

CITY OF WISCONSIN RAPIDS  
*PARKS / RECREATION / BUILDINGS*  
444 West Grand Avenue, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495-2780, (715) 421-8240

**Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes**

May 9, 2022

A regular meeting of the Wisconsin Rapids Parks & Recreation Commission was held in the Council Chambers and via remote videoconferencing on Monday, May 9, 2022, at 4 p.m. The public was invited to listen to the audio of the meeting. 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 4:02 p.m.

Commissioners present in the City Hall Council Chambers were Kris Barteck, Mayor Blaser, Craig Broeren, Tom Ekelin, Patrick Gatterman, and Dean Veneman. Carolynn Martin appeared via videoconference. Tom Rayome and Lee Thao were excused. Staff present in the Council Chambers were Dawn Desorcy, Carrie Edmondson, Tyler Mickelson, and Sue Schill. Jake Klingforth appeared via videoconference. Also attending in the Council Chambers was Alderperson Dennis Polach.

2. Approve April 11, 2022, meeting minutes.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ekelin, seconded by Mayor Blaser, to approve the minutes of April 11, 2022. Motion carried.

[By unanimous consent, Item 8 of the agenda was moved to this place in the meeting]

8. 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 Gatterman. Motion carried. Veneman was voted chairperson.

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

3. Update on creative placemaking strategic planning process kickoff meeting.

Carrie Edmondson shared an update on the meetings that have been held to rejuvenate areas by integrating art and creative placemaking; parks are a natural part of this. Carrie hopes to include a variety of stakeholders, including Hmong, Ho Chunk, and Hispanic communities, as well as historic industries in the community to assist with the development of a strategic plan for the future of this item.

4. Consider approval of Wisconsin Rapids Aquatics Center special events.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gatterman, seconded by Mayor Blaser, to approve the Wisconsin Rapids Aquatics Center special events. Motion carried.

5. Review ordinance as proposed by the Ad Hoc Park and Recreation Committee.

Sue Schill summarized the proposed ordinance changes that the Ad Hoc Committee has been working on. A motion was made by Commissioner Ekelin, seconded by Commissioner Broeren, to approve the ordinance as presented and refer to the Common Council for approval. Motion carried.

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6. Consider changing opening date for the Wisconsin Rapids Municipal Zoo.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ekelin, seconded by Commissioner Gatterman, that the zoo will open on May 24 this year; and that in the future the regular zoo season would be Memorial Day through Labor Day, with the Parks and Building Supervisor having the ability to revise opening and closing dates at his discretion. Motion carried.

7. Consider update and expansion of fox exhibit.

There is approximately \$14,000 remaining of the corn feed money, and we would like to make the fox pen more natural, with grass instead of concrete, and a larger fenced area. We have the ability to do the majority of work in-house, and would estimate the cost to be approximately \$9,000, mainly for fencing. A motion was made by Commissioner Gatterman, seconded by Commissioner Barteck, to use the money to update and expand the fox exhibit. Motion carried.

9. Bills.

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

10. Staff report.

Jake Klingforth summarized some of the work that has been done in the past month, including moving to the Lowell Center, building maintenance, tree pruning; spring cleanup, the kangaroo pen, oiling eggs, and opening all park restrooms for the season. Wood County Emergency Management helped clean up litter on the Expressway; Assumption High School students volunteered at the Aquatics Center and were a tremendous help; they moved 30 yards of mulch, brought out chairs, and started cleaning the pool.

11. Adjourn.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ekelin, seconded by Commissioner Barteck, to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Future meeting items will include an update on strategic planning (safety and prioritizing parks), discussion on rates for aquatics center and future replacement costs, room tax money, an update on the zoo fund (Teske and budget), and tracking residency/non-residency at the Aquatics Center.

Dawn Desorcy, Recording Secretary