



**Carver
County
Parks**

11360 Highway 212 West, Suite 2
Cologne, MN 55322

**Park Commission Meeting
Wednesday, February 13, 2019**

**Carver County Public Works Headquarters
11360 Hwy 212, Cologne, MN 55322
Conference Room #2**

Regular Meeting 6:30 p.m.

- 1) Call Meeting to Order, Roll Call (6:30 p.m.)
- 2) Election of Officers (6:31 p.m.)
- 3) Approval of the January 9, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes (6:35 p.m.)
- 4) Additions or Deletions to the Agenda (6:35 p.m.)
- 5) Approval of Agenda (6:36 p.m.)
- 6) Commissioner Liaison Report (6:36 p.m.)
- 7) Open to the Public (6:40 p.m.)
- 8) Park Commission Orientation Presentation (6:45 p.m.)
- 9) Old Business (7:00 p.m.)
 - a. Customer Service Scenarios Without Entrance Fees
- 10) Staff Reports (7:30 p.m.)
 - a. Waconia Event Center
 - b. Lake Waconia Regional Park
 - i. Construction Planning
 - c. MN River Bluffs Slope Failure
 - d. TH 5 Arboretum Regional Trail Connection
 - e. Park System Operations & Recreation Services Update
- 11) Commission Member Reports (8:00 p.m.)
- 12) Set Next Meeting Date (8:05 p.m.) –March 13, 2019
- 13) Adjourn Meeting (8:15 p.m.)

Please note if a Commission Member cannot attend the meeting, please call the Park Office at 952-466-5250.

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**Carver
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Cologne, MN55322

MEMO

TO: Members of the Park Commission
FROM: Martin Walsh, Parks and Recreation Director
SUBJECT: Election of Officers
DATE: February 7, 2019

County Ordinance, which established the Parks Commission, states that the Commission shall meet during the second month to elect officers. Positions of Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary (Secretary need not be a member of the Commission) are to be opened for nominations.

Recommendation:

Proceed with nominations and election for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair. County Park Staff can fill the position of Secretary, as we have done in the past. Voting can proceed by show of hands or by written ballot, whichever the Commission is most comfortable with.

Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2019

Members Present: Jim Manders, Gerald Bruner, Curt Kobilarcsik, John Fahey, Mark Lagergren, Jim Boettcher, Scott Welvaert and Commissioner Lynch

Staff Present: Marty Walsh, Sam Pertz, Connie Keller

Call to Order: Manders called the meeting to order at **(6:30p.m.)**

Welcome New Member Scott Welvaert and returning member Mark Lagergren: (6:30p.m.)

Park Commission members and staff introduced themselves and gave a brief introduction of themselves and history with the park commission. Staff also introduced themselves and how long they have been with the parks department. Welvaert introduced himself to members and staff.

Approval of Minutes: **(6:34p.m.)**

Bruner motioned to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2018 regular meeting minutes Kobilarcsik seconded the motion.
Motion passed 7 to 0.

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda: **(6:35p.m.)**

Staff revised agenda by adding new business item, introduction of new park commission member.

Approval of Agenda: **(6:35 p.m.)**

Brunner motioned to approve meeting agenda.
Kobilarcsik seconded the motion.
Motion passed 7 to 0.

Commissioner Liaison Report: **(6:35p.m.)**

Commissioner Lynch shared the effort that has gone into the first two large special use groups for the Event Center and stated that hopefully going forward things will go smoother after this year's events.

Staff shared with park commission members one of the items that they have been struggling with when setting these groups up at the Event Center has been the insurance requirement which the County's insurance provider requires, and also the townhall model that we are using is not what these groups are used to. Staff stated that when Lancer took care of the events at the Event Center they had the necessary insurance for these groups. Now that we have gone to a townhall model, groups are responsible for handling the insurance requirements.

Questions or Comments:

Manders asked, how much does the insurance cost; Staff stated that it is dependent on what type of services provider you are. This will determine the cost of insurance. Discussion on insurance coverage was had and the insurance requirements.

