



CARVER COUNTY PARKS

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Division of Public Works

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Carver County Park Commission Regular Meeting

Wednesday, November 4th, 2009

Conference Room #3

Public Works Headquarters Building
11360 Hwy 212 West
Cologne, MN 55322

Regular Meeting 7:00 p.m.

Agenda

- 1) Call Regular Meeting to Order (7:00 p.m.)
- 2) Roll Call (7:01 p.m.)
- 3) Approval of the September 9th, 2009 Regular Meeting Minutes (7:02 p.m.)
- 4) Additions or Deletions to the Agenda (7:03 p.m.)
- 5) Approval of Agenda (7:04 p.m.)
- 6) Commissioner Liaison Report (7:05 p.m.)
- 7) Open to the Public (7:10 p.m.)
- 8) Old Business(7:15)
 - a. Legacy Forest and Park Donation Program (Klevan Schmitz)
- 9) New Business (7:30)
 - a. Park CIP Presentation (Walsh)
 - b. Baylor Park Beach Usage Report (Klevan Schmitz)
- 10) Staff Reports (8:30 p.m.)
 - a. Application to the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (Walsh)
 - b. Events, Activities (Klevan Schmitz)
 - c. Regional Park Policy Plan Update (Walsh)
- 11) Commission Member Reports (8:40 p.m.)
 - a. Equestrian Sub Committee (Karki, Theiden)
- 12) Set Next Meeting Date (8:50 p.m.)
- 13) Adjourn Meeting (9:00 p.m.)

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

Minutes

September 9, 2009 Regular Meeting

Members Present: Myron Karki, Jerald Moja, Thomas Hermann, Neil Wingert, Gail Von Bargen, Jeff Conklin

Staff Present: Marty Walsh, Lenny Klevan Schmitz

Public Present: Carol Dunsmore, Becky Scott, Leslie O'Halloran, Leigh Harrod, Rayma Smith, Mary Novakowski

CALL TO ORDER - Wingert called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES - Karki motioned to approve the August minutes. Hermann seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0.

AGENDA- Karki motioned to approve the agenda. Hermann seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0.

LIAISON REPORT- Commissioner Lynch was unable to attend.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC- Carol Dunsmore asked if staff could provide information about the proposed trailhead facility planned for the Dakota Trail in Mayer. Walsh handed out a trailhead concept design for the Mayer location. Dunsmore and some others expressed a concern that there was not adequate room for vehicles with trailers in the event that equestrian use became a part of the future plans for the Dakota Trail. Walsh stated that this facility was designed for the approved uses and with the limited space at this exact location, trailer parking would not fit. Walsh stated that if equestrian use was added to a portion of the Dakota Trail that a separate parking lot could be built further to the west where there are not buildings and the right of way is still roughly 250-300' wide.

The Park commission decided since they were on the topic of horses, to move agenda item "Equestrian Sub Committee" up on the agenda so those who do not want to stay for the other business can leave if they wish. Klevan Schmitz informed the park commission that they had received nine applications as of the beginning of the meeting for the Equestrian subcommittee. Two other applications were submitted at the meeting bringing the total to 11. Staff also stated that after the 4 pm deadline that all the applications which were submitted will be scanned. Packets will be sent to the evaluation committee who will meet next week to select members from the public. The

first meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 29th, 2009 at 7 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS -

- a. Request by Peter Miller to Fund Raise for playground equipment at Lake Waconia Regional Park

Mr. Miller was not able to attend.

- b. Waconia Chamber of Commerce Application 2011 Governor's Fishing Opener

Klevan Schmitz provided a brief overview of the memo he had put together about this event which was included in the meeting packet. Klevan Schmitz reiterated that the Waconia Chamber of Commerce is planning to submit an application to host the 2011 Governor's fishing opener and they would like to be able to use Lake Waconia Regional Park for some of the events and activities including the beach, shelter and also the Waconia Event Center. Klevan Schmitz introduced Kelli Sites, president of the Waconia Chamber of Commerce. Sites expressed the excitement she has felt already about the hope of hosting this event in 2011 and the overwhelming support from local businesses. Sites noted a committee has been formed to help with the preliminary plans and putting together the application and has about 30 people. Walsh asked to have a County Parks staff person involved with the committee as we go forward to help with logistics, Sites stated that would be great. Walsh asked about the cost and budget for this large event, Sites noted that once a community is awarded a fundraising campaign begins to help offset the costs. Sites also noted that there are some grant dollars available and some matching funds from Explore Minnesota.

