

VILLAGE OF FONTANA ON GENEVA LAKE
WALWORTH COUNTY, WISCONSIN
(Official Minutes)

MONTHLY MEETING of the PARK COMMISSION
Wednesday, August 17, 2011

Chairperson Cindy Wilson called the meeting of the Park Commission to order at 6:00 pm in the Meeting Room at the Village Hall, 175 Valley View Drive, Fontana, Wisconsin.

Park Commissioners present: Trustee Wilson, Sarah Lobdell, Laura Coates, Sharon O'Brien, Sharon Conklin, Dan Green

Park Commissioner absent: Gail Hibbard

Also present: Ann Catlow, Administrator/Treasurer Kelly Hayden, Village Clerk Dennis Martin, Micki O'Connell, Director of Public Works Craig Workman

Approval of Minutes

Lobdell/Conklin 2nd made a MOTION to approve the minutes for the meeting held July 20, 2011, as presented, and the MOTION carried without negative vote.

Visitors Heard

Micki O'Connell stated that she wanted to encourage the Park Commission to have the Park House repaired. O'Connell stated that there are no mold issues in the building, and only the portion of the roof over the back utility room needs to be repaired. Ann Catlow stated that she also wanted to encourage the Park Commission to have the roof repaired on the Park House so the card clubs can continue to meet there and Big Foot Recreation District programs can continue to be held there.

Announcements

Trout Unlimited/Wisconsin DNR Work Day – Saturday, September 17, 2011

Workman stated that he discussed with Wes Milner the Trout Unlimited and Wisconsin DNR workday project in Van Slyke Creek on Saturday, September 17, 2011. Workman stated that the work will focus on the headwaters portion of the creek, and in particular an unstable low spot back by the Fontana School District property that is a safety hazard. Workman stated that a 5- or 6-foot-wide path will have to be cut from the Dewey Avenue side of the creek back about 300 feet so the required supplies and equipment can be transported to the site of the low spot. Following discussion, the Park Commission members reached a consensus that the only concern is that the path back to the work site be meandering and not just a straight line cut through the brush. Workman stated that he will be at the site on the day of the project and the DPW crew will be able to mark the route that the access path will follow to ensure it meanders. Workman stated the planners are seeking volunteer assistance to help on the work day. Wilson asked if an article could be posted on the website to encourage people to help with the project.

Lobdell/Green 2nd made a MOTION to authorize the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Trout Unlimited work day crew to do minimal clearing to create a temporary, meandering 6-foot-wide path from Headwaters Park at 208 Dewey Avenue back 300 feet to the site of an unstable low spot in Van Slyke Creek on Saturday, September 17, 2011, and the MOTION carried without negative vote.

General Business

Park House Use

The Park House was used 8 times in July 2011. Martin stated that it was used twice during the first week of August 2001, prior to the village building inspector closing it until the utility room roof and related mechanical problems are repaired.

Treasurer's Report

The updated treasurer's report as of July 31, 2011 was presented by Lobdell.

Plan Commission Report

Lobdell stated that the project to rewrite Chapters 17 and 18 of the Municipal Code is continuing, and the initial draft of Chapter 18 is being tweaked for the next joint workshop meeting now scheduled for Monday,

September 26, 2011 at 6:00 pm. The July and August 2011 monthly meetings of the Plan Commission have been cancelled due to a lack of agenda items.

Public Works Report

Workman stated that all the Public Works items are covered in other agenda items.

