

**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
Friday, May 10, 2019**

**Members present:** Dorothy Dybvig, Tony Vavricka, Mary Franklin, Eric Sturtz, Dave Barsness, David Chasson; Council Liaison Tim Franklin

**Members absent:** Karry White

**Staff Present:** Administrator Kathy George, Streets & Parks Supervisor Craige Hiler

**Guests:** None

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Agenda**

Photo Voice Project was given as an addition to the Agenda. **Motion Franklin, second Barsness, to approve the agenda with the addition. Motion passed 5-0** (Chair Dybvig had not arrived yet).

**Minutes**

**Motion Sturtz, second Franklin, to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2019 meeting. Motion passed 5-0.**

**New Business**

- A. Special Event Permit Application – Sandstone Evangelical Free Church – The City received a Special Event Permit Application from Cheryl Stafne on behalf of the Sandstone Evangelical Free Church. They propose to host “Family Fun in the Park” at Train Park on June 13, July 11, and August 15 (Thursdays) from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. They estimate there will be 50 attendees each night. They plan to provide hotdogs, chips and lawn games. **Motion Vavricka, second Sturtz, to recommend the City Council approve the Special Event Permit Application of the Sandstone Evangelical Free Church. Motion passed 6-0.**
  
- B. Special Event Permit Application – Elm Creek Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints – The City received a Special Event Permit Application from Reed Taylor on behalf of the Elm Creek Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. They would like to camp at Robinson Park with their church youth group on June 21st – 22nd (Friday and Saturday). They estimate about 15 attendees. They also plan to go rafting and do some rock climbing. They are interested in doing some type of service / small jobs in the park as well.

**Motion Vavricka, second Barsness, to recommend the City Council approve the Special Event Permit Application of the Elm Creek Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints with the following conditions:**

- **Fires are only allowed in fire pits, as follows:**

- 1 existing fire ring across from the bathroom by the picnic pavilion
- 3 existing fire rings in the camping areas
- Cutting of trees for firewood is not allowed;
- Designate an area for vehicle parking, with signage;
- Portage only to camp sites – no vehicles;
- The Sheriff's Department should be made aware of the event.

**Motion passed 6-0.**

- C. City Code 960 – Special Events – Since February, the Park Commission has been discussing possible changes to City Code 960. The majority of discussion has centered around streamlining the process. Rather than requiring Special Event Permits be presented to the Park Commission for a recommendation to the City Council, and then having the City Council make the final determination, Park Commissioners are proposing a modification to allow for the City Administrator to approve or deny the Special Event Permit Applications. Additional language has been added to allow for an appeal process if an application has been denied by the City Administrator. Language has also been added to require the City Administrator notify the Park & Recreation Commission and the City Council of approved events.

At the May meeting, Commissioners looked more closely at section 960.07 (Permit not Required). After discussion, it was decided to remove this section entirely, after checking with the City Attorney. Once this question is answered, the draft is ready to be presented to the City Council for consideration.

- D. Photo Voice Project – The City has been approached by Eagle Teens in Action, a group of high school students who are working to reduce the use of drugs and alcohol among their peers. They plan to use photos they took at Robinson Park for two separate messages – one message of hope and one message of concern. One photo is of the rock wall that is covered with graffiti. The other photo depicts two individuals looking at the river. The group also asked if the City was interested in building a structure specifically meant for graffiti.

Commissioners discussed the idea and noted that they are not interested in creating a space for graffiti. They acknowledged that some people like to have their photos (graduation, wedding, etc.) taken in front of the graffiti. The Streets & Parks crew also attends to any obscene graffiti that might appear from time to time. Otherwise, Commissioners noted no concern for the plans of the Photo Voice Project.

### **Continuing Business**

The following update was provided on the various items listed as Continuing Business on the Agenda:

Lions Hill Chalet. The Commission addressed the many needs that were previously discussed concerning the chalet at Lions Hill. Hiler is getting quotes to extend sewer and water to the building. He is also looking at the chimney and roof to determine the extent of the needed repairs. George will call Drilling Electric to have an electrical review of the building done, as suggested by D&E when they replaced the furnace. Other work needed

involves painting and repair work. The Sandstone Lions Club has expressed interest in helping with the needs. Hiler and George will work on putting together a list with cost estimates so that the Sandstone Lions can talk about it further at their May 23<sup>rd</sup> Board Meeting.

