

Meeting Minutes
Board of Park Commissioners
Wednesday, March 5, 2008

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1. Roll Call

Present: Curtis, Freckmann, Glodosky, McDonald, Okonek, Sorenson, Trzebiatowski, Wiza

Excused: Bahling, Hall

Also Present: Director Schrader, Forester Ernster, Tim Siebert, Peggy Rentz

2. Approval of the December 5, 2007 Minutes

Motion was made by Okonek, seconded by Sorenson to approve the December 5, 2007 minutes and place them on file.

Ayes - all; Nays - none. Motion Carried.

3. Amend 2008-09 Seasonal Employee Pay Rate Schedule

Director Schrader said the Recreation Supervisor position was eliminated with the 2008 budget and in order to continue the Tennis Program and the Basketball/Volleyball Program by using seasonal employees, he is asking to amend the 2008-09 Seasonal Pay Rate Schedule to include these positions. The Tennis program at \$10.00/hour and the Basketball/Volleyball program at \$15.00/hour. He added the wages were included in the budget.

Motion was made by Wiza, seconded by McDonald to amend the 2008-09 Seasonal Employee Pay Rate Schedule as presented.

Ayes - all; Nays - none. Motion Carried.

4. Request to hold Civil War Encampment in Pfiffner Pioneer park August 23 & 24, 2008 (Portage County Historical Society)

Tim Siebert, Portage County Historical Society, came before the Board to request permission to hold a Civil War Encampment in Pfiffner Pioneer Park on August 23rd & 24th as part of the Point 150 celebration. He said they had previously held this in Plover and explained that re-enactors come in and are dressed in period costumes and they depict a Civil War encampment. There usually are both Union and Confederate re-enactors. The encampment includes cooking demonstrations, camping, educational speeches, firing of muskets and cannons (without bullets) and there are other displays from local organizations, such as veterans groups or the American Legion.

Mr. Siebert added that Portage County provided a large number of soldiers during the Civil War including Company E, which was nearly wiped out in the battle of Shiloh.

Questions were asked such as how the educational information would be presented; safety, particularly with campfires and musket/cannon firing; how did the Police and Fire Departments regard this; how many re-enactors would there be; and how many visitors are estimated to attend.

Mr. Siebert said the educational information would be provided by the re-enactors, who are extremely knowledgeable about the Civil War; the campfires are in an area that has had utilities located and pieces of sod are dug out for the campfire and after the re-enactment the sod is replaced; Director Schrader said the Police and Fire Departments did not have a problem with it and Mr. Siebert said the only thing that comes out of the cannon would be the foil the powder is wrapped in, he added they do a dusk cannon firing also; Mr. Siebert said there are probably about 40 re-enactors but that number could change depending on how many are available; he said last year they had about 600 visitors.

Motion was made by Curtis, seconded by Wiza to approve the request to hold a Civil War Encampment in Pfiffner Pioneer park August 23 & 24, 2008 (Portage County Historical Society)

Ayes - all; Nays - none. Motion Carried.

5. Presentation on Urban Forestry Benefits

Todd Ernster, City Forester, presented information and slides (copies attached) in conjunction with a newly published brochure that covers the benefits city trees provide. Stevens Point public street trees provide \$317,600 annually, and have an appraised value of 4.8 million dollars. For every \$1.00 spent on city street trees, Stevens Point receives at least \$1.73 in return. If properly maintained, city street trees are one of the few assets a city has that will increase in value as well as the benefits they provide as it ages.

The Forestry Department has all 7,100 street trees inventoried. Information such as tree species, diameter and condition is kept on each tree. This information was downloaded into software developed by the U.S. Forest Service. The U.S. Forest software processes the information from the Stevens Point tree inventory and applies Midwest regional information such as typical growth rates and precipitation, as well as Stevens Point specific information such as utility rates and property values.

Measurable benefits city street trees provide include increasing property values, energy savings, reducing storm water runoff, and air quality improvements. The benefits city trees provide businesses economically and to the community socially were also discussed. Stevens Point has just received its 27th Tree City USA award. He said this is possible only because the Park Commission, City Council, and other City officials have paid special attention to the importance of trees in the community.

The Board thanked the Forester with a round of applause for the excellent work he has done for the community.

6. Point 150 Update

Director Schrader reported the Community Play went well and was well attended, they wound it up by singing Happy Birthday to Stevens Point and that is a tradition we may keep going; that at the end of each Point 150 event, we sing Happy Birthday to Stevens Point.

He said May 17th is the next big event, it will start with a parade at 11:00 a.m. near SPASH, and the displays will be placed in the parade in the order the business/organization or event they represent took place or was established. The 132nd Army Band will play at Pfiffner Park and park visitors will be encouraged to bring a picnic to eat in the Park. Point 150 bottled water (city water) will be sold. There will be a liars contest, the first lie will be on how Stevens Point got its name and the second lie will be at the discretion of the liar. One of the rules will be that neither politicians nor lawyers can participate because they are too well practiced. There will be log rolling which will be done in a tub brought in by the All American Lumberjack Show; the YMCA and Youth Leadership will provide games; there will be 150 birthday cakes; and there will be a military flyover of one Blackhawk helicopter. He said they are working on the coloring books and they will be introducing the Point 150 logo on Point Beer cans.

7. Director's Report

Director Schrader reported that the perpetrators were caught in the Goerke Park press box break in and vandalizing. He said a neighbor walking their dog noticed and called the police and the police surrounded the area and caught them. He added we should get reimbursed by going to court. He said we don't know the name of the person who called the crime in, but we gave them a gift certificate for a summer lodge rental and the police will present it to them and they might also receive some sort of reward through Crime Stoppers. He also said because of the dollar amount of damage, some of the offenders might be in more trouble than they thought they would get into.

He said the RC & D wants to establish neighborhood gardens, these are different from community gardens. He said the participants are encouraged to plant a row for the local pantries. The sites they are looking at are primarily areas that the City owns and are maintained by us and we will benefit by not having to maintain them if they are used for a garden. They are also working with areas owned by New Page. The organization puts together rules and have talked about placing 55 gallon drums to catch rain water to use in watering the plants.

He reported the Easter Egg hunt will be held on March 22 in Pfiffner Park with the "snow site" the Shopko Lot and he said the Ice Show will be held on the 29th and the 30th. Tickets can be ordered through the university.

He said we have had a record year for winter sports, this year we have had the toboggan runs going through the first weekend in March and we may even have one operating for the second weekend. The toboggan trippers have kept a record and 5,000 toboggans have gone down, twice the amount we normally have.

He went on to report that the Summer Rec. tennis lessons will be taught by Women's Tennis from the university, and he is still working with other organizations to re-establish a Kiddie Korner class for next year.

Mike Wiza reported the Dog Park Committee had just met and had gone over the compiled results from their surveys. The surveys were sent randomly to registered voters and had been on counters of some businesses. He said it appears there is a desire for a dog park and they will be working on compiling sites and will be bringing something to the Park Board.

8. Adjournment

Motion was made by Curtis, seconded by Okonek to adjourn the March 5, 2008 Board of Park Commissioners Meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Ayes - all; Nays - none. Motion Carried.

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