

City of Baraboo
Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting
Sept 12, 2022 – Minutes

Present: H. Kierzek, R. Franzen, A. Witczak, R. Sanchez, A. Workman, C. Schlender, S. Mordini & Mike Hardy

Others present: Amber Giddings, (Friends of Baraboo Zoo), Chris Hamm (Riptide Swim Team), and Race Frame (Friends of the Skate Park).

Franzen called the meeting to order at 5:28 pm. Legal posting of the agenda has been met. Schlender motioned and Witczak seconded approval of the Aug. 8, 2022 minutes. Motion carried. Witczak moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mordini. Motion carried.

Action Items

a. Discuss and consider proposed Campbell Park Master Plan options
Hardy presented a summary of public comments from the second public input meeting. Attendance was low, and only a few online comments were received from those who could not attend. The comments received overwhelmingly supported Option A over B. Advantages: Option A preserved the ability to develop in phases. No one really liked the idea of the pool at the back of the property in Option B. The difference in parking between Option A and B is ~6 additional stalls in Option B. There was quite a bit of public support at the meeting for expanded pickleball courts. Hardy said another concern raised was the lack of opportunity for expansion in Option B, which locks the existing size of the skate park and swimming pool into place, whereas there are options for expansion in Option A.

Franzen expressed support for Option A, liking the aesthetic of the pool from the roundabout. Mordini questioned the zero depth and how would seniors get into the lap lanes; it forces seniors to swim across the deep area to get to the lap lanes. Hardy said there would still be assist chairs, and in Option B there are stairs into the lap lanes. Mordini said she liked the shape of the pool in Option B better than in Option A, particularly the location of the stairs and the separation between different pool user groups. Hamm said from Riptide's perspective they would like to make sure there is enough storage included for Swim Team equipment. Witczak liked Option A and couldn't really see much positive in the layout of Option B. Kierzek said she and her family plays tennis and would hate to see tennis courts reduced from the current 4 adult courts to two courts total on Option A. Kierzek suggested rather than be reduced to two courts, it would be preferable to move four courts to another park altogether. Kierzek suggested that tennis court lessons in summer utilize the high school courts, since those were also taxpayer funded. Mordini and Witczak both voiced support for the inclusive playground on both options. Workman also expressed support for Option A. Schlender agreed with keeping the current configuration in Option A. Frame also expressed support for Option A over Option B for the skatepark plan. Hardy will pass on the committee's comments to JSD to use to revise and propose one plan.

b. Discuss and consider Riptide Swim Team 2022 season summary and 2023 pool requests
Hamm would like to keep the same schedule in 2023 as 2022 for Riptide peactices. Hamm reported that he heard rumors that swim lessons may be removed from the outdoor pool in 2023, which he considers unacceptable. Hardy reported the problem is that no one is applying for instructor openings, even though pay has been increased each of the last 2 years. Franzen added that with Dells attractions, getting staff is very difficult and we can't offer lessons if we don't have staff willing to teach. Hamm noted that he will work to try to get more applicants interested in working at the pool next summer.

- c. Discuss and consider Thunder Youth Softball “Fall Ball” program use of Pierce Park softball fields and restrooms

This group has a summer co-sponsorship and is looking to extend into the fall. They are paying to have a \$1500 new infield top dressing mix at Pierce Park, and asked for this to be used in lieu of a fee. The group would not need the restrooms. Hardy reported that there would be minimal cost associated with them using the field. Franzen questioned if these were tournaments, but Hardy clarified they’re just games. Franzen expressed support for not charging them.

Witczak motioned that the fee for fall youth league be waived in lieu of the donation of infield top dressing, seconded by Workman. Motion carried.

- d. Discuss and consider Girls Youth Basketball Club request to use the Civic Center gym at reduced fee for the winter 2022-23 season

Kierzek reported that space at the high school is getting limited because of the gymnastic teams using gym space to store equipment and an increase in the number of the boys’ basketball teams. The club is asking to entertain a reduced rate for use of the gym during the week for practices. Mordini asked how many rentals this would constitute; Kierzek said it’s really hard to say; it goes from 3rd-8th grade. Witczak expressed concern that if the girls team gets a reduced rate, the boys team may come back and ask for a similar reduction. Witczak suggested a co-sponsorship agreement for a certain number of dates. Franzen said we support the club but a rental fee reduction is not a good precedent; Schlender agreed. Kierzek said she didn’t think a co-sponsorship was possible as they would have sporadic use and not know when they need the gym until that week. Sanchez asked if practices are twice per week; Kierzek says it’s really difficult to tell because the high school/middle school gym sign-up system is highly competitive and they never know how much space they will need. Mordini asked about the BooU gym; Kierzek said they’ve tried to talk to BooU and can’t get any response. Witczak said in the last 7 years that she has been on the Commission, we have used the argument of precedent a lot to justify why/why not with groups. Workman questioned if the wording of the co-sponsorship agreement could be written in such a way that ‘only on dates available’ the group rents. Schlender asked how many nights Kierzek thinks it would be used; Kierzek said twice a week (16 total practice sessions every week are scheduled between 5-8 pm).

Mordini motioned to offer a six-month only co-sponsorship to the Girls Youth Basketball Club at \$25/hour gym space rental, to be offset by community service hours of the same value (\$10/hour volunteer match) to Parks & Rec Department, seconded by Workman. Motion carried, with Kierzek and Franzen abstaining.

Informational Items

- a. Staff Report submitted by Hardy.

Revenues were \$24,205.56 for the month of Aug 2022

- 1) Upcoming projects & programs

The llama barn has been completed and animals moved back in. The snowy owl exhibit now has a cooling shelter. Fall recreation programs have started. Park restrooms will start to be winterized next month.

- b. Subcommittee reports

- 1) Friends of Baraboo Parks and Zoo (Witczak)

The City received a federal grant for \$308,000 for the splash pad, which means it is fully funded. Hardy will be finalizing paperwork to accept the grant and hopes are to break ground on the spring.

2) Bicycle Advisory Committee (Workman)

Workman reported that there has been some positive media coverage of Chief Naaga Keramani Park. A new volunteer has put in some features, signage, and trails. A large, volunteer work day is planned for Sat, Oct. 29, from 9 am - noon. A smaller group of trail leaders is meeting at the site on Sat, Oct. 22, to mark off areas for work groups the following Saturday.

3) Friends of the Baraboo Zoo (Amber Giddings)

Giddings reported that the zoo group would like to be more present at the commission meetings. Two new Board members have been added. The group has two emphases: docents at the zoo and fundraising. Hardy added that the zoo group agreed to give \$15,000 to help offset the budget cuts to the city next fiscal year.

Next scheduled meeting: October 10, 2022, 5:30 pm

Mordini motioned and Schlender seconded adjourning the meeting at 6:54 pm. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Workman, Secretary