Wingert made a motion to formally ask the County Board to pass a resolution of support for the Waconia Chamber and City of Waconia to host the 2011 Governor's fishing opener. Moja seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

- c. Metropolitan Council Regional Policy Plan Update

Walsh presented information that the Metropolitan Council will be updating 2030 Regional Park s Policy Plan. As a part of the update Regional Park Implementing Agencies will have opportunity to support existing plan elements that are not yet master planned or acquired for parks and trails, add new parks and trail units for consideration, and or reduce possible plan elements that are not yet master planned or acquired for parks and trails. Existing park and regional trail elements such as Baylor, Lake Minnewashta, Lake Waconia, Dakota Rail Regional Trail and the Southwest Regional Trail Connection are a part of the Metropolitan Regional Park and Trail System.

For Carver County, existing plan elements that are supported by the County's 2020,
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and Draft 2030 Comprehensive Plans and the current 2030 Regional Park Policy Plan but are not yet acquired or master planned include:

- Miller Lake Regional Park
- Minnesota River Valley Bluff and Ravine Regional Park
- Expansion to Baylor Regional Park
- Expansion to Lake Waconia Regional Park – Coney Island
- Seminary Fen/Minnesota Bluffs Regional Trail Expansion
- TH 5 Regional Trail
- TH 101 Regional Trail
- Lake Waconia Trail (Connection to the Dakota Rail Regional Trail)
- Twin City Western Railroad Regional Trail (not graphically mapped in Draft 2030 County Comp Plan)

Regional Park Policy Plan elements that are supported by the Draft 2030 County Comprehensive Plan and 2030 regional Parks Policy Plan but not yet acquired or master planned include:

- Western Carver County Trail (Alignment not determined)

Regional Park Policy Plan elements that are supported by the 2030 Regional Park Policy Plan and conceptually consistent with the Draft 2030 County Comprehensive plan include:

- Waconia to Carver Trail

Possible New Regional Park Policy Plan elements supported by the 2020 comprehensive Plan and Draft 2030 Comprehensive Plan

- Union Pacific Rail Line Trail

Possible New Regional Park Policy elements supported by the 2030 County Comprehensive Plan include:

- Lake Waconia - Carver Park Reserve Trail
- Arboretum- Lake Minnewashta Trail
- Extension of Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail

The park commission had some discussion with staff about the purpose of this plan review and update. Walsh stated that the Regional Park Policy Plan is regional (Seven County Area) plan which is broadly based and looks at the entire regional parks system from a regional planning level. Walsh continued by stating that this document does not indicate specific locations of trails, parks or facilities and it does not determine or predict what activities will or will not be part of a future park or trail. The plan also is a long range plan and often times some of the elements may take 20, 30 or more years before they become reality and in some cases they may never become reality.

d. Legacy Forest and Park Donation Program

Klevan Schmitz provided an overview of a policy allowing gifts to be accepted by Carver County Parks. As outlined in the memorandum, the Parks Department does not have a policy pertaining to receiving gifts. Many park departments have a policy which allow for charitable contributions to be received in a way that is manageable by

the agency. As mentioned in the memorandum the proposed policy directs contributions to trees and potentially needed equipment or other items that the County would be willing to accept. In addition, gifts such as funds received for tree planting can accomplish management objectives of connecting with the public and replacing trees or reforesting areas already planned to be planted or restored.

Klevan Schmitz noted that this donation program would not be in competition with the Regional Parks Foundation and that if a larger donor came forward staff would direct them to the Regional Parks Foundation since they are prepared and a more appropriate organization to handle large contributions.

Members of the park commission indicated this was a good idea. Staff will format the language for the policy and will present it at the October Park Commission meeting.

STAFF REPORTS-

a. Events and Activities

Klevan Schmitz handed out a list of upcoming events and invited park commission members to attend and volunteer as time allows. Commission member help is always welcomed and needed at the events and programs.

b. Dakota Rail Regional Trail

Walsh indicated that plans for the trail are now 100% complete and the staff is working to get a permit in place from the Carver County Regional Rail Authority to allow the trail to be built by Carver County. Walsh hopes to have this approved and the bid letting by the end of September.

c. Lake Waconia Regional Park Acquisition –

Walsh noted that Carver County has reached a tentative agreement for the purchase of the Country Store Floral. Walsh hopes to have this acquisition wrapped up by the end of 2009.

