

CHISAGO COUNTY PARK BOARD OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, May 21, 2020

At 3:00 pm, Thursday, May 21, 2020, Chairman Kaiser called the meeting of the Chisago County Park Board of Directors with the following members present: Frank Storm, Dan Kaiser, Gregg Carlson, Jill Sicheneder, and Jolene Wille. Also present: Joe Tart; Park Director, Diane Sander; Support Specialist, County Commissioner Mike Robinson, County Commissioner George McMahon, Environmental Services Director Kurt Schneider, and Lindstrom City Administrator John Olinger.

Meeting Summary:

- Unanimously the Board approved the amended agenda.
- Unanimously the Board approved February 20, 2020 meeting minutes.
- Unanimously the Board approved Amador Township request of park funds in the amount of \$8,426.
- Unanimously the Board approved the In-Kind Credit Policy with review from the County Attorney.
- Unanimously the Board approved upcoming Park Board Meetings: Fish Lake County Park in June, Dennis Frandsen County Park in July, and Kost Dam County Park in August.

Meeting was called to order by Chair Dan Kaiser.

Motion by Gregg Carlson to approve the meeting agenda. Second by Frank Storm and carried unanimously.

Motion by Frank Storm to approve the February 20, 2020 minutes. Second by Gregg Carlson and carried unanimously.

Checkerboard Park Land Acquisition

Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota is moving forward with the land acquisition and scheduled to close in July. The additional land will increase the size of Checkerboard Park to over a 100 acres and making it eligible to become a Regional Park. Staff may apply for a grant to pay if we can meet criteria for the land otherwise it will be worked into the Parks Budget.

COVID-19 Update

Director Tart provided an overview of the Governor's Executive Order and reviewed how surrounding Park Directors have different interpretations of the Executive Order. As to date, parks and trails are open as long as the following guidelines are adhered to: social distancing, groups less than ten individuals, portable restrooms, beaches and campsites. Restroom facilities and playgrounds remain closed. Discussion followed if it was easier to close the shelter reservation for the season or keep it open and cancel/refund reservations when needed. Director Tart indicated he would like to keep the reservation open as COVID-19 guidelines are continually modified. Fish Lake Park will remain open and Rangers will remind visitors of COVID-19 safety guidelines.

Swedish Immigrant Regional Trail (SIRT) Interstate State Park Update

Director Tart reported he has been working on grant reimbursement payments. Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) work plan update is due June 30, 2020. Due to COVID-19 slowdown and among other things may have delayed construction some. Due to timing, additional gravel is needed in wet areas. Direct Tart will be submitting a change order in the grant for additional gravel. Project timeline has the trailhead being paved, amenities installed, and landscaped in June. July is scheduled to have trail bridge installed and paving the trail in August. DNR is proposing alternative trail in Taylors Falls for Segment C. Possibility of grant funds being used for a feasibility study and cultural resources study for Segment C. Commissioner McMahon volunteered to work with Director Tart on contacting and meeting with landowners along SIRT from Center City to Shafer to work towards linking the two trail segments together.

Amador Township Park Funds

Director Tart reviewed the Amador Township Park Fund request. Funds from Township, Lions Club, and Park Fund request will purchase playground equipment. **Motion** by Chair Kaiser to approve \$8,426 in Park Funds to Amador Township for the Almelund Ball Park Playground. Second by Gregg Carlson and carried unanimously.

In-Kind Credit Policy

Director Tart provided a copy of the In-kind Credit Policy and reviewed the use of the policy document. Park's Department would like to accept in-kind donations and the policy outlines required documentation. In-kind credit will be used for universal park improvements that benefit all users of Chisago County. Board discussed the credit policy and recommended obtaining second quotes. **Motion** by Jolene Wille to approve the In-kind Credit Policy with review from the County Attorney. Second by Chair Kaiser and carried unanimously.

Summer Park Board Meetings

Director Tart indicated he would like to continue meeting at different county parks during the summer months. Motion by Gregg Carlson to continue having Park Board meetings in the County Parks. Second by Jolene Wille. Discussion followed on next location. Motion by Gregg Carlson to amend with the addition of the following meetings: Fish Lake County Park in June, Dennis Frandsen County Park in July, and Kost Dam County Park in August. Second by Jolene Wille and carried unanimously.

Staff Report

County Parks

Director Tart reported ongoing cleaning, sanitizing, mowing and tree trimming was being done at each park. A list of summer projects included: installing additional signage in kiosks, improving landscaping, repairing Fish Lake beach retaining wall, athletic field work, painting and installing new playground in Checkboard Park. Docks at the Fish Lake boat launch are in the water.

County Trails

Director Tart provided an overview of trail erosion near two bridges on the SIRT due to heavy rainfall and increased flooding. Chisago Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and WSB Environmental Scientist provided recommendations for erosion control. Soil anchoring stakes, logs, seeding, erosion control blankets, wattles, and temporary fencing will be installed. Sites will be monitored and evaluated for future impacts. Chisago County Board approved a trail connection/spur to City of Wyoming's Railroad Park near the corner of Viking Boulevard and Highway 61.

County Trails

Supplies and equipment have been purchased for staff and park facilities for COVID-19 safety measures. Expenses will be reimbursed from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds at 75%.

Hiring Seasonal Staff

Director Tart provided a brief overview of the new online application process. A total of 45 applications were received and interviews have been ongoing. Seasonal staff should be close to full staff by end of May. Season staff would include nine employees: Park Ranger, Park Maintenance, and Collection Attendants. Sentencing to Service (STS) should be at full staff in the beginning of June.

Adjourn – Motion by Jolene Wille to adjourn the meeting. Second by Frank Storm and carried unanimously.