

UNOFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE  
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD OF THE CITY OF MITCHELL  
April 8, 2021

A regular meeting of the Mitchell Parks and Recreation Board was held Thursday, April 8, 2021. The meeting was called to order by Mary Ellen Jepsen, President at 6:00 p.m., at the City Hall Council Chambers.

The following members of the Board were present: Mary Ellen Jepsen, Andy Jerke, Amanda Johnson, Chris Retterath, Luke Norden. Council Liaison: Marty Barington. Absent: Pat Skinner, Shawn Erickson. Staff Present: Nate Powell, Kevin DeVries, Angel DeWaard, Steve Roth, Jamie Henkel.

A delegation represented by Steve Rice was present. Mr. Rice informed the Board of his recent experience in trying to utilize the new online shelter reservation system, which was not very user friendly. Was trying to reserve Patton Young during the week for evening, was unable to due to park & rec program, and was able to get reservation after speaking with Angel. Powell noted online reservation new this year, we are addressing glitches and issues as they arise and working with City Administrator on streamlining ease of reserving shelters online, will give update to at next month's meeting.

Motion Retterath, Second Jerke to approve the Agenda as submitted. Motion approved and carried.

Minutes of the March 11, 2021 meeting were reviewed. Motion Retterath, second Johnson to approve the March 11, 2021 Minutes as read. Motion approved and carried.

Motion Jerke, second Norden to approve the Bills as submitted. Motion approved and carried.

Kevin DeVries reviewed the Recreation Center Report. All winter programs have wrapped up. Men's basketball, Coed Volleyball, Swimming lessons and youth wrestling all were completed in March and early April. The summer brochure will be out the week of April 5<sup>th</sup> with online registration starting Monday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 8:00am. Jamie held here lifeguard training course March 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>. We canceled our youth basketball tournament on April 3<sup>rd</sup> due to lack of teams and rescheduled it for October 30<sup>th</sup>. Thomas & Adam are seeing an increase in high school athletes wanting to get back in and start their weight training programs. The State Swim Meet went very well. Thanks to Jamie and Joe for all the work leading up to the meet getting things ready. Starting April 14<sup>th</sup> on Wednesday evening, we will holding a Yoga class from 5:45-6:45 p.m. Starting April 1<sup>st</sup>, we have begun selling Rec Center memberships online, with the exception of corporate, scholarship or personal training memberships. New members will still need to come in to get their card and picture taken. We will also be selling outdoor aquatic center memberships online as well starting May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Steve Roth reviewed the Parks and Forestry Report. Projects we are working on or have completed are: Tree removals on boulevards and parks; Maintenance and repairs on equipment; Cleaning up trees and branches from snowstorm; Installed self-pay station at Campground for debt and credit cards; Prepping the floor in the enclosed shelter in Hitchcock for installation of new vinyl tile flooring; Replaced the light fixtures in our breakroom to new LED lights; Made repairs to the West end boat dock and put in the water; Did playground inspections and repairs; Snow removal; Advertising and hiring seasonal staff; Starting to clean up parks and lake access areas for the summer.

Board reviewed the Sports Complex Report.

*Cadwell*

- DWU and Mitchell baseball started
- Slow pitch softball starts first of May
- Travel teams started practicing
- Dakota Bulldogs Football starts first of May
- Bathrooms are all up and going
- Try to turn on irrigation this week
- Looking at fertilizing soon depending on weather
- Start mowing soon

*Soccer*

- DWU started
- MSA started this week
- Fertilizing and mowing soon

*Ice Arena*

- Open skate and bumper cars still going
- Hockey is down to just a couple practices a week
- Figure skating still practicing 3 times a week
- Men's league tournament this weekend
- Figure skating show next weekend
- Figure skating has practices scheduled to the end of the month
- Shaving down ice, taking out logos and ice first part of May

Director Powell reviewed the monthly Department Report.

