



Minutes

Park & Rec Meeting
City Hall – Council Chambers
Monday November 20th, 2023 - 5:15 PM

Park and Recreation

www.oelweinparks.org

Call to Order:

Roll Call: Bouska, Burkhart, Gearhart, Johnson, Jorgensen, Garrigus, Meska, Stasi

Attending: Bouska, Burkhart, Gearhart-arrived 5:27 for the duration, Johnson, Jorgensen, Stasi

Absent: Garrigus, Meska

Approval of Minutes:

- Consideration of a motion approving the minutes of the September 18th, 2023, meeting:

Motion:	Jorgensen	2 nd :	Stasi
Aye:	All	Nay:	None

Citizen Comments: None

Wellness Center Discussion:

Burkhart stated that the 28e agreement has expired and the city, school and foundation are working towards a new agreement. Burkhart stated that she had several questions about the future of the wellness center making sure it remains a community center. Burkhart stated the Mercy moved rehab to the hospital and they would convert that area to a weight room. Stasi asked about council discussions as Burkhart stated there was no discussion and they voted already. Burkhart stated that the school and city would remain funding the facility and that the school cannot take on an entity that takes a loss. Bouska asked how things are split now with the money. Burkhart stated that the board overseeing this consists of Seeders, Weber, King, and others.

Recreation Update:

Burkhart stated that fall sports are completed and they have ten women’s volleyball teams and are halfway through the season which goes to Christmas. Burkhart stated they are firing up 2nd and 3rd grade basketball and kindergarten and 1st grade dodgeball. Burkhart stated they are going to have winter break activities such as laser tag and nerf days. Burkhart stated that they received a \$200 donation to replace one of the basketball hoops in the gym, so they are all breakaway. Burkhart stated Ohl upholstery replaced some pieces at the wellness center and park employee Mal is finish painting at the wellness center.

Aquatics Update:

Johnson provided the commission with final PDF reports on the two major projects that were completed at the aquatic facility this past summer. Johnson reminded the commission that this was a GO bond project, and that Johnson also received a very generous grant in the amount of \$126,750 from the charitable foundation to complete these two projects. Johnson stated that the drain project was a very important project to complete and was super proud to complete this project. Johnson stated that Bacon Concrete did a good job, and everything is put back and ready to role for the upcoming summer season. Johnson stated the



park employees and cemetery employees did a fantastic job removing the old piping and removing the old steel filter. Johnson stated that Carrico Aquatics came in and finished the installation of the new system, which also turned out great.

➤ **Drain Report**

➤ **Filter Report**

Tree Board Update:

➤ **Community Forestry Report**

Johnson provided the commission with the final PDF report for this project. Johnson stated that on October 4th with the help of several volunteers Joe Bouska was able to bring, turned out great. Johnson stated that this was a matching grant of up to \$5,000 that the city had from their tree sale from the cemetery tree farm they sold. The holes were prepared ahead of time by the employees, trees were distributed beforehand so that the 10 different species of trees were spread out over the 72 locations between Platt Park and the Complex. We had a great turn out with tree board members, park and rec commission members, Ellie Jones with the DNR, East Penn employees, Fidelity Bank employees, Dylan, and some community members there to help. Johnson stated that Joe Bouska did an excellent job finding volunteers once again and noted that Connie Jorgensen was also in attendance. Projects like this take an immense amount of preparation beforehand but everyone felt we did a great job as we had all 70 trees planted in about 2.5 hours. We planted a dozen different species of trees with this planting to diversify as always. The tree board members did a great job of stepping in and helping with the initial tree planting demonstration given by the DNR representative. The 50 trees planted at Platt Park are replenishing the ash tree loss, as we have taken 68 ash trees out of that park alone. At the complex we planted 20 trees along the entrances of the front diamonds to provide some shade and wind block for the rec programs and to replace the ash trees we lost. This grant included funding to purchase new t-posts to hold the tree in position. Also, the green watering bags on the bottoms of the trees which we fill with water and the bags slowly release the water over several hours.

