

**PARKS & RECREATION BOARD
VIDEO CONFERENCE
MAY 20, 2020**

Video conference participants: Jim Anderson, Julie Asmus, Rick Fagerlie, Tom Gilbertson, Rand Middleton, Andy Ogdahl, Chloe Quinn, Val Swanson

Staff present: Rob Baumgarn, Britta Diem, Curt Hein, Ryan Scheffler, Alex Sobieck

Chairman Jim Anderson called the meeting to order. Rob called roll call.

Jim asked if there were any additions or corrections to the agenda. Rob said he would add some things he had learned this morning regarding summer rec.

Jim asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes. Val Swanson made a motion to approve, seconded by Rand Middleton. As there was no discussion, the minutes were approved.

Summer Recreation: Rob gave an overview of summer rec and the Covid-19 virus. He stated that there have been quite a few meetings by Zoom and that everyone is in the same boat. Rob said he has been talking to School staff, Ryan Blahosky and Scott Wallner and they are of the opinion that school facilities would be closed thru June, possibly opening by July 6. .

Jim called on Alex to present her plans for summer programming. She stated that she has been brainstorming programs that we could implement at a scaled back version. The idea is to offer programs in groups of 10 or less, including staff. The plan is to keep the same kids in the same groups for each program. For baseball/softball we will be asking kids to bring their own helmets. Staff will be wiping down bats, etc after each use. Hand sanitizer will be at each program. Rob stated there would need to be distinction between contact sports such as soccer, wrestling, versus racket sports. In the instance of soccer, there is going to some contact as kids will be running into each other.

Tom Gilbertson asked if other communities were having participants sign a waiver form so, if they do get Covid-19, they can't come back on the City. Rob said that he has seen it both ways, that a lot of communities are taking a stay safe attitude. A waiver form has been talked about. It would be difficult to prove that someone got Covid-19 from our programs.

Jim Anderson asked if we had thought of having staff at certain parks to take registrations. Alex thought that might be a good idea but how do we keep social distancing if a large group show up at the same time. Rob stated that situation could become a problem.

Jim asked Alex about staff. She replied that she has enough returning staff to help lead the programs and train in new staff.

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Jim called on Ryan Scheffler to talk about adult sports. He is in the same boat as Alex regarding start dates, whether we can start in July or we need to wait until August. Facilities – shelters remain closed. Has been involved in numerous conference calls talking about summer ice. There is a group who wants to have summer ice. Talk involves dividing the ice in half and have 9 skaters with one coach on each side, no locker rooms, skaters come in their equipment, wearing their skates with skate guards. USA Hockey says the Corona Virus loves cold temperatures and hangs on glass up to 5 days. We would need to sanitize the glass and door knobs, etc between each group which would mean additional staff.

Chloe Quinn asked what the financial impact is with regard to loss of summer ice, if that happens. Rob stated that the summer ice contract has a dead-line listed where the Association could cancel before ice is made. If that happens, he assumes that individuals who have already registered and paid would be refunded. If the numbers of skaters is limited to 9, that will really affect the program.

Rand asked how long a period of time would be needed prior to offering classes. Rob responded that we have talked to our printer. Once we get information to her, she could have it back to us in a couple of days. We would not be mailing a brochure, only have a digital copy available online.

Britta talked about the pool and changes that would need to be implemented in order to open. At the governor's stated usage at 25%, that would decrease the daily attendance to 75-80 which would greatly reduce revenue. The annual expense to open the pool is \$240,000 with annual revenue at \$70,000.

Britta also talked about the Community Center and the bikes. As with everything else, sanitizing and social distancing remain a priority.

Rick Fagerlie also asked about the status of the splash pad. Rob stated we are waiting for the clearance to open up. The same problems arise with the splash pad as the playgrounds. The water is not chlorinated. To keep the numbers down to acceptable levels, we would need to have staff on duty.

After further discussion, the consensus of the Board is that we should offer as many programs as we can while making sure to adhere to all safety protocols. It would then be the parent's decision to enroll their child or not. Starting programs July 6 was agreed upon unless the governor's message later today allows for an earlier opening date. Rob thanked everyone for their input.

The next item on the agenda is the Four Season Shelter. Rob shared some pictures of the shelter. Curt Hein told everyone that, after today, the project is about 99% done. The black dirt showing in the picture has now been seeded and should have grass growing in a couple of weeks, waiting for rain. A concrete pad was completed by Public Works staff, creating a seating area. There is also an overhang roof providing shade. The plan is to move the painting in the Guri Shelter and hang in the new shelter. Hopefully, we will be able to use the shelter this year. Tom Gilbertson asked if the shelter came in on budget. Rob replied that there is about \$30,000 to \$40,000 left in the contingency fund.

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Invest in Willmar Update: Rob stated that there is an Invest in Willmar meeting this afternoon. The Council made a decision this week to hold off on the rec center and rec field and to scale down the budget. Robbins Island will go out for bid for parking lot and road (not including the alternates). The other projects were told their budget would be 67% of their original amount because the sales tax dollars have not been coming in as expected. Julie Asmus said that the projects could not go on as originally planned because the sales tax dollars are not there and the City would be on the hook for the money which would entail raising property taxes by 14% or more.

Park & Rec evaluations: Rob explained that the City Council wanted an update of the Department since its new beginning after splitting with Community Education. Julie Asmus complimented Rob on a good report and thanked some of the Board's input.

Julie Asmus responded to Tom Gilbertson's question regarding the decreased revenue from the local option sales tax. She stated that \$600,000 was received for October, November and December. \$1.2 million was planned on being received. Going forward, the conservative estimate of monthly income from the Local Option Sales Tax is \$100,000-\$150,000. The yearly amount at \$150,000 per month would amount to \$1,800,000. This figure times 12 years comes up to \$21,600,000 which is quite a bit less than the \$30 million hoped for. Julie stated there will be quite a discussion at today's meeting and wondered if some of the projects can even go forward at 67% of their budget.

Coordinator's reports: In lieu of Coordinator's Reports, Rob informed the Board that staff is working with Public Works mowing boulevards, weed whipping, etc, staying flexible in this unsettled time.

Board questions: Val Swanson asked what the situation is with Becky's position. Rob replied that has been put on hold for the time being. Interviews had been set up but were cancelled due to Covid-19 situation.

There was a discussion regarding other ways of connecting with people, informing them of our summer programs. Rob said we are working on alternate ways to get the word out. He also stated we had been talking about sports bags that families could check out and probably expanding the equipment to different sports instead of just volleyball, softball, football, etc.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Tom Gilbertson, seconded by Rand Middleton. Motion carried.

The next meeting will be June 17.