

MINUTES: DECORAH PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEETING

PLEASE NOTE: There wasn't an April Mtg due to COVID-19 precautions.

7:00pm, Thursday, May 21, 2020, Virtual meeting by Zoom

Welcome and introductions: *Board members: Rich Gaard, Cindy Albers, Brian Fuhrmann, Kathy Bakken, Shirley Vermace. Staff: Erika Randall and Andy Nimrod. Others: Chad Bird and Johanna Bergan. Chairman Gaard opened the meeting at 7:00pm.*

Visitors/Public comment: *Vermace noted that the high amount of traffic was exposing the Dunning's Spring and Ice Cave areas to some items that needed to get fixed including filling a large pot hole near Good Times and covering up some graffiti on the pavement near Ice Cave. She also noted more litter along Ice Cave Rd than she was used to seeing.*

Approve minutes of February 20, 2020 and March 5, 2020 meetings: *Albers motioned to approve and Bakken seconded, all approved.*

Review City's COVID 19 response plans with facilities and update as needed: *Nimrod reported that much of the City's COVID 19 response was based off of recent proclamations by Governor Reynolds and was geared to begin reopening City facilities June 1. Recreation Superintendent Randall has become the department's COVID restrictions expert and was following information from Winneshiek Public Health, IPRA and the CDC. The Board discussed the swimming pool at length and tabled any discussion of opening the pool until there was more information regarding rules and restrictions. The Board noted they were not comfortable opening at this point and determined that it will likely need to meet in special session or have an early June meeting, hopefully when more information is available.*

Share results from goal setting exercise: *Nimrod reported that staff had compiled the data from the February Board meeting and that the following items had surfaced as the most popular improvements out of around 100 ideas; speeding up the development of Carlson Park was easily the most popular discussion point, followed by replacing the diving boards and creating more shade at the swimming pool, stewardship of the Upper Iowa River, addressing access challenges at Dunning's Spring and Ice Cave, and continue to work on a master parks plan. The Board noted using this as a guide when new projects come along and to refer to it at budget planning time.*

Review financial reports: *Nimrod reported that the balances of the endowments were down roughly \$60,000 following the recent stock market crash. However, in better news, it sounded like the Community Foundation was working with a couple of significant upcoming donations.*

Department reports: *Nimrod reported that the Parks and Campground staffs were busy and challenged by all of the recent tourism. Grass mowing was in full swing and the campground has been full. Randall reported the success of the virtual programming that had been going on and discussed a potential plan for summer recreation that would start much later than usual and would require restrictions we aren't used to.*

Other: *Fuhrmann reported on the most recent meeting regarding the Wellmark Grant. Plans were coming along and RC&D staff had put a lot of information together. He was impressed with the vision that had been created to help visitors and new trail users get familiar with the trail system through a "Nordic themed" trail identification exercise. Vermace requested that the committee consider a Native American theme instead of Nordic. The next meeting of that committee is in August. On a different matter Vermace asked that staff reduce spending as much as possible until things start returning to normal.*

Adjourn: *Bakken motioned to adjourn, Fuhrmann seconded, all approved.*

Respectfully submitted,



Andy Nimrod

Director

Decorah Parks and Recreation