

CITY OF WISCONSIN RAPIDS
PARKS / RECREATION / BUILDINGS
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Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes - REVISED

May 8, 2023

The Parks & Recreation Commission met on Monday, May 8, 2023, at 4 p.m. in the first floor conference room at City Hall, 444 West Grand Avenue, Wisconsin Rapids, WI. The meeting was also streamed LIVE on the City of Wisconsin Rapids Facebook page.

1. Call to order.

Commissioner Veneman called the meeting to order at 4 p.m.

Commissioners present in the 1st floor conference room were Mayor Blaser, Craig Broeren, Lee Thao, and Dean Veneman. Kris Barteck and Carolynn Martin appeared via videoconference. Tom Ekelin, Patrick Gatterman, and Tom Rayome were excused. Staff present were Dawn Desorcy, Jake Klingforth, Samantha Lom, and Mike Potocki. Also attending were Alderperson Dennis Polach and Elizabeth Whelen.

2. Approve April 10, 2023, meeting minutes.

A motion was made by Mayor Blaser, seconded by Commissioner Broeren, to approve the minutes of April 10, 2023. Motion carried.

3. Election of officers.

Mayor Blaser nominated Dean Veneman for chairperson. No other nominations were received. Blaser made a motion to close nominations and that a unanimous ballot be cast for Dean Veneman as chairperson, this was seconded by Commissioner Thao. Motion carried. Veneman was voted chairperson.

Commissioner Veneman nominated Craig Broeren for vice-chairperson. No other nominations were received. Veneman made a motion to close nominations and that a unanimous ballot be cast for Craig Broeren as vice-chairperson, this was seconded by Mayor Blaser. Motion carried. Broeren was voted vice-chairperson.

4. Discussion on Skate Park.

Staff met to discuss the skate park and how to make it safer and more enjoyable for people to visit. We hope to develop an app for the Police Department to give the ability to watch the park 24/7 from their squads so that issues may be addressed immediately. We do not want to close the park, but focus on removing the troublemakers. Policies and rules are being developed to address the skate park specifically (having regular hours and locking gate when closed; may require that users have a skateboard, bike, etc., in order to be in facility), as well as general conduct rules for all of our parks which would allow us to properly deal with those who damage park equipment or grounds or who are otherwise disorderly in our parks. The commission would like to explore whether or not the City is able to hold parents accountable for their child(ren)'s action via an ordinance. These policies and rules will be available for consideration at the next meeting.

5. Update on Dog Park.

Fence is installed for both large and small dog park areas. Entrance gate areas have been poured. The water source is in. Pulverizing has begun, and we are waiting for drier weather to start seeding. The parking lot approaches will be poured soon. Grass must be established prior to opening, and we are planning to open in the fall of this year.

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6. Update on Prairie Dog Exhibit.

We are currently waiting for the tunnel to be delivered, as we are unable to fill the exhibit in until that is received. We were under budget for concrete. The glass bid is in, but the amount should be less because project is smaller than the original plan. We hope to open the exhibit in mid-June.

7. Bills.

A motion was made by Commissioner Thao, seconded by Commissioner Broeren, to approve the bills. Motion carried.

8. Staff reports.

Dawn and Jake presented staff reports.

Future agenda items: Ideas for remaining Teske money, naming dog park, and skate park policies.

9. Adjourn.

A motion was made by Commissioner Thao, seconded by Commissioner Broeren, to adjourn. Motion carried.

Dawn Desorcy, Recording Secretary