



ROCK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Highways & Parks

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Public Works Committee Meeting – Parks
Tuesday, August 8, 2023 – 8:00 a.m.
Turtle Creek Parkway
6528 S Smith Rd
Clinton, WI 53525

Call to Order: Vice-Chair Mawhinney called the meeting of the Public Works Committee to order at 8:00 a.m.

Committee Members Present: Supervisors Mawhinney, Pennycook and Woodman.

Committee Members Absent: Supervisors Rashkin and Richard.

Staff Members:

John Traynor	Parks Manager
Amy Friend	Community Coordinator

Others Present:

Chuck Flynn (Zoom)	Citizen
Alan Sweeney (Zoom)	County Board Supervisor
Carolyn Brandeen	League of Women Voters
Floyd Finney	Parks Advisory Board
Dean Paynter	Parks Advisory Board
Tom Presny	Parks Advisory Board

Approval of Agenda: Supervisor Woodman moved approval of the agenda as presented, seconded by Supervisor Pennycook. ADOPTED.

Approval of Minutes Dated June 13, 2023: Supervisor Woodman moved approval of the minutes from June 13, 2023, as presented, seconded by Supervisor Pennycook. ADOPTED.

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements: Supervisor Sweeney stated he wanted to comment on Agenda Item 7A – Discussion and Possible Action on the 2024 Park Fee Schedule. He stated for 18 years he has been recommending a fee for horse trailers that use Gibbs Lake Park. He has watched hundreds of trailers go past his driveway, many are from Dane County, to use the horse trails for free. We charge people to launch a boat at the park and the committee should consider a fee for horse trailers to use the trails at the park.

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Mr. Presny stated the Rock County Multi Use Trail Group does hours of volunteer work on the trails and donates to the trail system at Gibbs Lake.

Parks Advisory Board Communications: Mr. Paynter shared the Friends of Rock County Parks have had several short workdays at Rock River Heritage County Park to help clean up the trails.

Mr. Finney shared the Rock County Multi Use Trail Group does work at all the parks that have horse trails. Any money the group earns or is donated is put back into Rock County Parks. Supervisor Mawhinney gave examples of items the Rock County Multi Use Trail Group donated. It included a \$15,000 well at Gibbs Lake, paying for ½ of the shelter of Gibbs Lake, mounting blocks at Gibbs Lake and the parking lot of Magnolia Bluff. This helps keep the horse trails free. Mr. Presny stated the hikers get to use the trails for free.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS

Authorizing the Land Transfer Between Adjoining Landowners Rock River Heritage Park Encroachment: Supervisor Woodman moved the Resolution, seconded by Supervisor Pennycook. Mr. Traynor explained about the garage encroachment that is located on the southeast corner of the property along North River Road. It was discovered when a Land Title Survey was completed. After referring to Corporation Counsel, the best option to resolve the encroachment is to file a Claim Deed for the .18 acres. The price was determined by taking what the County paid for the property and dividing by encroachment acreage.
ADOPTED

REVIEW, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION

Discussion and Possible Action – 2024 Park Fee Schedule: Supervisor Woodman moved the 2024 Park Fee Schedule, seconded by Supervisor Pennycook. Mr. Traynor proposed adding a \$25 Burning Permit fee. The Burning Permit was discussed at a previous meeting. The Burning Permit would only be good at Gibbs Lake, Magnolia Bluff, and Rock River Heritage County Parks. They are the only Rock County Parks that have fire rings.

Mr. Traynor proposed combining the Annual Boat Landing Sticker fee for Seniors (62 years and older) and Disabled and changing the fee to \$20 for Rock County Residents and \$25 for Non-Residents. They are currently charged two different fees.

Mr. Traynor recommended limiting the 2nd Car Duplicate annual Boat Landing Sticker to one per person. Currently there is not a limit on the number of duplicate stickers that a person can purchase.

Mr. Traynor stated he had reviewed the Picnic Shelter rates and they are comparable with our competitors.

Supervisor Mawhinney asked Mr. Traynor on his recommendation of charging for the use of the horse trails. Mr. Traynor stated that he understands Supervisor Sweeny's position but doesn't recommend a fee. He stated the Rock County Multi Use Trail Group has recently donated a \$15,000 well, mounting blocks, has a donation box at the trail head, and secured a grant to install trail signature at Gibbs Lake. Mr. Traynor agreed that Dane County does charge fees to use their horse trails, but they hire Park Rangers to monitor the horse bridles. We do not have the staff for to enforce the fees.

Supervisor Woodman stated he agreed that we shouldn't charge fees for the horse trails at this time. He didn't realize how much the Rock County Multi Use Trail Group has donated to the park system. He would like to see the park fees kept to a minimum. He agreed that we are not like Dane County and do not have to staff to enforce the fees.

Mr. Presny agreed it was a good approach but does see a reason to charge fees for equestrian use. He commended the Rock County Multi Use Trail Group volunteer efforts and improvements. He felt it was an incentive to not charge, but if the volunteer efforts ceased it would be applicable to revisit charging fees for equestrian use.

