

CITY OF STURGEON BAY
JOINT PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE / BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, December 21, 2022
Council Chambers, City Hall, 421 Michigan Street
5:00 P.M.

A meeting of the Joint parks and Recreation Committee / Board was called to order at 5:00 P.M. by Chairperson/Ald. Bacon in Council Chambers, City Hall, 421 Michigan Street.

Roll Call [1]: Members present were Chair/Ald. Helen Bacon, Ald. Gary Nault, Ald. Spencer Gustafson, Randy Morrow, Chris Larson, Debbie Kiedrowski, Jay Renstrom, and Thomas Hemminger. Municipal Services Director Mike Barker was excused. Also in attendance was City Administrator Josh VanLieshout and Administrative Assistant Suzanne Miller.

Adoption of the Agenda [2]: Motion was made by Nault and seconded by Larsen to adopt the following agenda:

1. Roll Call
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Review of Minutes from October 26, 2022
4. Review of Local Arts Board Minutes from September 14, 2022
5. Public Comment on Agenda Items
6. Consideration of allowing Door Drifters usage of the Ahnapee Trail extension through Cherry Blossom Park
7. Consideration of "Horizon" sculpture placement at Sunset Park
8. Chair's report
9. Director's report
10. Adjourn

Review of Minutes from October 26, 2022 [3]: Regarding the consideration of raising boat launch fees, Nault emphasized he was in favor of raising the boat launch fees (agenda item #6), but not in favor of the proposed increase in launch fees for commercial boats. He emphasized his vote was not in favor of the first motion to approve the fee increase with the daily rate of \$10 instead of \$8, nor did he vote in favor of the second motion to approve the increase as submitted in the executive summary. There were no other comments or changes.

Review of Minutes from the Local Arts Board meeting on September, 14, 2022 [4]: No comments or changes.

Public Comment on Agenda Items [5]: No comment.

Consideration of allowing Sturgeon Bay Door Drifters Snowmobile Club usage of the Ahnapee Trail extension through Cherry Blossom Park [6]: The Committee/Board discussed the following:

- Concerns regarding snowmobile use of the trail extension included safety of children, walkers, cross-country skiers, and snowshoers who share the trail because it now runs along the edge of the park rather than across the open field as it did in the past. The section of the trail extension that runs along Cherry Blossom Park is ≈2 blocks long.
- The trail extension is part of the larger WI DNR Ahnapee Trail System and the trail website clearly states snowmobiles are allowed on the Ahnapee Trail.
- Understanding the trail is a WI State trail, concerned neighbors have backed down a bit and are now requesting additional signage. Some members have heard no concerns from residents
- Questions were raised regarding the level of usage of the trail extension and the frequency with which snowmobiles and skiers/snowshoers are sharing the trail. Morrow stated "a couple hundred sleds" use the trail per season. The number of cross-country skiers is few, though skiers do like to use snowmobile trails.
- The Board/Committee questioned what the speed limit for snowmobiles on the trail extension would be.

Rob Tess of 735 Georgia Street addressed the Board speaking on behalf of Sturgeon Bay's Door Drifters Snowmobile Club. He presented the following information:

- They did not have landowners who were agreeable to their property being used to allow the snowmobile trail to move more to the west side of the park to avoid children, walkers, skiers, and snowshoers. Therefore, the trail was routed through the Ahnapee Trail Extension.
- The Club is willing to add signage to get snowmobilers to slow down.
- Because the snowmobile trail on Ahnapee Trail extension is in Cherry Blossom Park, the club is willing to erect snow fencing to prevent snowmobiles from veering into the park.
- The DNR monitors snowmobile trails and users for sound.
- During the 2021-2022 season, the trails were open for 3 weeks.
- There are more walkers on the trail in Cherry Blossom Park as skiers prefer the state park trails.
- As there is a 90° turn in a short space in Cherry Blossom Park that prevents much of a speed issue and plenty of width for users to move out of each other's way.

Motion to approve allowing Sturgeon Bay's Door Drifters Snowmobile Club usage of the Ahnapee Trail extension through Cherry Blossom Park at the correct speed limits made by Renstrom and seconded by Morrow. All ayes. Motion carried.

Consideration of "Horizon" sculpture placement at Sunset Park [7]: Chair Bacon reported the Local Arts Board is working toward having a sculpture walk that would encompass both East and West waterfront promenades, downtowns, and area parks. It is planned for the sculpture walk to be publicized by Destination Sturgeon Bay. An art piece, "Horizon" is offered as a loaned piece for up to three (3)-years by artist Nathan Hatch for placement along the sculpture walk. Hatch describes the piece as representing the Niagara Escarpment, with the flat/straight section being the horizon, the circular piece represents the sun/moon, and the craggy under section representing the escarpment itself. The large piece has no sharp edges or safety concerns and the artist feels it would be best displayed raised up from ground level and with the water as a background. The artist and gallery (Edgewood Orchard) will deliver the piece and assist Public Works with installation. Along the waterfront at Sunset Park is the suggested location as the piece can be viewed from a distance and up close there. The sculpture is priced at \$15,000. If accepted, artist Hatch will receive a stipend of \$750.00. Of concern is the cost of preparing the display site, which would be performed and paid for by Municipal Services. The Board discussed the following:

- The jetty near the beach and boat launch was suggested as a display site, as was the star shaped planter.
- It was suggested the issue of a call for artists at the end of the loan period will keep the display site filled. Concern was raised as to whether it will be more difficult to swap out art pieces for a large sculpture pad in Sunset Park vs. the display space at Stone Harbor.
- Is this board being asked to consider both acceptance of the art piece on loan and identify the site in this meeting? Concern was raised as to whether the artist should be allowed to decide location of display site. Parks and Recreation Board should be the decision maker regarding where anything is located in any City park.
- City Administrator VanLieshout stated the gems of Sunset Park are the sunset and the view of the bluff across the bay. He stated placing a piece that would obstruct that view is a mistake and the piece would be better situated on the landward part of the path that runs north and south in the park.
- Nault reported he had spoken to some constituents about the piece. He raised concerns as follows: 1. Who can put "art" on City property? 2. Who provides insurance for the pieces? 3. Who pays for the display site construction and removes the art piece at the end of the loan period? 4. Is the City's sculpture placement effort fair to other types of artists? 5. His discomfort that this Board is making the decision as to what people in the community want in public art.
- Chair Bacon explained the Local Arts Board's process for evaluating and selecting artists and art pieces and reported Mike Barker will be meeting with the artist. Due to weather/frozen ground, the art piece cannot be placed until spring.
- Regarding safety, there have been no problems thus far with people climbing on "Woolly" or "Crosswind Approach".

Motion by Gustafson to accept Nathan Hatch's sculpture as a loaned piece for a period of not less than two (2)-years with the contingency that the exact location of the display site be approved by the Joint Parks and Recreation Board/Committee. Second by Morrow. Vote on the motion resulted in seven (7) in favor and Nault opposed. Motion carried.

Chair's Report [8]: Chair Bacon reported Wisconsin Sea Grant released their video about their 50th Anniversary Mural. The mural is installed on the front of Sturgeon Bay's City Hall. The video will be emailed to the Board members and posted on the City's Facebook page. Morrow questioned when the "weigh on the water" issue would be back on the agenda. Bacon responded it will be necessary to consult Municipal Services Director Barker in order to know when that discussion will occur.

Director's Report [9]: No Director's Report due to Municipal Services Director Barker's excused absence.

Adjourn [10]: Motion to adjourn by Gustafson, second by Renstrom. All ayes. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:51pm.