NEXT MEETING – October 14th, 2009 at the Public Works Headquarters Building in Cologne.

ADJOURN - Karki Motioned and Von Barga Seconded to adjourn. Motion passed 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Donation Program For Parks Department

Purpose

Provide parameters for donations made to the Parks Department for the purchase of site amenities including, but not limited to picnic tables, benches, fire rings, grills, entertainment, program scholarships, trees, shrubs and other plantings.

Policy

Background

The Parks Department has received requests from constituents about donating cash, a tree or other type of site amenities in memory of a loved one or in recognition of an event or accomplishment. The purpose of this policy is to establish parameters for donations and promote the ability for people to donate to the Carver County Park System.

Procedures

Donations from the public will be kept in a separate line item account as part of the department's budget. Donations made to the department are to be in amount large enough to cover the costs of the item to be purchased and installed (picnic table, tree, etc.). All donations will be sent to the County Board for approval per county policy. Depending on the amount of the donation, the donor will be acknowledged in the department donation log book. A thank you letter or certificate will be sent to them or they may be invited to attend a park commission or county board meeting to be recognized for their donation.

Application

When someone wishes to make a donation, staff will work with them to determine the need and the appropriateness of the item to be donated for the parks system. Items which are purchased by donations will be maintained by staff for the life of the item with no promise to replace it after the life expectancy of the item has passed.

2009 Baylor Park Survey Report

Beginning June 11, 2009 and continuing through the end of August, staff (caretakers, camp hosts, gate attendants) from the parks department handed out surveys primarily to campers and to occasionally park guests. Weekly, roughly 45-50+ surveys were handed out. A total of 94 surveys were returned to the park department. Most of those surveyed used the campground. From the information obtained through the surveys and the park use counts, we have come up with the following data.

Demographic information asked included age of person taking the survey, gender and the number of times they use the park annually. Based on those who filled out the information, the age ranges most often reported 41-59 years old (35%) and 26-40 years old (34%). An assumption made was that these are people who are bringing their families to the park. The next highest response was from those 60+ years old, representing 18% of those surveyed. Women filled out 62% of the surveys as compared to 38% of men who responded. Based on the survey results, 81% of those who responded planned to visit Baylor Regional Park between 1-4 times in 2009, of which 7 noted on their survey that this was their first visit to the park, 9% planned to visit the park between 6-9 times and 2% planned on 10 or more visits for the year.

The survey asked a total of four questions with the two primary questions on the survey being :

"Based on your visit to Baylor Regional Park, please rank the following facilities at Baylor in order of importance: (1 - most important through 10-Least important, use each number only once)"

"Based on your park experience how important are the following park facilities to you choosing to visit Baylor Regional Park? (Rank each item 1 – least important through 5 – most important)"

The facilities we listed are: Campground, Onan Observatory, Disc Golf, Picnic Shelters, Trails, Water Access (Paddle boats/Fishing Pier), Beach Area (swimming area and Sand Blanket), Tennis Courts, Playgrounds and a blank space for "Other".

Based on the ranking people provided, both questions yielded similar results. Based on the results the most important feature at Baylor Regional Park is the campground. The next highest ranking facilities in order of importance were Trails (2), Beach (3), Playgrounds (4) and Water Access (5). Facilities in the park which were of lower importance included the Onan Observatory (6), Picnic Shelters (7) and Disc Golf (8). These three park facilities are used by a variety of people and often times draw people from further distances and entertain larger groups for activities, gatherings and special events. The facility which was of least importance based on the surveys was the tennis courts. On ten of the surveys, people ranked clean facilities and restrooms as something that is highly important to their enjoyment and use of the park.

The last two questions on the survey were open ended:

“Are there any features/facilities not currently in the park that you would like to see added?”

