

April 16, 2019

CITY OF WASHBURN PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING

6:30 PM Washburn City Hall

Present: Members: Jennifer Maziasz (council rep), Jamie Cook, Erika Lang, Wendy Reese, Kyleleen Bartnick

Municipal Personnel: City Administrator Scott Kluver, Public Works Director Bob Anderson

Excused Absence(s):

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm by Maziasz. Roll call attendance – all Parks Committee members in attendance.

Approval of the February 27, 2019 Parks Committee Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Bartnick; second by Cook. Motion carried unanimously and minutes were approved.

Discussion and Action on Request to Place Signage for Native Plant Garden Near Trailhead for Lakefront Trail

Karin Kozie was invited to speak about the proposal to place signage about native plants near the recently planted garden. Her group proposes a 2'x3' sign with a black metal frame and stand next to the garden. The sign would include information about the native plant garden and the benefits of native plants to educate passersby, and also include logos of partners who supported/contributed to this garden. This group will also likely place small identification signs in the garden. There is also an idea to place a memorial bench near the garden. Committee members discussed the following:

- Overall, an interpretive sign is a good idea
- We need to think about placement and look of this sign when considering how to make the trailhead more welcoming, organized, and cohesive. One idea could include multiple panels with various signs, rather than a scattering of small signs.
- Additionally, to make the habitat areas more cohesive, shrubs could be planted between the garden and the forested area further along the trail.

For next steps, committee members confirmed that at the May meeting, we will meet at the trailhead as a group to discuss trailhead signage options. In the meantime, committee members will look at some example trailhead signage from other areas.

Discussion and Recommendation on Request to Place Signage/Blockade Ravine Areas at Memorial Park

The City of Washburn received an email from a person who frequently visits Washburn. She expressed concerns that people are crossing across one particular ravine in multiple locations instead of just using the wood walkways and bridges. She is concerned that this behavior is

disrupting the root systems of plants and their growth. She recommends the City to block access to this area and through signage, to encourage campers to use the designated pathways/infrastructure. Committee members discussed the following:

- Currently, there are two paths/social trails over two culverts, and two paths/social trails without culverts. There are also two bridges that people can use to cross the ravine. It is evident that people are following the shortest path from the campground to other areas such as the bathrooms, and crossing the ravine at places other than the bridges.
- The ravines do have vegetation (mostly overstory but some understory).
- Committee members think it would be best for the campground manager and campground hosts to monitor this area throughout the summer to obtain a better understanding of use patterns. They will also be asked to assess damage. Anderson will follow-up with them to do this. Committee members will also visit the campground throughout the summer on individual time to observe use patterns. After the season, committee members will further discuss this concern and determine next steps. Some things that could be used to deter social trails and to direct people to fewer trails include: brush piling, signage, designating and further establishing two social trails that people can use in addition to the bridges.
- Additionally, Maziasz will follow-up with the concerned visitor.
- Committee members and Anderson also pointed out that the bridge structures need some repairs.

Discussion and Recommendation on Dog Park Location and Plan Details

Reese reported that she met with a couple of Washburn residents to look at various sites to evaluate them for a potential dog park. These included the sites that Parks committee members had previously discussed. They visited Lot 9 next to the lakeside walking trail, Lot 17 off of Hillside Drive, and Lot 19 off of Woodland Drive near the cemetery and adjacent to the communications tower. They also began researching how to raise money for the implementation of the dog park, and what other cities have done. Committee members discussed the following:

- While some residents would appreciate a dog park near the lake and walking trail, others may not appreciate it as it would disturb the peace and quiet of visitors who walk the trail. There is also a trail already there, hence an opportunity for pet exercise. Further, while Lot 9 was recently cleared of vegetation, it is a very wet site. Steps would need to be taken to buffer the dog park from the rest of the walking trail as well as planting vegetation as a buffer to minimize surface runoff into the lake. Groundwater water quality could also be a concern.
- Lot 17 is in a more residential area, however the open area that could be used for a dog park is often used for kickball and other play.
- Lot 19 is in a less residential area, and is a large lot that has both an open area and a forested area that could support trails and provide shade to users. It is also a sandy site, with good drainage.
- At this point, since there have been multiple discussions about a potential location, it would be best to recommend a location to City Council, and they can consider this request. Once a location is approved, the supporters of the dog park can work with the

Parks Committee on various details, likely best done in a phased approach. These details would include things like fencing, memorial benches, picnic tables/a shelter, dog waste receptacle and collection, etc. as well as fundraising. One fundraising idea is to raise the dog license amount for the City of Washburn.

To conclude discussion, Cook made a motion to recommend a proposed dog park on Lot 19 to the City Council for their concurrence with details of the dog park construction to be evaluated by the Parks Committee before going back to City Council; Bartnick seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion and Recommendation on Walking Trail Maintenance Plan

Lang and Bartnick reported that they are still working on an updated management plan for the walking trail and its habitat areas. Because there are multiple facets to a management plan, they are first focusing on vegetation management/restoration. Other facets include infrastructure (such as picnic benches and bridges), interpretive signage, drainage infrastructure, and near lakeshore needs, etc. These items will need to be further fleshed out in the near future, and all facets will work together to inform the management of the area. Draft sections and then the draft plan will be brought to the Parks Committee in May and June, and perhaps later if more time is needed. Lang and Bartnick will also be working to get feedback from key experts and partners. As part of the walking trail, Lang also gave an update that she is working with Anderson to put him in touch with a native plant restoration specialist to create a restoration plan for the mowed areas near the artesian well, the overflow camping area, and Areas 2 and 4 along the walking trail. These areas were heavily disturbed by the masticating machine last year and need some attention to establish new growth, prevent invasive plants from moving in, provide wildlife habitat, and to improve the aesthetics of the area.

Future Topics

- May meeting - Dog Park next steps; Site visit to trailhead of walking trail to discuss welcoming signage as well as native plant garden signage; Review of various parts of updated Walking Trail Maintenance/Management Plan; Trees in Memorial Park (Maziasz indicated that she is helping with this); Update on exercise equipment construction
- Other future meetings: Legion Park evaluation
- Other needs: Schedule additional meeting in June to visit all parks to evaluate conditions/needs

Adjourn

Motion made by Lang to adjourn meeting at 7:55 pm, second by Bartnick. Motion approved unanimously.