Fahey asked if people using the shelters are required to have this type of insurance and if so is this driving people away from renting the shelters; Staff explained what type of group would need to have this type of insurance. Fahey stated that this message might be getting out to the general public and keeping people away. Discussion was had on this topic and who is required to have the insurance.

No other Questions or Comments.

Open to the Public: (6:46 p.m.)

None Present

Old Business (6:46 p.m.)

a. Review comments 2020 Parks and Open Space System

Staff shared the comments from the 2040 Comprehensive Plan; staff stated that we should see the responses from the comments in the next few months. Staff shared some of these comments from the parks, trails and open space chapter. One of the comments was investigating consolidation with Three Rivers Parks District, staff elaborated on this comment.

Staff shared a map of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan with the parks and trails in the county. Staff shared the parks and trails that the county manages and other property's that are managed by other entities. Staff shared the comments made by Metropolitan Council concerning inconsistencies with the Regional Parks Policy Plan, primarily referencing possible future trail additions not currently recognized by the Council. There is also inconsistency with labeling or identifying trails and trail search corridors.

DNR staff suggested adding Tiger Lake to the map and a statement in plan regarding snowmobiling in Carver County.

City of Victoria acknowledges all the regional trails that pass through the city, but they have pointed out one of the trails is mislabeled.

Three Rivers Park District provided comments clarifying Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail; plan indicates Lake Minnetonka but not the Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail (LRT). Also the section of the Crow River Regional trail from Wright County in Carver County is hard to see on the map and asking to be labeled better.

City of Watertown requested clarification on Crow River RT alignment through the city.

City of Waconia requests coordination on any future lighting at Lake Waconia Regional Park. They envision a walkway to the park. Also city is planning a trail connection along Carver Creek to Miller Lake.

Staff also shared locations of possible future areas of trails, for future years.

Some of the other comments made included Hwy 25 and or Hwy 284 be widened, Metropolitan Council requested overlaying a map showing the Regional Bikeway Transit Network in relation to the network of off-road and on street bikeways including existing planned connections. Discussion was had on comments on riding the shoulders of some of the roads in the County and what roads have wider shoulders.

Norwood Young America requested development of a non-motorized trail to Baylor Regional Park.

No Questions or Comments

New Business (7:04 p.m.)

a. Special Use Permit request for Lions Wild Game Feed

Staff shared details for the permit request for the Lions Wild Game Feed to be held at the Lake Waconia Event Center on February 2, 2019. Staff shared the particulars of this event size of group, low impact on the park property due to time of year, working on getting COI. Staff stated two of the significant elements of this group is the gambling element and possession of firearms on park property which is against park ordinance. These two items require County Board approval.

Staff shared fees associated with this group and that it has been held at the event center 10+ years.

Staff feels that the townhall model is cumbersome for groups.

Staff is looking for Park Commission recommendation to approve permit.

Bruner motioned to approve permit to the Lions Club Wild Game Feed.

Lagergren second the motion.

All in Favor Motion passes 7 to 0.

Questions or Comments:

Manders asked if Lancer was doing this event; Staff stated that they are not.

Manders asked about the fee being charged and if this includes insurance; Staff stated no, that does not cover any outside services. It would be up to the person having the event.

Fahey asked if the charitable gambling has been approved by County Board; Staff explained the process with the County Board. Staff stated that they did pull the permit with taxpayer services.

No other Questions or Comments

Discussion (7:13 p.m.)

a. Consideration to Eliminate park Entrance Fees

Staff shared that at a recent board meeting, the topic came up to eliminate park entrance fees. The board did not vote on this but staff received direction to explore what this would mean if entrance fees were eliminated. Staff shared the approximate revenue generated by entrance fees from parks permits, group use fees, veteran's fees, and special use fees. Staff stated that past communications have discussed how park entrance fees are felt to be a barrier and that Three Rivers District does not charge a fee to go into their parks.