“Comments”

Almost three out of every four (74%) of all the surveys included an additional comment or suggested a facility or feature for the park. Based on the survey responses, features and or facilities people requested the most include:

- Updated Showers/Bathrooms (8) – More showers and/or locking doors on showers/restrooms
- Cleaner water at the beach (5)
- Wireless Internet/Wifi (5)
- Cleaner pond by barn (4)
- Pool/waterslide (4)
- More Mosquito Control (4)
- Way to keep dogs off the beach (2)
- Bridge across pond to get to campground (2)

From the comments portion of the survey, comments most frequently stated included:

- Great park (21)
- Very clean park/restrooms/well monitored (12)
- Caretakers/Camp hosts were helpful and friendly (8)
- Great Activities for families/kids in the evening (7)
- Quiet hours need to better enforced (5)

*See attached list of all the Features/Facilities wanted and comments.

Additionally, the camp hosts and caretakers conducted park use counts daily at Noon, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. At these set times they counted the number of vehicles in the active use area of Baylor Park picnic shelters, beach and playground, counted the number of people at the beach (sand and turf area near the lake) and lastly, counted the number of people in the swim area/water. Shown in the chart below is the average number of cars parked by month at the set times and the average number of people at the beach and in the water during those set times. These averages include days in which it was cold, wet and rainy. From the information collected, the busiest time of the day is in the afternoon (around 3 p.m.) and into the evening (6 p.m.) at Baylor Regional Park. The information below is just a snapshot of the 2009 summer and obviously only data from three single periods throughout the day.

	12:00			3:00			6:00		
	Cars	Beach	Water	Cars	Beach	Water	Cars	Beach	Water
June	5.79	7.68	3.10	7.72	12.11	6.11	8.17	7.72	3.28
July	6.97	4.23	2.29	12.39	6.32	3	6.5	4.6	2.65
August	7.25	3.25	1.79	10.17	6.1	5.9	6.11	4.52	3.63

We can however compare this information with data we receive from our lifeguard at Lake Waconia Regional Park and Lake Minnewashta Regional Park who also count/estimate the number of people in the water at the beach facilities at these two parks. Below is a chart showing the average number of people in the water at Lake Waconia Regional Park and Lake Minnewashta Regional Park for the 2007 and 2008 season at the same times as we observed for 2009 at Baylor.

	Noon			3 p.m.			6 p.m.		
	Wac	Baylor	Minn	Wac	Baylor	Minn	Wac	Baylor	Minn
June	6.4	3.1	7.2	21	6.11	18.2	5.75	3.28	4
July	9.85	2.29	9.3	24.5	3	27.4	8.45	2.65	11.7
August	5.2	1.79	6.5	17.9	5.9	17.2	5.3	3.63	9.1

COMMENTS

	Total #
Bad smell from pig farm. Won't come again because of it.	1
Great activities for families/kids in the evening	7
Nice size camping spaces & not back to back	2
Parking Permit should be part of camping fees	2
Shouldn't be a vehicle permit needed for towed car.	1
Very Clean Park	6
Great Park/ Love the Green Grass	21
Quiet Hours Enforced by Park Employees	5
Very Clean Restrooms/Regularly Monitored	6
Camp Hosts/Caretakers were very helpful & friendly	8
Need info of bike trails & Nearby towns	1
Website should tell # of campers allowed per site	1
Sites near Restrooms should be roped off	1
Extra Vehicles park in the Overflow	1
Don't Wrap wood w/plastic - people burn it	1
Love the Disc Golf	1

FEATURES/FACILITIES WANTED IN PARK

	Total #
Cleaner Water at the Beach	5
Away to keep dogs off Beach	2
Wifi	5
Canoe Rental	1
Boat Docking	1
Bridge across Creek	2
Cleaner Pond - Aerators &/or Fountain	4
Update Showers/Bathrooms - More of Them/Locking Doors on Showers	8
50 amp	1
Better Storm Shelter on Non-Barn Side of Park	1
Pool/Water Slide	4
"No Washing Dishes in Bathroom" Signs	1
Dumpster @ Other End near Bathroom	3
Kindling Wood	1
Playhouse on playground for shade play	1
Baby Swings @ Campground Playground	1
Repair Horse Shoe Pits	1
Add 2nd Dump Station - Dump Valve on other side	2
More sand on the beach	1
Sewer Hook-Up	2
Post Site #'s on roadway of main drive	2
Better Lighting by Bathrooms	1
Game Room	1
Bike Trails & More Trails	1
Little Camp Store	1
More Camp Sites Added	1
Recycling of cans & plastics	1
Repair some fire pits	1
Spray Campground for Bugs	4