➤ **Trees Forever Report**

Johnson provided the commission with the final PDF report for this project. Johnson stated that on October 18th the city completed their Trees Forever grant that the city received \$4,000 to purchase and planted 42 trees comprising of 11 different species. Johnson said once again there was a ton of work to be completed for this day. Tree board members talking with community members lining up planting locations, flagging, calling in locates, employees prepping holes. Johnson stated that once again Joe Bouska helped bringing in volunteers once again completing this planting in about two hours, with locations spread throughout the community.

We had the employees spade 70 holes between Platt Park and the sports complex this past month in anticipation of the large-scale tree planting we had scheduled for the 4th. We picked up 116 trees on

Parks/Cemetery Update:

Johnson provided the commission a copy of cemetery, shelter reservation, ash tree removal, aquatics and campground, and trail totals. Also were daily tasks completed, progress on projects and future projects planned. Johnson made note of how well the campground did this season as they hit an all-time occupancy record of 3,762 nights stated with a rate of 60%. Johnson talked about the new cemetery arcing sign, stating that the park and cemetery employees wrapped up another project that they have been waiting on for quite a while. Johnson provided the commission with the final PDF report for this project. Johnson stated that he thought of this project back in 2018 when they completed the limestone sign at the front entrance. Johnson



talked with Dave Sondrol about his project as Dave was very generous to fund this project to make the cemetery look its best. Johnson contacted the school as they started the project with their metals program at the RTC building. Johnson stated that COVID hit, and the project was put on hold and no progress was being made. This past year Hunter Woodward saw the project and picked it up for his senior project, finished it and delivered it this spring after 5 years. Johnson talked with Cristen Gallup with Alliant Energy about the overhead power line as she agreed to install a taller pole and take up the slack so the line would not interfere with the sign. Johnson contacted Transco which agreed to paint the sign for the city free of charge this summer. Johnson said the park and cemetery employees took on the project from there which included filling the pillar with concrete, and rebar. The bases were made larger to support the heavy sign as they lifted it into place this past month. Johnson stated that he had the paper come out and do a full story and tried to include as many people as possible for the picture so everyone that was involved received credit. Johnson stated that the feedback on all accounts has been positive and that it was a great project for the community to get behind and take pride in.

➤ Arching Sign Report

Johnson stated these past two months have been busy wrapping up the very busy season catching up on several projects. Johnson stated at Wings Park they took down an old utility pole that was not being used on the north end. Johnson stated that the employees mowed select areas during November with the two rain events they had that got the grass growing again. Ash tree removal was ongoing through the month as all the parks have been removed at all parks with City Park still having a few remaining. The new slides for the main City Park playground area arrived that are CIP items, that will be installed in the spring. This month all the fire extinguishers were serviced and returned to their proper locations. Johnson stated that other routine tasks were completed such as dragging the complex parking lot, trail sweeping, downtown daily cleaning, etc. Johnson had the cemetery employees trimming up some fence line areas at Oakdale and trim trees in the cemeteries. Johnson stated that he had the employees remove the dangerous and unsightly rail lines sticking out of the ground that were “protecting” water shut offs. Johnson acquired two shallow castings from the utility department from their sewer project to cover these shutoffs. Johnson stated that the course disc golf course sign was installed at Platt Park this past month for everyone to utilize. Johnson stated that the aquatic center is completely winterized for the winter.

This past month we received a resurfacing kit for the memorial benches that I requested and have been brightening up many of these benches placed along the trail system. The DNR stopped in at City Park and stocked the lake with just over 400 catfish that were 7” in length as they do every other year. Danny C. has been working on placing a fresh coat of paint on the storage building at the cemetery. The park employees completed some mowing of high areas this week and the soccer field lines were repainted for the rec program.

