



ROCK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Highways & Parks

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Public Works Committee Meeting – Parks
Tuesday, January 13, 2026 – 8:00 a.m.
Public Works Department – Committee Room
3715 Newville Road
Janesville, WI 53545

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

Committee Members Present: Supervisors Homan, Mawhinney, Pennycook, and Woodman

Committee Members Absent: Supervisor Sutter

<u>Staff Members:</u>	John Traynor	Parks Manager
	Amy Friend	Parks Community Coordinator
	Amanda McElroy	Administrative Professional III

<u>Others Present:</u>	John Light	County Administrator
	Carl Lange	Friends of Rock County Parks
	Kris Ellis	Parks Advisory Board
	Dean Paynter	Parks Advisory Board
	Cathy Schneider	Parks Advisory Board/RRHPF

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

Approval of Minutes Dated December 9, 2025: Supervisor Woodman moved approval of the minutes from December 9, 2025, as presented, seconded by Supervisor Homan. ADOPTED.

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements: Cathy Schneider, Rock River Heritage Park Friends (RRHPF) President, reminded everyone to complete the Master Plan survey. She also noted that the RRHPF raised a significant portion of the funds needed to create the Master Plan and expressed her disappointment that they were not invited to a prior meeting or asked for their input on what to include in the public survey.

NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

Mr. Traynor clarified that the initial meeting with Vandewalle and Associates was to go over the timeline for the project. He added that Vandewalle and Associates will be attending the RRHPF Meeting on January 21, 2026, to obtain their input for the Master Plan. Vandewalle and Associates created the survey. Mr. Traynor said there is no intent to exclude the RRHPF from the process.

Supervisor Mawhinney stated that a recent social media post suggests that Rock County Parks are not free to the public.

Mr. Traynor explained that Rock County Parks are free for the public to use and enjoy, however, there is a fee to reserve a pavilion.

Mr. Traynor extended an invitation to attend Diane Papcke's 80th Birthday Celebration at Heritage Hall on March 21, from 2-6pm.

Parks Advisory Board Communications: Mr. Paynter shared that the Storrs Lake candlelight hike was attended by over 500 people and raised almost \$1,000. Due to the popularity of these events, parking can be challenging. Attendees are encouraged to carpool and be prepared to walk a distance to the start of the event.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS

Acceptance of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources County Conservation Aids Grant CC26-54WM Funds: Supervisor Homan moved the Resolution, seconded by Supervisor Pennycook. Mr. Traynor explained that all DNR grants are a two-step process and require a resolution to apply for the grant, and another resolution to accept the grant. Mr. Traynor added that this 50/50 match grant requires the county to spend \$15,000 before being reimbursed \$7,500. Awarded funds will be used to repair the trails at Carver-Roehl.
ADOPTED.

Parks Report – See Attached: Mr. Traynor and Ms. Friend discussed items in their report and answered questions from the Committee.

Parks General

- Maintenance Update – Tree Work, Snow Removal, Winter Rehab Work- currently, parks are plowed the next business day after a snowstorm unless there is a rental
- 2026 Permits Are Available- 46 Park reservations, 7 firewood permits, and 3 metal detection permits have already been issued
- Budget Updates – Equipment List- have obtained a UTV, trailer, and truck from 2026 budget
- Snowmobile Trail Status- trails were open for several days

Beckman Mill

- Dam Repair Update- hoping to complete in the spring
- Brushing Project- the mower has been repaired, will resume next week

Carver-Roehl

- Candlelight Hike- February 21, from 6-8pm, hosted by the Friends of Rock County Parks and Friends of Carver-Roehl

Lee Park

- Park Road Issues – Hwy 140 Construction- reaching out to WisDOT after the park road was damaged from vehicles using it to get around the construction

Pelishak-Tiffany Nature Trail

- Brushing and Tree Removal- recent weather has allowed staff do trail work

Rock River Heritage Park

- Tree School – Clean Up- cut down 40 trees to make available for Firewood Permit list
- Master Plan Update- Vandewalle and Associates attending Rock River Heritage Park Friends meeting on January 21
- Candlelight Hike- February 28, from 6-8pm, hosted by the Rock River Heritage Park Friends

Sportsman Park

- Water Easement – Combs- the well pit is taking on water, hired Combs & Associates to get an easement from the City of Janesville for the water line
- Funding Options- still looking, have not heard back from a previous grant application

Friend Groups & Volunteers

- Update Work Permits for 2026- volunteer forms have been sent out for 2026

Turtle Creek Parkway

- Flooring Repair- replaced dirty carpet tiles with laminate flooring around serving area

Events

- Hearts in The Parks – February 2-16- 14 hearts and two gnomes at Magnolia Bluff
- WPRA Annual Conference February 3-6- Mr. Traynor, Ms. Friend, and Mr. Hessenauer will be attending
- FORCP Candlelight Hike – Carver Roehl Park – February 21- 6-8pm
- RRHPF Candlelight Hike – February 28- 6-8pm

Next Meeting Date and Time:

Highway Meeting: Tuesday, January 27, 2026, at 8:00 a.m. at the Department of Public Works.

Parks Meeting: Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at 8:00 a.m. at the Department of Public Works.

Adjournment: Supervisor Pennycook moved adjournment at 8:26 a.m., seconded by Supervisor Woodman. ADOPTED.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amanda McElroy, Administrative Professional III