**PARK COMMISSION MINUTES**

**December 1, 2021**

Meeting called to order 6:32pm

Commission members in attendance: Fred Belay, Jennifer Meyer, Barb Kleist, Sarah Titera, Dean Kallenbach

Guests: Jane Endl, Mike Endl, Benny Anderson

Motion to approve October 20, 2021 minutes Barb/ sec Jennifer and passed

Motion to approve November 3, 2021 minutes Jennifer/ sec Barb and passed

**Citizen Input**

\*\*Mike and Jane Endl shared concerns about unauthorized hunting in Canyon Park that apparently resulting in an injured and disabled deer in the backyard of a town resident near the park. A hunter in the park denied shooting the deer, but on that same evening, Town Constable Russ Johnson, took a call from the hunter asking permission to hunt in the park with a firearm. Russ let the hunter know that he could not offer such permission, since one could not safely hunt in the part without being within 100 yards of residential property. Motion to post the Elk Lake properties – Wildwood Park, Canyon Park, Primeval Park, and Ravina Park – as well as Sherman Creek Park as no hunting areas, and to consult with legal counsel to develop the appropriate language to use on signage and other notice. Jennifer/ sec Sarah and passed.

**Visit Eau Claire**

\*\*Benny Anderson from Visit Eau Claire said room tax collections have recovered to levels exceeding pre-COVID times in 2019. He estimates revenues to the Town of Union for this quarter will be $6,000, and he feels we should expect $3,000 to $6,000 in revenue for the town every quarter in 2022. The money will stay in the Visit Eau Claire checkbook until such time the Town has designated projects targeted to tourism, which could include work planned for the Conservancy.

\*\*Benny reported Visit Eau Claire was working with JB Systems to fix a problem with search engines regarding the Conservancy. Currently, the location is identified as a “museum.” The goal is to get it recognized as a park.

\*\*Benny said that visitors to the Visit Eau Claire website has nearly doubled in the past year, to a half-million visitors, and he expects that to double again in the coming year. That will mean increased visits to the Town’s websites through Visit Eau Claire as well.

**Old Business**

\*\*Quinten Anger finished his Eagle Scout projects improving the trails at Sherman Creek Park. Board members will try to get there to look the work over in the coming weeks. Quentin will eventually provide a report of his work, and Fred asked that the report be shared with the Park Commission when it arrives.

\*\*Pavilion construction at the Town of Union Conservancy has apparently come to a standstill. The concrete is still not poured. Cameras have been installed, but there is no power to the site yet. Fred will continue to birddog the vendors as best he can.

\*\*Jennifer said she would reach out to Steph Travis to see if she would have an interest in coordinating a Ball Fields Planning Group.

\*\*The Winter Solstice Event at the Conservancy on December 18 was discussed at length. Sara Norman from Landmark Conservancy has shared the details of the event with the Wintermission publicity mechanism at Visit Eau Claire and has posted the event on Landmark’s Facebook page. Dean has written a news release which he invited the group to edit so it can be sent to local media tomorrow. Fred and Tom will gather the brush for the bonfire and will get sticks together for marshmallow roasting. Jennifer will shop for the marshmallows, chocolate, and crackers. Barb and Sarah will put together packets for the s’mores the weekend before the event. Jennifer will reach out to Sara from Landmark to see if she’s providing the hot cocoa, which seems to be what was indicated in an email last month.

\*\*Sara at Landmark is working with us to develop the snowshoe event at the Conservancy on February 12.

\*\*Jennifer is going to connect with Minuteman Press to put together a nice thank you card that can be used to those who contribute to the Commission and its projects.

**Maintenance**

\*\*Fred got a message from Jeff Bechard that there is a down tree in Sherman Creek Park. Fred said he will see to cleaning it up within the next few days.

\*\*Barb agreed to take over keeping the Conservancy stocked with trail maps and hunting regulations.

\*\*Supplies for the picnic tables have arrived but need to be unloaded. Fred will have them unloaded into his trailer and will get help to put the tables together.

**Financial**

\*\*The Board of Supervisors approved a budget of $57,000 for the Park Commission, reducing the proposed budget by $20,000. The Capital Improvement line item was reduced by $5,000 to $30,000, and the proposal for research by UW-Eau Claire for $15,000 was eliminated entirely. The other items approved as proposed were Maintenance ($15,000), Promotion ($7,000), and Utilities ($5,000).

\*\*Fred suggested we spend an hour at a future meeting reviewing state statutes regarding the power and responsibilities of a Park Commission.

**Next Park Commission Meeting Wednesday, February 2 at 6:30pm**

Meeting adjourned 8:00 p.m.