***Major Incidents/Significant Events***

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***Important Meetings and Training Attended***

- Friends of Firesteel Meeting
- Parks Board Meeting
- City Council Meetings
- MACPD meeting
- Sports and Events Authority meeting
- Weekly and Quarterly staff meetings
- Weekly Department Head management meetings
- R8 HAB conference call

- Golf & Cemetery Board Meeting
- Attended the Council Work Session
- Transportation Plan Meetings
- Loss control safety inspections
- ESports discussion

***Project Outcomes***

- Firesteel Park Preliminary Design Approved By the Board
- Park Specialist Positions Fully Staffed
- Contingency funds approved by Council for Deerland Estate Controllers
- Tennis Association Agreement Approved by the Board
- Golf Course Master Plan firm Selected by selection committee

***Current Projects***

- Skate Park Upgrade
- Digital Cemetery
- Golf course master plan
- Lake Mitchell trail markers
- Refurbish pond on Indian village Rd
- Dredging design
- Golf Course Fly Over Edits
- Dry Run Creek Trail Lighting
- SDNG project
- Golf Cart Replacement
- Shared Roadway Installation
- Jetty & Boat Dock Installation

***Upcoming Special Events and Meetings***

- Parks Board meeting
- Friends of Firesteel meeting
- MACPD meeting
- City Council Meetings
- Monthly SEAC meetings
- Monthly Region 8 HAB's conference call
- Golf & Cemetery Board Meetings
- Transportation Plan Meetings for Public Works

***Change in Park/Facility Status***

- Diamond Brite Warranty Issues
- Zipline Warranty Replacement
- Ice Arena Roof Warranty Repair

***Public Requests***

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Director Powell submitted the updated Guidelines for addressing harmful algal blooms in Lake Mitchell to the Board along with a request to stop testing for cylindrospermopsin as the past two years has been good. After a brief discussion, Motion Norden, Second Jerke to approve the

updated Guidelines for addressing harmful algal blooms in Lake Mitchell as presented. Motion approved and carried.

Director Powell submitted a request to the Board to Update the Life Jacket Policy in the SOP Manual to allow puddle jumper style life vests. Board approved policy in 2018 that no life jackets permitted but there is no clarification on whether or not puddle jumper style vests are permitted. The current practice is we allow puddle jumper style life vests at the indoor pool but not the outdoor pool and no life jackets allowed at either. If the Board takes action to change the policy we would update Page 47 & 51-52 of the SOP Manual if no action is taken by the Board the policy will remain the same and no puddle jumpers would be allowed. DeVries noted insurance and HR are against puddle jumpers, current policy for children age 5 and under must be in arms reach of parent. We have allowed puddle jumpers we have allowed floatation devices and find parents leave children unattended. Johnson informed the Board she did not renew her membership because life jackets and puddle jumpers are not allowed. Henkel noted the younger (new guards) let it go whereas the older and returning guards enforce the rules. Jerke questioned is there could be timeframes set to allow and not allow these. Retterath stated as a former lifeguard he is against kids using any floatation devices. Powell questioned if they should be provided. DeVries noted HR is completely against this due to liability, which we are trying to decrease. After more discussion, Motion Johnson to allow change the current policy and allow puddle jumpers. The motion dies for lack of a second and the policy will remain the same not allowing lifejackets or puddle jumpers.

The Board reviewed a request submitted by Director Powell to Update the Vortex Policy language to "Open Swim" rather than "Guarded Times." Noting current policy is 48" height required during guarded times, age 14 requirement when not guarded, however the current practice is age 14 required at all times. DeVries stated Vortex is utilized a lot for exercise and therapy by adults. Henkel noted Adam & Thomas utilize it for their athletic training programs and due to the strong current children are unable to handle the water motion and lifeguards are making numerous saves. Jepsen noted using the Vortex and felt it was hard work for an adult and dangerous for children. Retterath stated the original intent for the Vortex was to be a play feature however does not feel it is safe for anyone under the age of 14. After a lengthy discussion Motion Retterath, Second Jerke to Update the Vortex Policy language to age 14 required at all times. Yeah by Jepsen, Norden, Retterath and Jerke. Nay by Johnson. Motion approved and carried.

There being no further business the Board adjourned at 7:03 p.m., noting Thursday, May 13, 2021 at 6:00 P.M., at the City Hall Council Chambers as the date of the next regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Board.