Supervisor Woodman moved the motion to add a \$25 Burning Permit Fee for the fire rings at Gibbs Lake, Magnolia Bluff, and Rock River Heritage County Parks, combine the Annual Boat Landing Sticker fee for Seniors (62 years and older) and Disabled and changing the fee to \$20 for Rock County Residents and \$25 for Non-Residents, and limit the 2nd Car Duplicate annual Boat Landing Sticker to one per person. Supervisor Pennycook seconded. ADOPTED

Parks Manager Report – See Attached: Mr. Traynor provided information on the items listed in his report and answered questions from the Committee.

Parks General

- Mowing Update- with the recent rains we are back on the mowing schedule.
- Trail Work – Reroute trails at Gibbs Lake due to erosion problem. Cleaned up and widened trails at Magnolia Bluff.
- Tree Work – Cleaned up storm damage at Magnolia Bluff, Carver–Roehl, Gibbs Lake, and Pelishek Tiffany Nature Trail.
- Memorial Bench Donations – Installation of benches at Gibbs Lake and Carver-Roehl Parks.
- Rock County 4-H Fair- The parks booth was a success. Amy and Parks Crew staff manned the booth.
- Staffing Update – We are at full staff and the seasonals are all done at end of the month.
- 2024 Budget Season – Joint budget presentation on July 20th. Budget meeting is scheduled with Administration on August 31st. Will keep the committee updated.

Rock River Heritage Park

- Trail Project Update – The perimeter trail was cut with a forestry head. Clean up work will continue.
- 2nd Auction Status – Don't have total amount made on auction. It was not as good as first auction.
- United Way - Day of Caring – Wed. September 13th – Have volunteers scheduled all day for Rock River Heritage Park.

Beckman Mill

- Ice Cream Social- The Friends of Beckman Mill had record breaking attendance for the event. It was enjoyed by all.
- Interpretive Sign Donation – The Friends of Beckman Mill are donating two signs. One will be placed at the welcome center and the other will be placed in the oak savanna.

Turtle Creek Parkway

- Tree Donation – Ethan Lee donated a Sycamore Tree. He will be planting wildflowers to dress up the bridge stone.

Carver Roehl Park

- Traffic Incident – A young male leaving the park ran into the side of a semi and died from the accident.

Sweet Allyn Park

- Shopiere Days Report – It was a good year for their event. The weather was beautiful, and the park was in great shape.

Capital Improvement Projects Update

- Magnolia Bluff – The shelter is finished. Dirt work needs to be completed around the shelter. The picnic tables need to be moved into the shelter.
- Carver Roehl – A problem was discovered with the light bulbs. The wrong light fixtures were installed. They were supposed to be adjustable light bulbs but the light fixtures were prewired with LED lights.
- Rock River Heritage – The base work has started on the smaller playground. Next Tuesday will be a workday for the playground.
- W.L. Sportsman's – Received Shelter Design. Funding requested in 2024 Budget.

Community Coordinator Report: Ms. Friend highlighted The Busy Tree StoryWalk® that was at Magnolia Bluff Park from June 30th - July 14th and at Sportsman's Park from July 21st - August 4th. She stated that July was Parks and Rec Month and Rock County Park had a photo challenge during the month. She stated we received 107 photo submissions for the contest. Three prize winners were randomly selected from all entries. She is currently working with Sherri from Friends of Beckman Mill to install a new piece of playground equipment at Beckman Mill. She is

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also working with Friends of Carver-Roehl to add new playground equipment or a boardwalk in the State Natural Area.

Ms. Friend discussed the Parks booth at the Rock County 4-H Fair. She worked the booth every day and members of the Parks Crew helped at the booth Tuesday-Friday. She created an updated Rock County Parks Guide. It is a brief guide to the 22 parks & 4 trails owned and/or maintained by Rock County Parks. Over 300 Rock County Parks Guide and over 700 rubber bracelets embossed with Explore a Rock County Park were handed out to fair goers. Chip clips were given to fair goers who stopped at the booth and asked about or shared stories about the parks. She stated she received very positive feedback about the parks and very little negative comments. She shared the suggestions, comments, and or questions she had received from fair goers with the committee.

Ms. Friend stated a map of Rock County Parks used to be in the Rock County Tourism Guide and it wasn't in the 2023 edition. Discussion took place on reaching out the Tourism Guide creator and being involved in the meetings for the guide.

Ms. Friend stated that Sunday, August 6th Dannelle Gay was at Beckman Mill Park for a book signing. Mrs. Gay wrote 100 things to do in Wisconsin before you die and touring the mill at Beckman Mill is Number 78 in the book.

Ms. Brandeen asked if the QR code on the Rock County Parks Guide took you to a map of the park. Ms. Friend stated it takes you to the Parks Info & Maps section on the Rock County Parks Page.

Supervisor Woodman stated Turtle Creek Parkway (TCP) is an amazing facility and we should be promoting it more. Ms. Friend stated the facility was one of the parks most rented facility. Mr. Presny stated what a beautiful resource Turtle Creek is. The long-term vision for the Parkway was for the county to acquire additional acreage from TCP to Sweet Allyn Park to gain access to more waterfront.

Next Meeting Date and Time: Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at 8:00 a.m. at the Department of Public Works.

Adjournment: Supervisor Woodman moved adjournment at 8:46 a.m., seconded by Supervisor Pennycook. ADOPTED.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amy Friend, Community Coordinator