This past month concrete was poured, completing cemetery foundations, a memorial bench foundation and sign foundations. Vandalism in the parks picked up with people burning things in bathrooms and destroying signs, as a soap dispenser at Platt Park was set ablaze and the skate park sign was damaged. The employees moved around to the different facilities winterizing bathrooms as near freezing temperatures are occurring in the mornings. We removed the shade structure at Depot Park for the winter before the rain showed up that day. At Wings Park two large ash trees were dropped by Dave Mauer as they were just too challenging for the employees to take down. This month the department received a very generous donation from Greg Bryan to buy \$2,000 worth of trees for the community. The employees clean the remaining bathrooms in the mornings and clean the downtown flowerbeds. I have two young adults that started their senior seminar project at Wings Park staining the dugouts for the ball diamonds. The cemetery crew moved trash cans to the back for the winter, brought up the propane tanks and grave heaters, prepared two cremation burials this week and winterized the water lines.

A pair of kids that are also lifeguards for the city during the summer, are preparing the concessions area for painting for their senior project. I met with two more students that are preparing to start working on the bocce ball court at Redgate Park. Craig and Carolyn Rohrick did a fantastic job once again this season as we had our second highest occupancy rate ever this year. The park employees installed the new handicap



signs at the complex that went missing. The city employees with the park and cemetery did great, as several of them have been off work sick for two weeks in October. The employees clean downtown every morning and sweep trails weekly as the leaves are really starting to drop. Ash tree removal hit the 300 mark this past month as 168 ash trees were removed this season with 132 ash trees removed last season.

On Monday morning on the 23rd the cemetery employees were forced to dig a grave right away during early morning light and, in the rain, because proper notice was not given on a full burial for that morning by the funeral home. Johnson has been working on completing the grant proposal for next year with Trees Forever to plant more trees in street boulevard areas. Thank you, letters were sent out to everyone that helped with these plantings this week as well. A morning was spent removing identification tags off trees and documenting where each species of the trees was planted at Platt Park and the complex for the records. The park and cemetery spent much of their week at the library trimming trees and bushes. Chris took the stump grinder around and continued to work on tree stumps in some of the parks and at the pool. This time of year, we are clearing the trails when we can as the leaves are really starting to drop. Unfortunately, we had some more vandalism at Wings Park as they kicked in the door at diamond one that we boarded up. At Depot Park, the park employees planted a tree for the VFW guys in memory of John McBride. Ash tree removal continues as the guys took another seven trees down that takes the total to 176 this year at City Park. I completed a grant proposal to the Fayette County Community Foundation for matching funds to purchase more lounge chairs for the aquatic center.

The park employees installed a memorial bench at diamond one for the Hoth/Duffy family. At the cemetery we dug up the water shutoffs as we could not get the water to completely shut off which is going to be a much larger project that we can get into next season. This week all the employees have been chopping up leaves at the properties and finishing up with all the oak leaves at City Park. We have also been working on cleaning trails pushing back the leaves several feet now that most of the leaves have dropped. The watering bags have been removed from the platt park and complex trees and put in storage for the year. I submitted the Tree City designation application to the arbor day foundation this week and am working on the growth award designation as well. The tree board met yesterday as we ventured out and trimmed up past tree plantings over the past several years. This week the tree whips arrived that the tree board ordered, we provide a planting demonstration and hand out 100 tree whips to elementary kids each year that we will complete next week.

CIP Items / Budget:

Johnson started out the conversation by showing a PowerPoint presentation of CIP items to the commission for the Aquatic Center, Parks, Campground and Cemetery. Johnson stated that a lot of these projects that he has proposed are general maintenance projects. Johnson then provided the commission with the proposed budget as Johnson stated that cities statewide are looking at budget cuts for the foreseeable future. Johnson asked the board if they had any questions.

Burkhart stated that they are always needing to update treadmills. Other items Burkhart stated they put on their list are flooring as they have mats down on the floors now. WIFI updates need to be made as equipment has gone obsolete. Cameras are on the list to be updated all for the wellness center. Burkhart told the commission that they are asking for an indoor pitching machine for recreation. Burkhart showed their budget and plans to make up for required cuts by raising recreation rates as they are lower than surrounding communities.

- Consideration of a motion approving proposed budgets and CIP items:

Motion:	Stasi	2 nd :	Jorgensen
Aye:	All	Nay:	None

Board Member Updates: None

Adjournment: 6:11pm

Next Meeting: January 2024