Staff stated that they have been directed to develop a recommendation for consideration to eliminate entrance fees and an implementation plan to be considered by the County Board. Staff will develop service options and an implementation strategy. Staff stated that we would still need seasonal staff for park counts at the parks which is required for grant funding, as well as for Lake Minnewashta Regional Park to monitor boat traffic per City of Chanhasen regulations on parking, and having gate staff for visitor contact when shelters are being rented.

Staff stated that we will need to roll this out in a manner that will not cause a lot of work with refunds or proration or permits. Staff will have to work on a good marketing strategy.

Staff thinks eliminating the fee could increase usage at the beaches, dog park, and camping. This may mean that there are impacts related to increased park use.

Questions or Comments:

Manders asked if there would be any fees for use of the dog park, beach; Staff stated that if the County Board is giving us this option to not charge fees, they might not like that we would replace one fee system for another. We don't have the infrastructure to enforce a valued added fee type of service similar to Three Rivers Park District.

Manders asked if there would be any type of rental fees that would increase. Staff stated that we might increase canoe or kayaks, not necessarily in camping.

Discussion was had on group fees and if there would be an increase of scouting group or larger groups coming into the parks and what the process might be for these groups or will there be a different cost for these groups.

Bruner commented that if the dog park is already full, how would you control more people coming to the dog park. Staff stated that this could be an outcome of not having a fee to enter the park.

Kobilarcsik stated that he would like to see this, but as the county grows is the park missing out on revenue. Lynch stated that not having gate staff would help offset the revenue loss because you wouldn't need the dollar amount for gate staff in the budget. Lynch also stated that there is a lot of pressure and confusion on not paying for Three Rivers Park and having to pay to get into our parks. It would be a great PR move for the County Board.

Staff shared information on other parks that don't charge admission fees and the parks that do charge. Staff stated that they don't see Washington or Anoka County Parks moving away from charging admission fees for their parks. Staff also stated that Three Rivers Parks raises revenue through property tax money.

Staff stated that this would be a great move for Carver County. Perhaps people would be willing to support parks with a small property tax increase.

Boettcher asked how we would roll this out; Staff stated we will need to work on this and how we would roll this out once the board approves this. Staff explained a possible options on how we would do this. Discussion was had on possible roll out.

Discussion was had on the fee's Three Rivers Parks charges on certain things in there park.

Staff stated that we will come up with a strategy which could include addressing increased use of the parks. A strategy will be developed for the park commission to consider and make recommendation to the County Board.

Staff Reports: (7:46 p.m.)

A. Waconia Event Center

Staff shared that the market analysis and stakeholder meeting have been completed. Staff stated that they have decided to change course a bit and decided not to do a general survey due to people not having knowledge of the building. Funds to do a survey would be better spent on estimating costs pertain to possible building improvement options.

Staff presented options for developing cost estimates scenarios:

- Make upgrades to maintain facility as is operates now.
- Make upgrades to attract a new operator include a new kitchen/caters kitchen.
- Reprogram existing facility – renovate to add spaces for parks and rec, community programming.
- Cost to replace facility for 300 person seated events
- Demolish facility

Providing costs will be more useful for decision makers. Staff also stated that getting feedback from people that have never been to the building is not likely to yield creditable information.

Questions or Comments:

Manders asked who will be developing these costs; Staff stated that the consultant will be.

Fahey asked would we be comfortable accepting the consultant costs; Staff stated that staff is not coming up with the numbers and if we have questions on certain things they would have to tell us. Fahey asked will we be giving the consultant certain parameters to follow or go by when doing this study. Discussion was had on possible parameters and intangibles.

Bruner asked if we should attract people that just need a larger space and not necessarily having food or drink.; Staff stated that would lead to the renovating the space for community programs.

