

## **DECORAH PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEETING**

**7:00pm, Thursday, May 20, 2021, Decorah City Hall**

Chair, Rich Gaard, opened the meeting at 7:00pm. Board members in attendance; Brian Fuhrmann, Cindy Albers, Kathy Bakken and Shirley Vermace. Staff included Blake Moen and Andy Nimrod. Visitors included Brett and Lincoln Robinson, Janelle Pavlovec, Bruce Ventura and Tina Hall.

Public comment:

- The Board welcomed Blake Moen to his first DPR Board meeting.
- Gaard shared that he and others are interested in studying a splashpad further and suggested that we look at putting together a Request for Proposal to do that study at the June meeting. The goal of the study would be to gather enough information to make an informed decision on if it should move forward. The RFP should include: construction costs, maintenance projections, site analysis, gathering of public input, fundraising potential and a potential time line.

Vermace motioned to approve the minutes from the April 15, 2021 meeting, Fuhrmann seconded, all approved.

Nimrod reported on meeting with the new director of the Iowa Great Places grant and the discussion they had about some of the current challenges, including steeply raising construction costs and lack of contractors last year during COVID. The lone bid to replace the steps at Ice Cave was rejected due to high costs and the plans to renovate Larsen Fountain has been a struggle to keep within the budget.

Decorah Boy Scout Lincoln Robinson asked that the Board consider allowing him to build a bench and sitting area next to the pillars when the Phelps Trail comes down to Dug Road as part of an Eagle Scout Project. He has proposed building a wood bench and placing it on a sitting area that has limestone rocks as a surface. He also discussed providing a bike rack for the same area but probably locating it near the kiosk with the TRT map. The Board noted that they were favorable to the concept but would like more details before making a final decision. Albers motioned to allow Robinson to begin finalizing plans and asked for more details to be brought back to the Board at the June meeting on the bench, a drawing of the area that would be to scale and detailed, and a picture of what the bike rack would look like. Fuhrmann seconded and all approved.

The Board reviewed the most recent Covid-19 news. The Decorah City Council rescinded ordinance 1257 mandating the use of face coverings in public places. This will be effective upon publication Thursday, May 27, 2021. In lieu of this, Decorah Parks and Recreation no longer requires the use of face coverings when participating in Decorah Parks & Recreation programs and events. The Decorah Parks and Recreation Board recommends continued use of face coverings for those who have not received the COVID-19 vaccination per CDC guidelines.

A discussion was held on COVID-19 safety precautions at the pool, and the Board agreed with staff on the list of things the public should be made aware of when visiting:

1. Extra sanitizer will be available
2. Extra cleaning/sanitizing will be performed, per COVID recommendations
3. Plexiglass shield will be installed at the cash register as a barrier between cashier and customer
4. Family Swim Night will available in the evenings
5. Circles will be painted in the lawn off the pool deck to help create social distancing barriers

They also discussed staff expectations and expressed interest in finding ways to encourage staff to get vaccinated. Vermace wanted staff that are vaccinated to wear a pin that would let people know they were vaccinated. They also stressed the importance of staying home if they are aren't feeling well.

Vermace motioned to approve the plans as presented, Albers seconded, all approved.

Nimrod gave the following department reports:

- The pool is on schedule to open June 1
- Work continues to move along with Vet's Memorial in Mary Christopher Park
- The campground has been extremely busy and staff is looking into going to an online system in hopes of it allowing them to be more productive outside of registration

Vermace requested that the name of Mary Christopher Park never be allowed to change and to be added into the contract with the Vet's Memorial.

The next meeting will be June 17, 2021, 7:00 pm, at Whalen Cabin and will include an update on the Wellmark Grant and the new signage that will be getting installed in the parks for the natural surfaced trails.

Respectfully submitted,



Andy Nimrod

Director

Decorah Parks and Recreation