

**PARKS & RECREATION BOARD  
VIDEO CONFERENCE  
JUNE 17, 2020**

Video conference participants: Jim Anderson, Julie Asmus, Rick Fagerlie, Tom Gilbertson, Rand Middleton, Andy Ogdahl

Staff present: Rob Baumgarn, Britta Diem, Curt Hein, Ryan Scheffler, Alex Sobieck

Chairman Jim Anderson called the meeting to order. Rob called roll call. Jim asked for a motion to approve last month's minutes. A motion was made by Andy Ogdahl, seconded by Tom Gilbertson to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

**Summer Rec Programming:** Alex Sobieck talked about youth programming which is scheduled to start on June 22. Programs consist of baseball, softball, soccer and sports sampler. Jon Konold is offering football camps and Amy Morrell is offering tennis. Once programs start, the kids will be divided into groups and will stay with the same group throughout the summer.

Ryan Scheffler talked about Adult Recreation which has not been approved by the governor. He is hoping we will be able to have games starting July 6. Ryan stated that field use is very busy. Summer ice is being worked on and hopefully should be open next week. He stated that he is getting a lot of shelter calls so he is hoping they will be opened up soon.

Rob said the Mark from Commercial Refrigeration was here to walk staff thru the startup procedure. He stated that the Blue Line Arena was 80 degrees last night and was 24 degrees this morning, using one compressor running at 75%. Mark complimented us on the design and upkeep of the compressor room and said we have one of the top 10 refrigeration systems in the state.

Britta Diem spoke on the Splash Pad which opened on Tuesday. There are 3 to 4 lifeguards working at the splash pad keeping track of social distancing. Some bikes have been put out and more will be going out soon. Willmar has received the Bronze designation for a bike friendly community.

Rob spoke about the pool which was discovered to have a couple of leaks when it was filled. We have someone coming in to take a look at what needs to be done. Curt Hein said a company will be coming this week hopefully to run pressure tests on the lines to find exactly where the leaks are. Curt said he is aware of at least three leaks.

**Four Season Shelter:** Rob stated that the DNR is coming out on Thursday, along with the Greater MN Parks & Trails Commission to do a final inspection of the shelter. After that, the DNR should approve and we would get the final portion of the grant money. Curt stated that most everything is in place. Jeff, the custodian, will be cleaning the shelter in preparation of renting. Julie Asmus asked about the grass. She had heard that sod was planted and turned brown and that someone had damaged some sprinkler heads. Curt replied that grass seed had been planted. There is a fibrous material added to the grass seed to keep moisture in which is a bright green. That loses its color as it rains which explains the brown that was being seen. He stated that grass is beginning to grow and the fence protecting the area will be taken down shortly. Curt said that there had been some damage to sprinkler head which has been repaired and hopefully the problem won't occur again.

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**Invest in Willmar:** Rob updated the Board. The Robbins Island project is up for bid, and should hopefully start late July, early August. The City Council approved the Swansson field project at \$2 million. The project should happen this fall. The plans are over budget so the committee need to prioritize their needs and wants. He stated that because of some of the schedules and processes that need to be completed, there may need to be a special Park & Rec Board meeting scheduled.

Rob stated that the other projects, ie the Event Center and recreation fields are on hold right now. The committee is going to recommend to the City Council to approve \$2 million for the locker room and meeting space. The Rec Fields committee is going to recommend to the Council to approve the full \$6 million for turf, softball fields and bubble. They do need to develop a priorities list for the project. Jim asked if the committee had decided on Orange or Blue for the upgrades. Rob stated that because of the cost, it was 95% decided to work on Orange.

**5 Year Park Equipment Replacement Plan:** Rob asked that Board members look at the map so a discussion can be held at the next meeting regarding where new equipment should be placed when funding is available.

**Recreation Assistant Position:** Interviews for Becky's position were put on hold due to Covid-19. Now that Park & Rec is opening up registrations for summer programming, this position needs to be filled. Rob stated that it is being presented to the Labor Relations Committee on Monday and, then to the City Council the following Monday. The people who were set up for interviews originally will be called to see if they are still interested. If not, the applications will be looked at for suitable candidates. Rob is hopeful to have someone hired by the end of July.

Jim asked when the City Auditorium will be open and, if the Arena is open to summer ice, would that mean people can come in to register for programs. Rob stated that West Central Hockey is leasing the building. Staff is sometimes working outside the office, either in the field or at home. He said we are getting quite a few calls asking when the Auditorium, Community Center, shelters, etc will be open. We explain that, until we get authorization to open, the facilities will stay closed.

**Board Announcements:** Jim said he listened to Rob and City Administrator Brian Gramentz on Open Mike with J P Cola and complimented Rob on a job well done.

Julie Asmus asked what the status was on the sprinklers and water softener at the destination playground. Rob stated that the water softener was installed earlier this spring. Curt said the misters are on and using the softened water from the four season shelter.

The next Board meeting will be July 15, hopefully at the four season shelter.

As there was no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Andy Ogdahl, seconded by Tom Gilbertson. Motion carried.