TID Maintenance – Items/Update

Martin stated that the report was updated to include items addressed in an August 4, 2011 email from Gail Hibbard, including the harvesting of seeds at the Duck Pond prairie restoration area at the end of September; fertilizing the red maple trees located between the path and Wild Duck Road; and spraying the garlic mustard in fall and pulling it out in the spring at the Hildebrand Nature Conservancy. Lobdell stated that the entrance area to the Hildebrand Nature Conservancy still needs to be mowed. Workman stated that the former “no mow” grass area has been added to the work list for Blackstone and the grass was scheduled to be cut this week. Hayden stated that with regard to the Park House roof, photographs taken by Building Inspector Ron Nyman were distributed. Hayden stated that Nyman found that the main roof is still in great condition and there are not mold issues in the building. Hayden stated that Nyman posted the building as temporarily inhabitable because of concerns with the back utility room, and repairs will be needed prior to it being open for public use. Hayden stated that Nyman was going to be presenting a report and repair estimates to the Village Board for consideration. Wilson asked if the Village could remove the mechanical room from the Park House and relocate new appliances in the interior of the building. Wilson stated that if a new heating system that could be turned off when the building is not in use would be installed, the Village would save some of the expenses to keep the Park House open. Workman stated that the back mechanical room could be removed, but the current heating system runs on a boiler. Workman stated to convert to an electrical heating system would be very costly, and the building has to be heated at all times if it is used in the winter to keep the water lines from freezing. Workman stated that he could get estimates on the cost of removing the back room from the building and downsizing the appliances for placement inside the Park House. O’Brien/Conklin 2nd made a MOTION to direct Workman to obtain cost estimates for removing the back utility room from the Park House and to downsize the required appliances so that they can be relocated inside the building, and to report back at the next meeting of the Park Commission. The MOTION carried without negative vote.

Old Business

Porter Court Plaza Improvement Plan – Update

Workman stated that he and Gail Hibbard met with Roy Diblik to come up with recommended trees to replace the unsuitable serviceberry trees that were planted as part of the initial plan. Workman stated that with the soil condition report obtained by Hibbard in mind, Diblik recommended River Birch and Bald Cypress trees to replace the serviceberry trees. Workman stated that Diblik also recommended planting 33 Jim Dandy native deciduous holly plants that grow well in wet conditions. Workman stated that the cost to pull out the initial trees, purchase the new trees and shrubs and have them planted will total about \$2,028. Lobdell stated that the expenses for purchasing the new trees could come from the Village reforestation fund, but the \$1,000 for planting the new trees and removing the serviceberry trees would have to be found elsewhere in the 2011 budget or added to next year’s budget. Workman stated that they only made a recommendation on the trees in the Porter Court Plaza, and not on the other initial design elements including the water fountain. Workman stated that if the Park Commission pursues any major changes other than the plants at the Porter Court Plaza, the proposal should be presented to the Village Board for approval. O’Brien stated that the Village spent a lot of money in past years on landscaping projects designed by the Park Commission upon advice of professionals that have not done well and that have had to be replaced. O’Brien stated that the trees that have been selected have not survived in some places, and the Fontana Boulevard median plantings were dug up and transplanted at a great expense because someone complained about them. O’Brien stated that Bald Cypress trees are slow growing and may not be appropriate for Porter Court Plaza, and that River Birch trees also are not good as they will not produce shade. Wilson stated that the Park Commission could put off approving the plant improvement plan and O’Brien could provide an alternative recommendation. Workman stated that he, Hibbard and Diblik did not consider canopy trees because they were trying to stick with the initially approved landscaping plan that called for low-growing, ornamental trees around the plaza. Workman stated that if the Park Commission wants to change the type of trees to canopy trees, swamp white oak trees would be a good alternative. The Park Commission directed Workman to meet with Diblik to come up with a recommendation on canopy trees to be planted in Porter Court Plaza.

