

CITY OF VERONA

MINUTES **PARK, RECREATION & FORESTRY COMMISSION** **WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2021**

1. The meeting was called to order by chairperson Tyler Powers at 7:00 p.m.
2. Roll Call: Present: Tyler Powers, Mark Giesfeldt, Paul Schmidt, Heather Reekie, Charlotte Jerney. Also present: Dave Walker, Parks Director; Casey Dudley, Recreation Director; Tim Spencer, Verona Resident.
3. Moved by Reekie, seconded by Schmidt, to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2021 meeting of the Park, Recreation, and Forestry Commission. Motion carried 5-0.
4. The chair recognized Tim Spencer to address concerns about the proposed path through the East View Heights Nature Sanctuary. The path concept was originally approved by the Common Council as part of the 2016 Bike and Pedestrian Study and construction cost were included in the 2021 East Side Interceptor Sewer Project. Mr. Spencer was concerned about the impact the path would have on the serenity of the area with increased traffic as well as the environmental impact of additional pavement and the maintenance involved with maintaining it. The Commission acknowledged his concerns but felt the path would be welcome improvement for the community and since it had already been approved by the Common Council they ultimately had no authority to change the plan.
5. The Commission reviewed five playground proposals for a new park in the Woods at Cathedral Point. The proposals were solicited from three different manufacturers and included common specifications regarding size, price, installation, and required minimum features. Dave Walker informed the members that the City currently had structures from all three manufacturers and that they were all quality products. After review and discussion the Commission decided on a proposal for a Game Time structure from MN-WI Playground.
6. Moved by Reekie, seconded by Giesfeldt, to approve playground option 1 from MN-WI Playground for the Woods at Cathedral Point. Motion carried 5-0.
7. The Commission resumed discussion from the January meeting regarding the name for the new park in the Woods at Cathedral Point. Consideration was given to former landowners and pioneer families in the area as well as glacial terms because of the parks proximity to the Ice Age Trail. After spirited debate it was decided that the adjoining street, Wild Willow Way, would be an appropriate and descriptive name for the park and would also be an opportunity to theme tree planting in the park with native willow trees.
8. Moved by Reekie, seconded by Jerney, to name the new park in the Woods at Cathedral Point Wild Willow Park. Motion carried 5-0.

9. The Commission considered a concept from the Verona Ice Arena to install cooling coils under the outdoor hockey rink in 2022. The rink would like to look at the possibility to lengthen the duration and improve the quality of ice offered at the rink. Budget estimates for a rented system would be \$50-70,000 per year and the rink would seek to fund most of the expense privately but may need some City funding for the first few years to make it feasible. The Commission did not rule out the possibility but would like to see more detail on a plan before they give it serious consideration.
10. The Commission considered a request from Tree Top Explorers, Inc. to utilize city trees for tree climbing classes. The company currently offers programs through the Recreation Department but had inquired about using city trees for private classes offered to groups various youth groups and private businesses.

The Commission had no major issues with the idea provided the company carried adequate insurance that indemnified the City and since it was a ‘for profit’ entity the current resident park rental fee of \$50 per seminar would apply.

11. Moved by Giesfeldt, seconded by Schmidt, to approve a proposal by Tree Top Explorers to utilize City trees for private tree climbing seminars contingent on maintaining adequate insurance coverage and payment of the resident park rental fee. Motion carried 5-0.
12. Moved by Jerney, seconded by Powers to approve a special event request by Magnum Opus Ballet to host a performance at Harriet Park on Saturday, May 29. Motion carried 4-0. Abstain: Reekie.
13. Moved by Reekie, seconded by Jerney, to adjourn. Motion carried 5-0. Time: 8:10 p.m.

Tyler Powers
Chairperson