

CITY OF MENASHA
Parks and Recreation Board
Menasha City Hall, 100 Main Street, Room 132
January 10, 2023
MINUTES

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chr. Dick Sturm at 5:31pm.

B. ROLL CALL/EXCUSED ABSENCES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chr. Dick Sturm, R. Dowling, Ald. Ted Grade, T. Hale, E. Wickman, B. Adesso, T. Marshall
OTHERS PRESENT: PRD Megan Sackett, Ald. Tom Grade, Ald. R. Nichols, Eric Schaefer (Fox Valley Athletics)
EXCUSED ABSENCE: None

C. PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence from Heckrodt Executive Director, Tracey Koenig, regarding her retirement was shared with the Board.

Eric Schaefer-Fox Valley Athletics (1139 Honey Creek Circle, Oshkosh.) Schaefer introduced himself as the owner of Fox Valley Athletics and organizer of the Menasha Adult Softball program. Schaefer spoke about his tenure of running the adult softball program in Menasha.

D. MINUTES TO APPROVE

1. **Minutes of the November 29, 2022 Joint Common Council and Park Board Meeting:** Moved by Ald. T. Grade, seconded by B. Adesso to approve the minutes of the November 29, 2022 Joint Common Council and Park Board meeting. Motion carried.

Minutes of the December 13, 2022 Regular Park Board Meeting: Moved by Ald. T. Grade, seconded by B. Adesso to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2022 Regular Park Board meeting. Motion carried.

E. DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

1. **Jefferson Park Plan:** Director Sackett reviewed the different options for design, placement and associated cost for the softball diamonds in the Jefferson Park plan.

General discussion ensued on:

- Importance of design for current and future usage of the softball diamonds
- Fees of facility rentals and the need to increase
- Ability to maintain and grow programming
- Optimization of park space
- Other users interest in playing at Jefferson (i.e. Menasha Youth Sports)
- Optimal accessibility to park for youth because of trails and sidewalks
- Timeline for growth of programming
- Design with future needs in mind

Schaefer spoke about his development of the adult softball program in the Fox Valley and on his programs in Neenah and Appleton being at capacity. Schaefer spoke about how the current fields in Menasha are outdated and not safe. Schaefer expressed concern about the future of his current program and lack of ability for growth with Option #4 (new diamond with no lights) due to no lighting thus limiting the number of games able to be played each night, but feels there is an opportunity for growth if designed correctly. Schaefer indicated that growth of new and existing programs can happen pretty quickly if it's going to grow due to their efforts to spend time networking.

Motion was made by T. Grade to recommend option #4 (construction of new diamond without lights, but being light ready) without the consideration of option #3 of renovating the existing diamond. Motion failed due to not receiving a second.

Discussion continued on the desire to have softball in Jefferson Park and the need to develop facilities that won't hinder current programming and the need to do it the right way vs. the cheap way and what is the best investment for the next several years.

Schaefer indicated the current diamond is not designed to ASA standards, does not feel safe and his goal is to sustain programming in each community of Neenah, Menasha and Appleton.

Ald. Nichols spoke about the priority of the softball diamond needing to move and noting the concession of the Park Board from two diamonds in the vision plan to one diamond while recommending what you prefer, but knowing what you can live with.

Motion was made by T. Grade, seconded by E. Wickman for the Park and Recreation Board to recommend Option #1 (construction of a new diamond with lights) as it goes along with the Jefferson Park Vision plan recommendation of creating more usable greenspace while giving up an extra diamond and saving approximately \$250,000, but not have Option #3 considered as it does not fit the vision plan and has safety concerns.

F. REPORT OF DEPARTMENT HEAD / STAFF

1. **Department Report:** See attached written report.

G. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY MATTER LISTED ON THE AGENDA

Ald. Tom Grade spoke about the need to put the best foot forward with the design of Jefferson Park indicating the Park Board made a good decision with the diamond and wondering where is the overall budget for the park project.

H. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by B. Adesso, seconded by T. Hale to adjourn at 7:04pm. Motion carried.

Staff Reports from the Parks, Recreation, Forestry & Cemeteries Department



January 2023

PARKS

- Jefferson Park: Staff is working on the final edits of the Jefferson Park playground design.
- Ski trails were prepped and staff noticed they were immediately being used by residents at both Smith Park and the Conservancy. Due to deteriorating weather, the trails were only open for 2 days. With the next snow cover, they will get prepared again. (Typically 5-6 inches of snow is needed.)
- The ice rink was plowed off and water almost ready to be applied and then, the warm weather happened. We will try again!!
- Staff cleaned the Trestle Trail lights as part of a new preventive maintenance program implemented with the upgrades that were completed this past summer.
- Marina Updates include installing/replacing eight boat fenders in various locations, fixing the pier at five locations and fixing some water line areas.

Events

- Holiday Hayride on December 9 was another successful event. Every ride time was sold out! It's so gratifying to host this tradition for so many families and friends.
- We're recruiting teams for Winter Gala to participate in our snow carving competition. This event takes place on February 4th from Noon until 3:00pm at Smith Park pavilion. There will be professional carvers in addition to the community teams, chili, winter golf, and much more!



RECREATION

Summer Preparations

- A Pool Manager has been hired to join our staff. Kraig Toeppler was a head guard for us for several years and is eager to join the team in this capacity; as well as, continuing to teach swimming lessons.
- All Summer seasonal positions are posted for Parks, Recreation and Pool including Summer Parks Seasonal (long-term and short-term), Pool Manager, Lifeguard, Swimming Instructor and Recreation Program Instructors. Please help spread the word about these great Summer employment opportunities.

Programs

- Gymnastics Skill Clinics are growing. Fall 2022 skill clinics averaged 6 kids whereas registrations are currently averaging 12.5 kids in Winter 2023.
- Pickleball Open Play has 25 people on the waitlist! We had already added a day of play, but are limited in indoor space for this program to grow additionally.
- Winter Tiny Tots begins on the 16th with a 70% full class.

Upcoming Programs/Events

& Me Preschool Group Touch-a-Truck Event;
January 11 at City Garage

Call It a Snow Day (No School Day); January 16

Winter Gala; February 4, 12-3pm at Smith Park