Robinson Park. The Legacy Grant Application is due by the end of July. 11 contractors have been contacted about the Gin Pole project. Hopefully, some of them will be willing to provide a quote. Hiler is working with Mike Johnson on replacing the stage. A meeting is being arranged with DNR representatives to look at the old dam remnants and the boat ramps. Spring Clean Up is coming up on May 18<sup>th</sup>. The MN Climbers Association members will be reminded. PeopleService contractor Alex Leger is reviewing the Climbers request to move the hydrant shed and water supply closer to the cliff. There were 5 registrations for 7 days of camping in April.

Commissioner Barsness reported that some of the rock on one of the powder houses seems to be disappearing. It was suggested that signage be put up at various locations in the park letting people know that Robinson Park is on the National Register of Historic Places and that removal of historic artifacts is against the law.

KREEC Site Redevelopment. Commissioners received a report on the meeting that took place with the DNR, Council Member Brandon Devlin, and Park Commissioners on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. George stated that the major take away was that mixed uses – ATV's in a confined space and camping/hiking/skiing could work if designed correctly. The group had talked about creating an ATV training center on the west side of Old Military Road and developing trails and camping on the east side.

Commissioners discussed what the driving forces are behind these ideas. Is there an ATV group lobbying for a training center? Is there enough demand in the area for hiking and camping sites? It was noted that the Audubon Center uses the property for hiking. There is already an existing patchwork of trails that could be maintained. The ATV training center could provide something that is lacking in the area and, therefore, bring more people into town.

Train Park. Artist Carole Bersin is resuming work on the Kettle River Watershed Mural as the weather permits; the grant is supposed to be closed out by June 30<sup>th</sup>. Commissioners are working on the plans for Arts in the Park; details are needed by May 20<sup>th</sup> for the advertising. The Kiosk project is moving forward; all of the updated information has been provided to Craig Saari. It is hoped that the posters will be in place by the end of May.

Angle Park. The hockey boards will be offered for sale on the Public Surplus Auction site to see if there is any interest.

Eagle Field. Commissioners discussed signage for the park. Lee Dybvig had agreed to make the sign, but would like input on the verbiage. Commissioners decided the sign should say EAGLE FIELD on the top line, and City of Sandstone in smaller print underneath.

**Other** – Other updates were provided as follows:

Pine Avenue – Big Spring Falls – City Engineer Steve Rose and Streets & Parks Supervisor Craige Hiler are working together to come up with a plan to improve the City’s portion of the road, along with cost estimates.

DNR Regional Meeting- Pine County Commissioners hosted a DNR Regional Meeting on April 30<sup>th</sup> at the St. Croix State Park Visitors Center. Patty Thielen is the new Regional Director for this area. She went through all the different divisions of the DNR, explaining what each of them do. It was very informative. A handout was provided to Commissioners.

Scenic Byway Workshop – Deputy Clerk Alana Tyson attended the workshop this week at the Audubon Center of the North Woods. Commissioner Vavricka also attended. He reported that there is interest in connecting the St. Croix Scenic Byway to the Veterans Evergeen Scenic Byway through the City of Sandstone. Commissioners noted that it would be great to have a visitor’s area at Train Park.

Climbing Advocacy Summit – George attended this event last weekend (May 4-5) at Devil’s Lake in Wisconsin. Sessions she attended covered:

- Maintaining Relationships with Public Land Managers
- Maximizing Your Local Climbing Organization’s Impact
- From Obscure to Official (Ice Climbing)
- Stewardship Workshop

She reported that this was a great weekend. There were climbers from all over the Country – Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Upper Peninsula, Colorado, Arkansas, Illinois, Missouri, Ohio, South Dakota, and more. Good networking. Rock Climbing and Ice Climbing are growing at a fast rate. They are even being considered for the Olympics, which will only increase the interest. She mentioned creating an emergency response station in Robinson Park. The Fire Department is also looking for funding and equipment in order to provide rope rescue. Commissioner Vavricka stated that he would be interested in becoming a volunteer firefighter, with an emphasis on creating a Ropes Rescue Team.

## **Adjourn**

**Motion Barsness, second Vavricka, to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 a.m. Motion passed 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathy George, City Administrator