Kobilarcsik stated that they found the building structurally sound. What do we need to do to make it more attractive so people would want to rent it if the county invested in the building. Things like a deck or patio that overlooks the lake, more windows not just changing a few things that are worn out.

Manders asked if there is a time line on this; Staff stated that we are meeting this week, hope to have something by end of month.

Fahey asked about the town hall model and are we making upgrades to make a better run town hall model; Staff stated that the this model is a interim operation plan until August and may not be the best model for a building of this size. The town hall model is not a long term solution for this building. A longer term plan will have to be considered.

Lynch stated anything we do, we will be criticized because it might not be what they want.

Lagergren asked what the timeline on this is; Staff stated that we should have some cost by end of month.

Bruner asked when Lancer left where do they hold there events now; Staff stated that they are a larger operation and that they cater to schools, zoo's and golf courses. Staff stated that most of the business was coming from locals and community events. They weren't bringing business in from other parts of the metro.

No Other Questions or Comments

B. Lake Waconia Regional Park
i. Construction Planning

Staff shared that the consultant is working on the grading plan and now are working with the City of Waconia for the trunk sewer line that will be coming through the park. This work will be wrapped up in our project and will be bidding this out together for work to start late summer early fall. Work continues on drainage and storm water ponds.

Staff shared that the consultant is working on the plaza design and Coney Island restrooms. Staff shared a couple different layouts of what the park might look like and the potential layout of the park and facilities. The consultant is working on what the buildings might look like and cost estimates.

Staff stated once we start grading, we will remove the existing shelter and restroom and we will need to provide the County Board options for the park. They are also looking at traffic flow patterns within the park as it relates to concessions and rental operations.

Staff has provided feedback and the consultant will comeback with other concepts.

Questions or Comments:

Manders asked about how much experience the consultants have; staff stated that they have quite a bit of experience and shared buildings that they have designed. Staff stated that what attracted them was there outdoor seating experience.

No other Questions or Comments

C. MN River Bluffs Slope Failure

Staff gave a review of this project and shared the location on map. Staff shared that funding source on this project and the exchange of property for funds. Staff stated that the HCRRA wants us to acquire the Lake

Minnetonka RT in the process and we have told them we want to keep the two separate. Staff stated that the funding for acquisition is running out and we need to move forward with project. Staff also shared information on the mortgage on this project and the process of this mortgage.

Staff stated they are going to ask the board to approve the agreement contingent on attorney and risk departments' approval. Staff shared information also on the LMRT.

Questions or Comments:

Kobilarcsik stated that we are coming up on five years for this trail to be closed and it seems to drag on and on. This would be a great project to get done. Staff stated this has been a long process. It makes the county look bad. People don't understand that we don't own the property but are trying to partner to fix the problem.

No other Questions or Comments

D. TH 5 Arboretum Regional Trail Connection

The project memorandum is nearing completion, there is significant impacts on the wetland corridor and working through this. Staff has met with City, Arboretum, Life Time Fitness and updated them on progress. The cultural resource discovery is delaying this project. We are going to ask for some project year extension from the Technical Advisory and Planning Committee. Additional, a memorandum of agreement is being considered with the cultural resource unit with MNDOT. This may allow the project to go forward. Staff shared on a map the locations of cultural resource discovery.

Staff hopes to have more information by next month.

Questions or Comments:

Manders asked about the wetland impacts; Staff stated that we may have to purchase wetland credits.

No other Questions or Comments

E. Park Operations & Recreation Services updates:

Staff shared that the 2019 opening of camping didn't go as well as expected. We have had to close the on-line reservation system down until later this week, most people got what they had wanted.

Grant application is in the works for the Phase 1 for an interpretive plan for Coney Island. We will start our recurring contract work for goose mgmt., lifeguard services, graphic design, etc. We will start hiring for summer staff soon.

Projects for 2019 could include an fee-less entrance system, the development of Coney Island interpretive plan and related grant application, implementation plan for access to Coney Island.

Recreation services has been struggling with the lack of winter conditions and has had to reschedule or cancel events. This makes things challenging.

