

**WEST DES MOINES PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD PROCEEDINGS  
Thursday, August 15, 2024**

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, August 14, 2024, at 5:31 p.m. by presiding Chair Miller.

<b>Commission</b>	Heather Schebel	Joe Hrdlicka	Jim Miller <i>Chair</i>	Aaron Sewell	Linda Lowe <i>Vice-Chair</i>
<b>Present</b>	X		X	X arrived 5:40p	X

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

<b>Staff &amp; Council</b>	Ryan Penning <i>Director of Parks &amp; Recreation</i>	Marco Alvarez <i>Superintendent of Parks</i>	Laura Murphy <i>Superintendent of Recreation</i>	Shayne Ratcliff <i>General Manager of RecPlex</i>	Miranda Kurtt <i>Executive Assistant to Director</i>
<b>Present</b>	X	X		X	X

<b>Staff &amp; Council</b>	Greg Hudson <i>Council Liaison</i>
<b>Present</b>	

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

Clarke-Wharff moved to approve the agenda as presented. Till Stange seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**On Item 2. Citizen Forum**

None.

**On Item 3. Approval of Minutes of July 15, 2024, Meeting**

Lowe moved to approve the minutes as presented. Till Stange seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**On Item 4 Old Business**

None.

**New Business**

**On Item 5A. – Presentation – Annual Reports**

**1. Rugby Foundation**

Matt Conner, Rugby Foundation At-Large Member provided an update on the Foundation. The revenue is brought through donations that cover expenses. The summer schedule held three tournaments that brought in teams from the surrounding states. The Foundation hosted the U.S.A. Under 23 Rugby Tryouts and one of the coaches was Ilona Maher, U.S. Women's Rugby Bronze Medal-winning team member. Till Stange questioned who owns the fields. The city owns Windsor Field and the Foundation owns the other field.

## **2. WDM Girls Softball**

Sarah Reihmann provided an update on West Des Moines Girls Softball. During the 2023-2024 softball season. Holiday Park hosted over 150 recreational games, 25 tournaments, and two weeks of Nationals. They had 372 participants from ages three to fourteen in recreation and 140 tournament players. Quinn Field is now lighted through a private donation and partnership with the City of West Des Moines. The organization is requesting help to plan, finance, and execute a barrier along the north fencing to prevent runoff of field material. Clarke-Wharff questioned if players are required to play in the recreation league and how the tournament players level their abilities and address safety issues. The Recreation League fees are \$160-\$200 with scholarships and payment plans for recreation and tournament players. Lowe questioned if players are required to be West Des Moines residents. Non-residents can participate if their city does not have a program.

### **On Item 5B. – Discussion – Park Usage Policy**

Penning stated there have been a couple of incidents in parks that have instigated the department and city to review current the Park Usage Policy. The department will meet with the West Des Moines Police Department and take this to the Safety Sub-Committee on October 4 to discuss the Parks and Recreation Department's recommendation. This would then be brought to the Facilities Committee and the Board for approval. Penning stated that the City Ordinance for park hours are 6:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. except for Raccoon River Park which is 6:00 a.m. to midnight. The staff has researched metro park hours and West Des Moines is comparable with their hours. Based on the discussion, suggestions included: educating neighbors about the park rules and when to report incidents; shortening park hours at neighborhood parks; closing restrooms earlier; monitoring cameras; and not making any changes.

### **Staff Reports**

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

Alvarez stated the Athene Pedestrian Bridge is making progress and the pouring of concrete connection sections will occur this week. The Pearson Park Bridge will start demolition of the south bridge, with the new bridge installation in September. Southwoods Single Track Trail is 90% complete with the official opening at the end of August. Park staff is working with a consultant on a proposal for the reconstruction of the paved portion of the Raccoon River Park loop trail. Open house meetings were held with neighbors of Wild Rose Park and Ashawa Park to discuss the renovation of the playgrounds. The Urban Deer Bow Hunt season will start at the end of September.

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

Penning stated Fall/Winter program registration on August 6 had over \$100,000 in revenue. Trevor Hoth, Recreation Coordinator, was promoted to Recreation Program/Facility Supervisor on September 2 as Mark Brewick retires after 36 years with the City on August 30. Penning stated that Hoth and Brewick have worked well together managing multiple facilities, overseeing programming, and hiring aquatic staff. Lowe questioned if the Recreation Coordinator position would be backfilled with Hoth's promotion. Penning stated that all positions need to go through a review process to determine if a position can be filled. Schebel questioned if support from the Board stating reasons this position should be backfilled would be helpful and would draft a letter. The USA Triathlon Youth & Junior National Championships that took place in July at Raccoon River Park brought in over \$1,000,000 in economic impact according to Catch Des Moines. Holiday and Valley View Aquatic Centers are open through August 21, and then on weekends through Labor Day. Recreation staff participated with other state parks and recreation departments on Parks

and Recreation Day at the Iowa State Fair. Illumifest: *a fall festival of light* is Saturday, September 14 from 4:00 – 9:00 p.m.

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

Ratcliff stated summer programs are ending and hockey season will start with youth hockey tryouts. Basketball tryouts are held in September. Discussions are being held with the Des Moines Buccaneers who may be permanently playing at the MidAmerican Energy RecPlex d in a couple of weeks. Part of the discussion is the need to protect youth hockey and skating in general. Sewell questioned what benefits the city would receive. Ratcliff stated that the Buccaneers would sell all the advertising dasher spots in the main arena and the base rate would be paid to the city. The revenue from concessions would also be revenue for the city.

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

Penning stated City Council will accept the three-acre land transfer from the Historical Society that will be part of Legacy Woods. The Parks and Recreation staff have submitted applications for a REAP Grant, a National Arts Endowment Grant, and one from Polk County. Landscape Intern Ellie Porter's last day was August 9 and Recreation Intern Nola Gafkjen's last day is August 23

**On Item 7. Other Matters**

None.

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

A. City Council Communications

August 5, 2024 Motion – Approval of MidAmerican Energy Company RecPlex Lease Amendment – 6500 Grand Avenue - CanPlay

B. Parks CIP Projects Status

Schebel moved to adjourn the meeting. Sewell seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



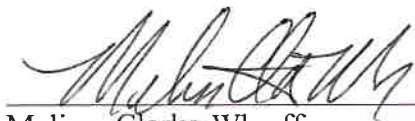
Miranda Kurtt

Executive Assistant to Director

9-5-24

Date

ATTEST:



Melissa Clarke-Wharff  
Secretary

9/5/24

Date