Duck Pond Recreation Area 20 Dead Trees –Recommendation from Tom Vanderpoel

Workman stated that there are actually about 15 oak trees that did not survive the transplanting and are still under warranty for Prairie Tree to replace. In an emailed message to the Park Commission, Hibbard stated that she and Workman met with Vanderpoel and they looked at the dead oak trees. Vanderpoel's advice is to not replace them and to try to work out a credit with Prairie Tree to help pay for new trees and shrubs for Porter Court Plaza and to provide some labor on the prairie restoration area weed abatement. Hibbard stated that Vanderpoel was impressed by the good job they did spraying last year. "The really good news is there are not a lot of weeds in the prairie and Tom was able to pick out a lot of the flowers we have been sowing for the last couple of years. You all remember that the roots go down first and get established and then the flowers appear after that happens. Tom saw compass plant, butterfly plant, prairie clover, coreopsis, cone flower and blazing star. Some may bloom this year, but we will definitely have more flowers next year. The grasses all look fantastic in the prairie and there are oaks that look really good. We need to fertilize the red maples (they are between the path and the road past the bridge) soon. At the end of September volunteers will start harvesting seeds. The seeds we harvest on the side of the road and on the hill up from Highway 67 get sown in the Oak Savanna, the ones we harvest in the prairie which is mostly the grasses we save and have the prairie sowing with the volunteers in the fall. If I can get a group of volunteers to go to Barrington and help harvest there they will donate some of their seeds to our prairie. It is a fun and educational trip, we learn about plants plus we get the extra seeds. We will be buying some seed but not very much. That will come from the funds the Garden Club gave Parks. Now about the garlic mustard in the Hildebrandt area: We can spray for that in late fall, the plants we want to save have gone dormant then so they are safe from the spray. Then we can do some pulling of garlic mustard in the spring. We will have to do that for a few years but at least there is hope to get rid of it without intensive labor. Tom will be back to give Prairie Tree instructions on spraying because they must be careful not to spray the new plants that we have sowed, and in September to point out the plants to harvest. I can't say enough about Tom Vanderpoel and the wealth of knowledge he brings to Fontana. We would be lost without him," Hibbard stated in the emailed message. Workman stated that the native prairie and some of the oak trees are doing very well. Workman stated that the Prairie Tree employees are certified and licensed to spray the invasive weeds in the prairie restoration area. Workman stated that his recommendation would be to take the credit for the dead oak trees and not replace them, and use the credit with Prairie Tree to fund the invasive weed maintenance assistance and maybe for the purchase of new trees and plants for Porter Court Plaza.

Lobdell/Wilson 2nd made a MOTION to recommend that the Village take a credit from Prairie Tree Landscape, Inc. for the dead oak trees at the Duck Pond Prairie Restoration and Oak Savannah area and to allocate the funds for invasive weed abatement assistance and if there are remaining funds to allocate them for the purchase of new trees and plants for Porter Court Plaza. The MOTION carried without negative vote.

Pig in the Park September 3, 2011 Reid Park Fund-Raiser – Authorize Expenditures

Hayden distributed the event planning sheet. Laura Coates stated that she should be able to solicit help from four or five volunteers to help at the event. Lobdell stated that she will email the volunteer registration sheet out to the Park Commission members. Hayden stated that volunteers are needed to help man the bounce house, and other events being planned for this year are a petting zoo, pony rides, the T-shirt painting booth and a popcorn lady. The Park Commission members asked Hayden to try and find a balloon artist again this year and maybe someone for face painting. Hayden stated that there are two bands scheduled to provide entertainment at the beer tent. Hayden stated the security deposits have to be paid for the pony rides and petting zoo, and some of the food items have already been picked up.

O'Brien/Conklin 2nd made a MOTION to authorize staff to pay the Pig in the Park expenses, and the MOTION carried without negative vote.

New Business

2012 Budget Process

Hayden stated that the budget worksheets will be distributed later in the month. The Park Commission will consider its budget proposal at the next monthly meeting Wednesday, September 21, 2011, and then present the budget to the Finance Committee on Thursday, September 22, 2011.

Any Other Comments/Concerns

Martin stated that Sharon Conklin has submitted her resignation from the Park Commission due to personal

reasons. There will be an item on the next agenda to accept the resignation.

Adjournment

Lobdell/Wilson 2nd made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 6:49 pm, and the MOTION carried without negative vote.

Note: These minutes are subject to further editing. Once approved by the Park Commission the official minutes will be on file at the Fontana Village Hall.

Approved: 9/21/2011