing by the MN DNR with a gate providing access to their hiking trail network within the park including an overlook of the St. Croix River Valley. A meeting will be held in June at DNR headquarters to discussion further connection to Taylors Falls City Hall and the community center. Negotiations continue with land owners for land acquisition to complete the next segment of the trail.

Discussion was held regarding the LCCMR funding request and process "Interstate State Park Trail Project". No significant feedback has been provided to date on the chances of success.

The Park Director updated the Board on the ability to accept credit card payments for park shelter reservations once training has been completed.

The next meeting date was scheduled for Thursday, June 16, 2016.

#### **CHRIS WILL BE ABSENT AT JUNE MEETING**

On motion by Sicheneder, the meeting was adjourned at 4:43pm.

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Dan Kaiser, Chair

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Laird Mork, Park Director