

MINUTES: DECORAH PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEETING
7:00pm, Thursday, September 16, 2021, Whalen Cabin at Phelps Park

Decorah Parks and Recreation Board Chair Rich Gaard called the meeting to order at 7:00pm, board members Shirley Vermace, Cindy Albers and Kathy Bakken were present. Staff members Andy Nimrod and Blake Moen were present.

Public comment: both Board and staff had received favorable comments regarding the new signage on the off-road trails. However, both Board and staff also received comments of concern regarding damage from horses on the trails. Nimrod reported that the new signs did not have the "no horses" stickers for the trails that are not suitable for horses, but that they had been ordered and would be put on when the 911 signage are added to the signs.

Bakken motioned to approve the minutes from the August 19, 2021 meeting, Vermace seconded, all approved.

Moen gave an annual report on the swimming pool. Highlights included that it was the longest season in memory, June 1 to September 3. There were lots of unknowns going into the season but staff and patrons navigated it really well. Gaard stated that he would like to see lifeguards paid more in an effort to try and retain them longer. Nimrod reported that he completed an inspection of the pool basin with Craig Spilde and City Engineer Jeremy Brill after emptying the pool for the season and that it still looks to be in pretty good shape.

Department updates:

- The trail project to rebuild and reopen the old trail from Phelps Park along the wall on Park Street down to the east end of Dug Road was completed in late August by Legacy Trails, staff and volunteers. This trail is going to need a name, possibly Phelps Trail East.*
- Preliminary work at Mary Christopher Park is being done by staff to prepare for a fall installation of the Veterans Memorial.*
- John Dingly is in the process of wrapping up the wall in Phelps Park. This project started over nine years ago and was rebuilt in segments.*
- Nimrod met with representatives from Iowa Great Places (IGP) and the State Preserves Board regarding an extension on the IGP Grant to try and find a way to fix the steps at Ice Cave.*
- Youth flag football and volleyball programs were underway and registration numbers showed significant increases from previous years*
- Touch a Truck will be held October 9 from 11:00 to 1:00 behind City Hall.*
- Pulpit Rock Campground continues to be full every weekend.*

The Board discussed how they wanted to navigate upcoming meetings and moving back inside. Bakken prefers going back to zoom. Nimrod will look into options for hybrid/in person meetings besides the council chambers, including the library. Zoom meetings in the council chambers are difficult unless an additional staff person is assigned to run the computer and coordinate the meeting.

Nimrod reported that thanks to many generous donations at Judy Syverson's retirement, the newly establish "Judy Syverson Everyone Plays" fund with the Community Foundation currently has a balance of \$4,700.

Vermace motioned to adjourn, Albers seconded, all approved, 7:53pm.

Respectfully submitted,



*Andy Nimrod
Director
Decorah Parks and Recreation*