

MINUTES: DECORAH PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEETING

7:00pm, Thursday, April 18, 2019, Decorah City Hall

Welcome and introductions: *Board members Jeff O’Gara, Shirley Vermace, Cindy Albers and Rich Gaard were present. Staff members Robin Sailor, Allie McIntyre and Andy Nimrod were present. Visitors included: Ellen Macdonald, Jeff Tomlinson, Brian Fuhrman and Mary Lewis. O’Gara opened the meeting at 7:02pm.*

Visitors/Public comment: *Tomlinson shared more information on pickleball courts and encouraged the Board and staff to continue to look at more pickleball options. He encouraged hiring an engineer to come to work on drawing up a plan.*

Fuhrman shared information he had received from Backyard Trails to help with professional layout and design of a natural surfaced trail system through the Carlson property. The proposal had a cost of \$3,550. Fuhrman reported that DHPT has pledged to cover one half of the cost and hoped that DPR would cover the other half. The proposal comes at a discounted rate as the owners of Backyard Trails have been enthusiastic users of the Decorah Trail System. Trail development in the Carlson property is projected to be about \$5/foot. Fuhrman also reported that DHPT would be willing to initiate a major fundraiser to assist with trail development in the Carlson property.

Approve minutes of March 21, 2019 meeting: *O’Gara motioned to approve, Albers seconded, all approved.*

Update from Friends of Decorah Park-Ellen Macdonald and Mary Lewis: *Overall, the volunteer efforts towards managing garlic mustard were excellent. Lewis reported that the biggest need would be if DPR staff could assist her with spraying. She has not sprayed much yet and won’t know exactly what is needed for another week or two. Lewis also mentioned that dumping off of Quarry Hill Road was a problem and wondered about signage. Nimrod will contact the County Engineers Office about it.*

Review and consider possible user fee changes for the Decorah Swimming Pool: *Nimrod shared information from other pools in Iowa and their admission fees. The last time fees were changed was 2011. O’Gara motioned to raise daily fees by \$0.50 and adjust season swim passes accordingly. Staff expects the increase to raise revenue about \$11,000/season.*

Review financial reports: *Nimrod reported to the Board that the Park-Rec Dept will have a budget amendment coming up due to flood damage and being able to start the Iowa Great Places Grant work.*

Department reports:

Parks:

- Dug Road fence - *estimated costs to be about \$13,000 for black chain linked fence*
- Facility report – *Decorah High School has agreed to allow the painting of two more pickleball courts on the tennis courts following the high school tennis season. Nimrod shared that he had discussed pickleball courts with administration from Vennehjem at the Vennehjem site*
- Iowa Great Places Grant update - *Sailor and McIntyre showed the board how they were planning to address the fountain accessibility concerns with hopes of starting that part this coming fall*
- Mary Christopher Park - *the Board was updated on a potential donation for more playground equipment for the park*
- *Sailor and McIntyre showed the Board some potential improvements at Vennehjem Park and the Dog Park that included mulched walkways and repurposing ash tree logs as agility obstacles for dogs. The Board indicated they would like to see more long-range park improvement items at future meetings.*

Swimming Pool:

- Dog Swim update -Nimrod reported that the State Health Department was tightening up regulations due to health concerns involving dog swims.

Recreation:

- New summer programming opportunities - the Board reviewed new programs being offered through the Recreation Dept for this summer, including Yoga in the Parks, Golf Camp, Drama Show Camp and Pickleball Clinics. The Rec Dept is also considering a family campout.

Pulpit Rock Campground:

- Staff reported a slow start to the camping season due to weather

Adjourn: The next meeting was scheduled for 7:00pm, May 16, 2019. O'Gara motioned to adjourn, Vermace seconded, all approved, 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Andy Nimrod

Director

Decorah Parks and Recreation