

**DRAFT**  
**CITY OF WAUSAU – PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Date/Time: February 5, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. Location: Council Chambers, City Hall  
Parks and Recreation Committee Members Present: Dawn Herbst (c), Tom Kilian, Carol Lukens, Sarah Watson, Lou Larson  
Others Present: Jamie Polley-Parks Director, REI Representative – Matthew Michalski

1. In accordance with Chapter 19, Wisc. Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and sent to the Daily Herald in the proper manner. A quorum was present and the meeting was called to order at 4:30pm.
2. Public Comment or Suggestions – Gary Gisselman, 319 Park Avenue, Alderperson 5<sup>th</sup> District – regarding remediation in Riverside Park that good work has been done already and he hopes any additional work that needs to be done in the park is completed.
3. Approve Minutes – December 4, 2023 – **Motion** by Watson, second by Larson to approve the Park and Recreation Committee draft December 4, 2023 minutes. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 5-0.
4. Discussion and Possible Action Reviewing the Results from the Riverside Park Remediation Project – Presentation by REI – Michalski summarized some of the remedial actions that were completed in 2023. 1829.03 tons of contaminated soil was excavated and hauled to the landfill. Two sidewall samples from a small hand excavation done near the bike polo court continued to show exceedances so that area will require additional investigation. Additionally, there were two samples along a residential property and one additional sample that would have been part of the low spot that fed into the culvert right on the property boundary that continued to show exceedances. REI’s report was submitted to the DNR on January 24<sup>th</sup>. Part of the request to the DNR is to make a determination on responsible party for any samples at the top of the hill that showed exceedances as previously identified as an upgradient area. That will be part of their final review and determination on potentially either additional investigation of those areas or submitting responsible party letters to other parties. Michalski discussed the two sidewall samples in the park. Kilian asked about the ash that was noted nearby the samples with exceedances along the residential backyard property boundaries. Michalski said one of the potential sources of dioxins is incomplete combustion so something like ash from potentially a grill or fireplace could be contributing dioxins to at least a small area right around the ash. He had removed some potential yard waste on the park side of the fence and that’s when he saw what appeared to be ash. It wasn’t collected and analyzed by a lab it was just an observation he made, there was some other waste found on the hill while they were doing the excavation. Kilian felt, unless he was misunderstanding, if the thought was that could be a contributing source then it should have been collected, analyzed and the profile in the ash compared to the profile in the soil which would have been a scientific valid way of drawing a conclusion. Michalski said at that time he was looking more at defining it and wasn’t worried about identifying potential additional sources. The soil sample is taken from 2 to 3 inches below that grade and the material is still there so it still can be sampled. Kilian discussed some results from a previous aerial deposition study. He again stressed how important congener profiles were to have to be able to analyze and compare. Kilian had a question about the S29 sample that in the report it’s mentioned most of the contamination in the park was apparently from stormwater that came from the culvert and dispersed into the park. Michalski said that’s the current theory based on just the concentrations from the outfall of the culvert. The DNR was initially considering the culvert to be the point source discharge. That was why the City was listed as the responsible party and that S29 still would have been taken in but would have historically more than likely been the depression that at least was right adjacent to that culvert. The property line and fence was three to four feet off the end of the culvert where that S29 sample was. There’s been changes to the topography so it’s hard to say exactly how that continued but it was a lower spot than either side of it. Kilian thought the topography sloped down west to east so historically the stormwater was flowing east toward the park. Michalski said he didn’t have any historic topography of that area that he has reviewed at this time and that was partially why he put it up to the DNR to make the determination as it was on the property boundary with the park and again what was considered upgradient of what was initially identified by the DNR as the source area. Kilian discussed what had been west of the culvert historically. He said he had looked at 1974 aerial imagery and it appeared to show stacking of industrial materials with discolored or stained soil around it. He thought it would be helpful for Committee and Council to also see that, to overlay REI’s excavation and the former culvert location over that 1974 aerial imagery. Lastly, depending on how this unfolds he

would like to see park neighbor's concerns recognized that were given to him about wanting to make sure this hasn't migrated to their backyards.

5. Discussion and Possible Action on Presentation of 2023 Year in Review – Polley gave highlights on some of the work done in the City and County which included tree removals and plantings mainly dealing with Emerald Ash Borer, trees planted in Marathon Park, added activities to recreation programming, offered 200 swim lesson classes for 673 students, increased swim lesson revenue, served approximately 10,000 patrons at Sylvan Tubing Hill, replaced watermain and laterals at Marathon Park, sold timbersales above the \$305,000 evenflow budgeted amount. Some specific projects included installed Lincoln Tot Lot playground, two rounds of goat vegetation management, helped with Athletic Park video scoreboard installation, continued to partner with the Fire Department for a pop-up splashpad, worked with Wausau School District to build a new kiosk at Scholfield Park boat launch, worked on new Oak Island Park restroom, worked with Highway and Public Works Departments on paving projects, installed new docks, put in a self-service kayak launch at DC Everest Park, updated plans, increased camping revenue, and much more.

6. Discussion and Possible Action on the 2024 Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department Work Plan – County Capital Improvement projects approved using ARPA funds include Eastgate Hall renovation, dump station installation at Dells of Eau Claire campground, Nine Mile septic system replacement. County small projects include DC Everest Park restroom completion, Dells of the Eau Claire manager cabin update and group campground well. At Riverlife the concession fence will be replaced and the leaper jet will be repaired/replaced. A push button will be installed at the 400 Block fountain to reduce water usage. Other work includes Department consolidation plan, ice arena feasibility study, Memorial and Schulenberg slide restoration, Stewart Park wall cap and tuckpointing, build skatepark, complete Oak Island restroom, 400 Block safety bollards, work on Rib Falls master plan, AED/Save Station grant, Athletic Park Clubhouse review and more.

#### 7. Educational Items

A. Park Updates – Brockmeyer Park – JoJo's Jungle – working with volunteer group on plant replacement and design with the work to be done in spring 2024, repairs are being made to the ballfield shed door. Oak Island Restroom – The new restroom construction continues; the exterior is mostly complete, and staff will begin to work on the interior installing fixtures and partitions. Kaiser Pool – Contracting company, Fisher, continues work on slide stairs and repairs to play features. These are planned small projects. Scholfield Park – The boat launch kiosk is installed. This was a joint project between our department and the Wausau School District. Schulenberg Pool – Contracting Company, Fisher continues work on play feature slide repair. 400 Block – Ice rink was up and running however with the unseasonably warm temperatures the rink is now closed. The 400 Block is the only outdoor rink that was able to be built this year. Sylvan Hill – The tubing hill is up and running currently with both hills available. We are watching the conditions of the hill daily as the warm temperatures and rain are melting the snow. We plan to keep at least one hill open as long as possible. Staffing has been a bit of a challenge at times. Snow Removal – The crews are completing snow removal and brining at various location as needed.

8. Future Agenda Items – contract for City services

9. Next Meeting Date – March 4, 2024 at 4:30pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

8. Adjournment – **Motion** by Larson, second by Watson to adjourn at 5:10pm. Motion **carried** by voice vote, vote reflected as 5-0.