

**WEST DES MOINES PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD PROCEEDINGS  
Thursday, November 16, 2023**

Members of the public wishing to participate telephonically, could do so by calling: 515-207-8241 and entering Conference ID: 189 093 379#

The meeting of the West Des Moines Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was called to order in the City Hall Council Chambers on Thursday, November 16, 2023, at 5:31 p.m. by presiding Chair Miller.

|                   |                 |                                  |                            |              |                                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Commission</b> | Heather Schebel | Joe Hrdlicka<br><i>Secretary</i> | Jim Miller<br><i>Chair</i> | Aaron Sewell | Linda Lowe<br><i>Vice-Chair</i> |
| <b>Present</b>    | X               | X                                | X                          | X            | X                               |

|                   |                       |                      |
|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Commission</b> | Melissa Clarke-Wharff | Kathleen Till Stange |
| <b>Present</b>    | X                     | X                    |

|                            |   |   |   |  |  |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Staff &amp; Council</b> | Ryan Penning<br><i>Director of Parks &amp; Recreation</i> | Marco Alvarez<br><i>Superintendent of Parks</i> | Laura Murphy<br><i>Superintendent of Recreation</i> | Shayne Ratcliff<br><i>General Manager of RecPlex</i> | Miranda Kurtt<br><i>Administrative Secretary</i> |
| <b>Present</b>             | X   | X   | X   |  | X  |

|                            |                                       |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Staff &amp; Council</b> | Greg Hudson<br><i>Council Liaison</i> |
| <b>Present</b>             | X                                     |

**On Item 1. Call to Order/Approval of Agenda**

Lowé moved to approve the agenda as presented. Schebel seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**On Item 2. Citizen Forum**

None.

**On Item 3. Approval of Minutes of October 19, 2023, Meeting**

Schebel moved to approve the minutes as presented. Lowé seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**On Item 4 Old Business**

None.

**New Business**

**On Item 5A. Motion – Recommendation to City Council – FY 24-25 Parks Capital Improvement Program**

Alvarez stated that the FY 24-25 projects and ranking remain the same as what was presented at the October Board meeting. Staff is continuing to finalize the estimated cost of the projects. The city was awarded a \$75,000 grant from the DNR Water Access Cost Share Program for the Raccoon River Greenway – 1<sup>st</sup> Street River Access Project proposed in FY 24-25. The project has been updated to show the secured grant.

Clark-Wharff moved to approve the Recommendation to City Council – FY 24-25 Parks Capital Improvement Program as presented. Schebel seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**On Item 5B. Motion – Approval Recommendation to City Council – Adjustment of Fees and Charges**

Penning stated that the aquatic fees have not been increased since 2020. These fees along with lifeguard rates were presented to the Finance and Administration Committee on November 8. West Des Moines lifeguard rates are competitive with local and statewide rates but have been reviewed on an annual basis the last couple of years due to the national shortage of lifeguards. In 2024, lifeguard wages will start at \$15 per hour with a \$0.50 increase each year for four years. The lifeguard wages need to increase to ensure that they are higher than the concession and event staff wages due to the training they receive.

Murphy stated that the two aquatic centers offer different amenities that have been taken into consideration for modifying the admission fees. The rates at Valley View will remain the same, however, the age range will change. Holiday Aquatics will decrease the general admission; however, the age range will change. These changes are projected to increase revenue by approximately \$60,000. An admission fee of \$2 for children under three years of age will be added. This will provide a more accurate capacity count each day. Till Stange questioned what the net cost is to operate the aquatic centers. The aquatic centers are subsidized between \$400,000-\$500,000 net operating costs. Lowe and Clarke-Wharff suggested removing the senior rate. Penning and Murphy will review what impact this could cause. Sewell stated he feels that there is a lot of positives with the increases.

With the expansion of the 9-hole disc golf course at Southwood Park, a tournament fee is being added. The course is still open to the public even with then there is a tournament. For Singletrack Trail events, the course would be closed to the public.

Till Stange moved to approve the Recommendation to City Council – Adjustment of Fees and Charges Program based on the review of senior fees and modification made, if needed. Hrdlicka seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Staff Reports**

**On Item 6A. Superintendent of Parks**

Alvarez stated the construction on Holiday Park Baseball Field Phase 8 has begun and will continue during favorable weather. Huston Cemetery modifications that include sidewalk improvements and a perimeter band for the installation of fencing have been completed. The 1<sup>st</sup> Street River Access Project is in the permitting and city approval process with the goal to be put out to bid in January 2024. The Parks Security Contract will end in December and Request for Proposals for 2024 will be collected. The Accepted Work for Raccoon River Park Playground Replacement will go to Council on November 20 along with Approvals of Contracts for Valley View and Holiday Park Aquatic Filter Media.

**On Item 6B. Superintendent of Recreation**

Murphy provided an update regarding program registration data from opening day on November 8. Winter's Eve is Monday, November 27, at 5:30 p.m. The Valley Junction Activity Center Lease for Teasy Artistry will go to Council on Monday, November 20. The agreement with Sportsmen Solutions was approved by Council. This group will assist with acquiring sponsorships for the naming rights at Holiday Park Baseball and Raccoon River Park Softball Complexes.

**On Item 6C. RecPlex General Manager**

Penning provided an update of events occurring at the MidAmerican Energy Company RecPlex. The All-Iowa Attack Basketball Tournament and Central Iowa Sports Indoor Softball Tournament will occur this weekend along with various tournaments in December. Skate with Santa program is December 2 and 9.

**On Item 6C. Director of Parks and Recreation**

Penning stated that on December 7 there will be a Public Art Unveiling at the Railroad Park in Valley Junction. The department’s Arts, Culture, and Enrichment Coordinator position was vacated. When a position is vacated, the department is required to present to the Budget Review Team to determine if the position can be backfilled or if other options are available. The Budget Review Team has approved the backfilling of the Arts, Culture, and Enrichment Coordinator position. The goal is for the position to be filled by mid-February.

**On Item 7. Other Matters**

None.

**On Item 8: Receive, File and/or Refer:**

A. City Council Communications

November 6, 2023                      Motion – Approval of Agreement Amendment – Raccoon River Pedestrian Bridge Capital Campaign – Great Outdoors Foundation

November 6, 2023                      Motion – Approval of Sportsman Agreement – with Sportsman, L.C., an Iowa limited liability company

B. Parks CIP Projects Status

Schebel moved to adjourn the meeting. Sewell seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Miranda Kurtt  
Executive Assistant to Director

12-21-23

Date

ATTEST:

  
Joe Hrdlicka  
Secretary

12-21-23

Date

