

**Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes – DRAFT**  
**July 21, 2016**

**1. Call to Order.**

Chair Kolk called the July 21, 2016 meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Committee to order at 7:00 p.m. in Conference Room A of the McFarland Municipal Center.

Members Present: Clair Utter, Jacob Tissue, Greg Smith, John Feldner, Rick Ruecking, Dan Kolk, Judy Sauer, and Chuck Rolfsmeyer

Members Absent: Kate Barrett, Jacob Schkirkie, and Darrel Waldera

Staff Present: Library Director Heidi Cox

Others Present: Brian Berquist, Town & Country Engineering, Timothy Benishek, Bruce Voight, Sam Martino, Jim Amrhein

**2. Public Comments**

Unidentified resident – requested they be able to hear new information regarding archaeological and permitting issues before they comment.

**3. Review and possible approval of draft minutes of the Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources Committee meeting of June 16, 2016.**

Motion by Dan Kolk second by Clair Utter, to approve the draft minutes of the Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources Committee meeting of June 16, 2016. Motion carries 8-0 by acclamation.

**4. Discussion and possible recommendation regarding the Discovery Garden Park.**

Library Director Heidi Cox joined the committee for discussion on the current status of the Discovery Garden Park and her ideas for potential changes. She noted because of the close proximity to the Library, they often receive feedback on problems and issues with the park. The park is a high traffic park that has been neglected for the last couple years and could use numerous upgrades, as it sees a lot of traffic on a daily basis. The Library has incorporated the park into their summer reading kick off, and would like to see more events in the park. Director Cox provided examples from a park near her residence. While the park itself was much larger and more costly than what the Village may consider, she noted it is still a great park for reference. The park is fully accessible and includes a variety of features including: a ramp for wheel chair/stroller accessibility, larger turn around area, dual play options, accessible equipment, a poured in place surface, and a variety of games. Director Cox highlighted the opportunity to build literacy into the upgrades.

The Committee discussed one of the goals has been to begin repurposing the Village parks. More specifically, there has been discussion on transforming the Discovery Park into an accessible park to fit more of a variety of special needs. The Committee discussed equipment and ideas that may fit the park. The Committee also discussed creating a new committee to provide direction on the redesign of the park.

The Committee also discussed the larger issue of maintenance in the parks Village wide. They also discussed the possibility of engaging volunteer groups in up keep of the Village parks and perhaps reactivation of the Friends of McFarland group.

Motion by Dan Kolk, second by Clair Utter, to make a recommendation to Public Works to evaluate and address specific maintenance issues to correct the deficits that exist right now, and the committee pursue forming a public advisory committee to explore the possibility of a new design for the Discovery Garden Park. Motion carries 8-0 by acclamation.

**5. Discussion and possible recommendation regarding Egnor Park.**

Residents of the Egnor Park area have attempted for several years to notify the Village of maintenance issues in the park. The park is mowed and maintained, but other bigger issues have not been addressed. The residents have reported the park is in pretty poor shape.

The specific concerns have been addressed; however, the residents of the area would additionally like to see further development of the park. The Committee once again discussed the issue of maintenance of the parks Village wide. There is staff dedicated to maintenance such as toiletries and mowing; however, the other larger maintenance issues are not being addressed. The Committee discussed the idea of forming a Friends of Egnor Park group to begin to address some of the issues.

**6. Discussion and possible action regarding the Lion's Club request for placement of a fountain at the gazebo at Arnold Larson Park.**

The McFarland Lions, as part of their 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (55<sup>th</sup> for the McFarland Lions), proposed a legacy project to install a lion fountain at the gazebo at Arnold Larson Park. The fountain would be similar to the one installed near the Discovery Park. Additionally, they would like to recognize some of the projects the Lions organization have done Village wide.

The Committee agreed they support the project; however, noted Arnold Larson Park may not be the best park for this project. The Committee recommended Lewis Park may be a better location for the project; however, also cautioned Lewis Park has ongoing problems with vandalism. The Committee discussed Arnold Larson Park should have a water fountain, but the design should support the usage of the area that will include the bike path. They suggested a two level water fountain with a bottle filling station.

The Committee agreed appropriate signage should be erected to recognize the work the Lions have done throughout the years in the Village.

**7. Grandview Conservancy Trail status update.**

An update was provided on the permitting status of the project. The WI DNR has provided their approval for the wetland disturbance and archeological artifacts. An archeologist will need to be onsite during earth disturbance. The project is still awaiting the Army Corp Permit.

Current plans have the trail being constructed out of asphalt as opposed to board walk. Dan Kolk reported the Village chose to proceed with the asphalt option because it displaces less of the wetland soil and would not require additional remediation. The Committee questioned the validity of choosing an option that will displace less of the

wetland during construction, as opposed to the Boardwalk option, which would displace less after construction. Brian Berquest, Town & Country Engineering, reported bids for the asphalt trail came in around \$75,000 and the bids for the Boardwalk trail came in around \$133,000.

The Committee discussed there are several outstanding issues that need to be addressed including:

1. Composition of the trail. The Committee discussed the main two options of asphalt and Board walk, and additionally, exploring other materials that would be a good fit for the conservancy area such as a geotextile material.
2. Addressing whether the trail will be seasonal or year round
3. Lighting and safety issues.
4. Environmental issues with putting asphalt trail through the conservancy.

Sam Martino, resident at 6407 Fox Run, spoke on the following issues:

1. Inadequate lighting for the end of the access Drive
2. Longevity and replacement cost of the asphalt.
3. Evaluating the necessity of putting a 1000 foot path through a conservancy.
4. Potential drainage issues.
5. Evaluating the impact on the conservancy
6. Whether the trail is necessary considering the close proximity of other trails.

He noted some of the neighbors of the area oppose the trail completely, while other support the trail with the boardwalk option, but still have safety concerns.

Overall, the committee felt there were far too many outstanding issues to proceed with the project. The Village has expedited the project, and bid out the project as proposed, in large part due to the deadline of the County PARC grant.

Motion by Dan Kolk, second by Jacob Tissue, to pull back the permitting for the project, reject the asphalt bids, reconsider the design and pursue the grant extension. Motion passes 8-0 by acclamation.

The Committee also recommended staff looking into additional funding from the current grant, as well as, any additional grants available.

The Committee referred the issue of trail lighting and safety to the Public Safety Committee for consideration.

**8. Lewis Park Shelter update.**

Agenda item was postponed.

**9. Discussion and possible recommendation regarding parkland dedication for Prairie Place.**

Agenda item was postponed.

**10. Discussion and possible recommendation regarding the Dog Park use and policy.**

Agenda item was postponed.

**11. Discussion regarding office hours at the Public Works Building.**

Agenda item was postponed.

**12. Public Works Director update.**

Agenda item was postponed.

**13. Adjournment.**

Motion by Chuck Rolfsmeyers, second by Clair Utter, to adjourn at 9:12 p.m.