Services area goals includes, cost recovery model, scholarship program, voyager canoe programing.

Staff shared a picture of a scout group that had us come out to do an archery program during there recruitment night.

Commission Member Reports: (8:32 p.m.)

Manders attended a community education meeting with Chaska Rec people. They are aiming to become a bike friendly community.

Next Meeting Date: (8:33 p.m.)

Next meeting will be on February 13, 2019. Meeting will be held at Public Works building in Cologne at 6:30p.m.

Adjourn Meeting: (8:34 p.m.)

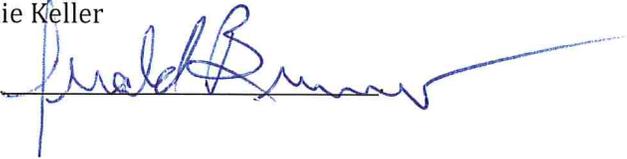
Lagergren motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Fahey seconded the motion.

Motion passed 7 to 0.

Final Minutes prepared by Connie Keller

Approved by Commission Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Frank B...", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is cursive and extends to the right with a long, thin stroke.



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MEMO

TO: Members of the Park Commission
FROM: Samuel Pertz, Parks & Recreation Supervisor
SUBJECT: Consideration to Eliminate Park Entrance Fees – Service Scenarios
DATE: February 7th, 2019

This memo is intended to further brief the Park Commission about the requested consideration to eliminate park entrance fees by members of the County Board.

Background:

Customer contact services have been provided at each of the three regional park areas operated by Carver County. The level and type of services vary based on park amenities, park use and other similar factors. Examples of services provided are: directional information; permit fee collection; user counts; rental programs (winter & summer equipment at both Baylor & Minnewashta parks); general customer service to address complaints and service needs (“there’s dead fish on the beach” OR “the trash cans need to be emptied in the shelter I rented” etc.) as well as general public relations or interactions with park users.

The majority of customer service is applied from Memorial Day – Labor Day for each of the three parks. Overall efficiencies found in the broader management of the Parks Department seasonal staffing budget, have allowed for the labor hours for both rental programs and user count work have been part of this service budget – they are further outlined below.

Each park area has different customer service programs based around specific characterizes.

Baylor Park: Campground, weekend customer contact for picnic shelter and community room facilities, Minnesota Astronomical Society services, equipment rental programs (both winter & summer seasons) and second highest service needs amongst the three park areas.

Waconia Park: Customer contact Monday – Sunday, high demand for beach facility, due to minimal development - has lowest service needs amongst the three regional park areas.

Minnewashta Park: Customer contact Monday-Sunday, picnic shelters, beach, off-leash dog area, public boat access monitoring parking capacities, equipment rental programs (both winter & summer seasons) and highest use amongst the three park areas.

Core Information:

Existing Model = 2018 services (Cost to staff this model is \$35K).

Revenue Generated from Entrance Fees = \$170K (annually).

Increase in General Fund Contribution = the calculation of entrance fee revenue, less reduction in service expense.

Operational Expense Reduction = the difference between shown scenario & existing model.

***User Counts** = \$2,300 in cost annually (Are required by the Met Council to satisfy requirements for operations and maintenance grant funding).

Please see the attached table illustrating the existing model of customer services, in addition to four service scenario options. Corresponding financial information based on the definitions above is provided. Note: The scenarios shown are not the only options that could be assembled.

Pros and Cons for each of the scenarios include, but are not limited to:

Existing Model

Pros: High level of service continues to be offered, user counts are conducted, maintains peak operational effectiveness related to customer service, equipment rental programs continue, retains resources that might be needed to maintain park areas with anticipated increase use.

Cons: If entrance fee collection were eliminated, it would require the greatest contribution of general fund resources to offset revenue of entrance fees.

Scenario A

Pros: Requires the least amount of general funds contribution to eliminate entrance fees, provides basic services at highest use park areas, user counts are conducted.

