

**HARTFORD PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

Wednesday, January 4, 2023

6:30 PM – City Hall – Council Chambers

Present: Todd Rusniak, John Klabachek, Dan Hummel, Ken Mikulec, Joe Kohler

Excused: Scott Helms, Kate Carroll

1. President Rusniak called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM; "This is an open meeting under 19.81 to 19.98 of the Wisconsin State Statutes".

2. Approval of Minutes

**MOTION BY** Kohler, seconded by Mikulec to approve the December minutes.

**MOTION CARRIED**

3. Informational Monthly Staff Reports – Reviewed.

4. Communication and Correspondence – None

5. Appearances / Public Comments

Ron Schnorenberg, member of the VFW, appeared in front of the Commission to express his gratitude to the City for the development and enhancements to Sawyer Park. He also went through the history of those enhancements including items the veterans have added. He indicated that there are now 80 memorial flags flown throughout the. Ron also said the park was used more this past year than ever with 9 events and over 350 people. He thanked Ralph Kuepper for his volunteer help in keeping the flower beds maintained. Ron also thanked the City for doing a great job with up keep in the cemetery, especially for Memorial Day weekend. Ron offered the veterans' groups assistance in helping maintain the flags at Sawyer Park. He requested the City consider placing a flag at Independence Park. He believes with so many soccer and baseball games held at this park having an American Flag in the park would be appropriate.

Commissioner Mikulec thanked Ron for his service to Hartford, Sawyer Park and our Country.

6. Old Business – None

7. New Business

**ADMINISTRATION**

February Commission Meeting Date – The Director, Aquatic Fitness Supervisor and Recreation Supervisor will be at the WPRA conference on February 1. The Director will reach out to all Commissioners to find out if they can meet on February 8 instead.

Centennial Park Update - City Staff including the City Engineer, held a pre-construction meeting with Wondra and Design to Construct. Wondra will be doing all of the park construction and Design to Construct will construct the pavilion. A pre-construction schedule from both companies was shared with the Commission. It shows that the pavilion should be completed by the end of July and the main construction of the park will be done also by the end of July with seeding and cleanup done through early October.

Ken Mikulec asked if the City had plans for a grand opening such as an Oktoberfest. The Director did not have any immediate ideas but did say some sort of celebration will be held.

Charlie Koch Retirement and New Park Equipment Operator Hire – After 18 years working for the City, 10 of which was in the Parks, Charlie Koch is retiring on January 13. He will be greatly missed. His dedication, service and skills have been invaluable to the City.

Over 100 applications for this position were received. Interviews were held with five of them. The position was offered to Kurt Rathke. Kurt formerly worked at Laufer Trucking as a mechanic, did some excavating work and most recently worked for Jackson's DPW mainly in their Parks system. The Director reached out to a contact he has in Jackson and the contact was very disappointed to hear that they would be losing Kurt.

## RECREATION PROGRAMS / ACTIVITIES

Staff mentioned these upcoming programs:

Fitness Classes, Session 1, Starts week of January 9

Valentine Banner Youth Craft, Saturday, January 14, ages 8+

Snowed In at the Movies, Friday, January 27, High School Movie Lock In

Pee Wee Gym Class, Saturday, Starts January 21, Ages 3-4

## ADULT / YOUTH SPORT

Staff mentioned these upcoming programs:

Winter Adult Volleyball League – Leagues are slightly half over and going fairly smoothly.

Pee Wee Soccer, Saturday, Starts January 21, Ages 4-6

Youthball Registration Report, Youthball Registration will be held February 1 to March 6.

## AQUATICS

Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center –

None

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- Rubber Duck Day, Thursday, January 13, Open Swim 3:30-5:15 PM
- Winter/Spring Session 1 Swim Lessons, Starts week of January 16. Classes are mostly filled and additional classes were added on Monday and Wednesday due to demand and the availability of instructors.

## PARKS OPERATIONS

Ice Rink Report – The borders for both rinks at both parks are set up, but the rinks themselves have not been flooded as the weather has not been cold enough, long enough. Staff have discussed future ice skating in Hartford including, with the development of Centennial Park, bringing back skating on Mill Pond. Staff has also been considering using a retention pond off of Wilson and Loos Street. These areas would be used instead of the 'portable' rinks as these are very time and labor intensive and can get expensive to maintain as liners need patching or replacing yearly. In addition, to flood these rinks required additional time as the ground frost must be in, then time is needed and cooperative weather to flood and freeze. This often means a shorter skating season.

West Side Park Dugouts – A meeting with the various stakeholders of Westside Park, Jordan Stephans (Hartford Hawks Baseball Team), Scott Helms (Hartford Union High School), Jason Brown (Hartford Baseball Club) as well as the Parks and Recreation Director, was held in in December to discuss dugout improvements. The City has allotted some money in the 2023 CIP for this project. The hope is with all user groups financial and volunteer help, this project could be done at the end of the season this summer. The group plans to meet next month to discuss designs.

Parks Project Report – Not available. Update will be available next meeting. The Director did comment that there have been an increase in burials that have been keeping staff busy.

Parks Shelter Reservation Season – Shelter reservations for the summer will begin Monday, January 19

**OTHER REPORTS /COMMISSION REQUESTS**

The Director mentioned that, typically, the February meeting is also the Recreation Center Facility Tour. The meeting will start in the Council Chambers at 5:30 with a tour following.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION BY** Mikulec seconded by Klabecek to adjourn at 5:55 PM.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Submitted by Randy Wojtasiak and Sara Cummings

"Persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations for attendance at the meeting should contact the City Clerk at least one (1) business day prior to the meeting." Members of the Common Council may attend the above meeting. Pursuant to State ex rel. Badke v. Greendale Village Board, 173 Wis. 2d 553, 494 N.W. 2d 408 (1993) such attendance may be considered a meeting of the Common Council may attend the meeting without violating the open meeting law."