Cons: No customer contact, public expectations might be problematic, equipment rental programs cease, unanticipated customer services needs not addressed timely at Baylor and Waconia.

Scenario B

Pros: Requires the 2nd least amount of general fund contribution to eliminate entrance fees, provides basic services at highest use park, user counts are conducted, equipment rental programs continue.

Cons: Targeted customer contact for rental operations and watercraft parking, public expectations might be problematic, unanticipated customer services needs not addressed timely at Baylor and Waconia.

Scenario C

Pros: Requires the 3rd least amount of increased general fund contribution to eliminate entrance fees, provides basic customer contact services on weekends at the two highest use park areas, user counts are conducted, equipment rental programs continue.

Cons: Public expectations might be problematic, unanticipated customer services needs not addressed timely on weekdays at Baylor and Minnewashta, and not at all at Waconia.

Scenario D

Pros: Requires the 4th least amount of increased general fund contribution to eliminate entrance fees, provides basic services on weekends at all park areas, user counts are conducted, equipment rental programs continue.

Cons: operational effectiveness related to customer services during the weekdays might endure unanticipated consequences.

Next Steps:

Staff will...

- Work to address Park Commission input and provide additional information where needed.
- Develop implantation options and related factors.
- Prepare a service scenario and implantation recommendation for the Park Commission.
- Prepare the Park Commission recommendation for service scenario and implementation to the County Board.

Recommendation:

Staff is not seeking a recommendation from the Park Commission at this time.

Elimination of Park Entrance Fees - Service Scenarios & Financial Factors

Scenario	Weekend Service		Weekday Service		Rental Program(s)		User Counts (Both Park & Trail Locations)		Operational Expense (Labor)		Operational Cost (Labor)		Operational Expense (Labor)		Increase in General Fund Contribution (In Order to Eliminate Entrance Fees)	
	Weekend Service	Weekday Service	Weekend Service	Weekday Service	Rental Program(s)	Rental Program(s)	User Counts (Both Park & Trail Locations)	Operational Cost (Labor)	Operational Expense (Labor)	User Counts (Both Park & Trail Locations)	Operational Cost (Labor)	Operational Expense (Labor)	User Counts (Both Park & Trail Locations)	Operational Expense (Labor)	Operational Expense (Labor)	Increase in General Fund Contribution (In Order to Eliminate Entrance Fees)
<u>Existing Model</u>	All Parks	Waconia & Minnewashta	All Parks	Waconia & Minnewashta	Baylor & Minnewashta (Winter & Summer)	Baylor & Minnewashta (Winter & Summer)	Yes	\$ 35,000	\$ -	Yes	\$ -	\$ -	Yes	\$ -	\$ 170,000	
<u>(A)</u>	Minnewashta Only	None	None	None	None	None	Yes	\$ 8,199	\$ 26,801	Yes	\$ 26,801	\$ 26,801	Yes	\$ 26,801	\$ 143,199	
<u>(B)</u>	Minnewashta Only	None	None	None	Baylor & Minnewashta (Winter & Summer)	Baylor & Minnewashta (Winter & Summer)	Yes	\$ 12,508	\$ 22,492	Yes	\$ 22,492	\$ 22,492	Yes	\$ 22,492	\$ 147,508	
<u>(C)</u>	Minnewashta & Baylor Parks	None	None	None	Baylor & Minnewashta (Winter & Summer)	Baylor & Minnewashta (Winter & Summer)	Yes	\$ 16,729	\$ 18,271	Yes	\$ 18,271	\$ 18,271	Yes	\$ 18,271	\$ 151,729	
<u>(D)</u>	All Parks	None	None	None	Baylor & Minnewashta (Winter & Summer)	Baylor & Minnewashta (Winter & Summer)	Yes	\$ 22,070	\$ 12,930	Yes	\$ 12,930	\$ 12,930	Yes	\$ 12,930	\$ 157,070	