

MINUTES

PARK COMMITTEE TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 1998 ROOM 310, CITY HALL

The meeting was called to order by Ald. Theisen at 6:30 P.M.

Members present: D. Baenen, D. Haefs, J. Hansen and A. Theisen

Others present: B. Landvatter and D. Cramer

A motion was made by Ald. Haefs to approve the minutes of the last meeting as recorded. Motion was seconded by Ald. Hansen and carried.

1. Request by Bob Goodletson to Address the Committee Regarding a Youth Baseball Incident

Mr. Goodletson and his son, Jeremy, came to the Committee to discuss an incident which occurred following a Babe Ruth baseball game at Perkins Park in May. A coach came to Jeremy, grabbed him around the neck and threatened him because he didn't like the way Jeremy had hit hands with him in the lineup after the game. When Mr. Goodletson joined them, the coach yelled at him and shoved him. Mr. Goodletson and Jeremy then left the park. Mr. Goodletson wanted to find out what the city could do about this incident.

Mr. Goodletson came to the Park Department the day after the incident and spoke with staff and the Asst. City Attorney. A citation was then issued to the wrong person because the wrong name was given to Mr. Goodletson. When the correct person was identified and the police talked with him a couple of days later, he had a different story about what occurred. No further citation has been issued. Ald. Hansen contacted the Asst. City Attorney and was told Mr. Goodletson should bring this matter to the Park Committee.

Ald. Haefs suggested sometimes these problems can be handled in house by the league. Staff stated if the city was the direct provider of the program, we could take action and probably eject the coach. Being a direct provider would mean that we hire, supervise, train and schedule volunteers and employees in the program. Because the city has given the leagues autonomy to conduct their own business, we have little control. Ald. Theisen said we need an opinion from the City Attorney regarding liability for the city and our authority and if we need any policies to handle incidents like this in the future.

Ald. Haefs suggested the least the Committee could do was issue a statement from the City or Council letting them know the Committee has looked at the situation. He made a motion that the Director should draft a strong letter to the Babe Ruth coaches which is to be reviewed by the Park Committee Chairman. Ald. Baenen informed Mr. Goodletson he could pursue this matter in a civil case. Motion was seconded and carried. Ald. Haefs made a motion to get a legal opinion from the City Attorney to see what recourse we have for future incidents. Discussion followed regarding removing patrons from parks by playground leaders. The playground leader

must witness the incident to eject someone and the police can be called to assist. A form is completed and an investigation done by the police. The patron can be kept out of the park for a certain amount of time. Motion was seconded and carried.

2. Request to Use Jackson Square for Titledown Challenge Cycling Race

This request is similar to previous years except they are asking to sell beer. Staff recommended approval of the request. Ald. Haefs made a motion to approve the request subject to the usual stipulations including insurance, permits and payment of fees. Motion was seconded by Ald. Hansen and carried.

3. Review of Eisenhower School Expansion Impact on Park

The expansion of Eisenhower School will be right up to the park property line. Staff recommended having the Park Committee go on record as to having no objection to the expansion. Staff is reviewing drainage with the School District. The land will probably be sloped toward the park, and the backstop may be moved. The School District will also be asking for a variance which we could support. Ald. Haefs made a motion to go on record supporting the Eisenhower School expansion, and if needed, prepare a letter for the Board of Appeals supporting the variance. Motion was seconded by Ald. Hansen and carried. Ald. Haefs left to attend another meeting at this time.

4. Alcohol in the Parks

The policy currently in the Park section of the Municipal Code states “Fermented malt beverages and intoxicating liquors may be brought to and consumed in such areas of the parks as shall be designated by the Park Committee.” We also have a policy restricting the use of fermented malt beverages between April 1 and the Saturday before Memorial Day. This policy went into effect to prevent problems in the parks when beer could be consumed at the age of 18. At this time we have more requests for parks which allow beer than we have parks. It is not particularly good customer service to ask the person to write a letter requesting to consume alcohol at the park, have the request come before the Park Committee for approval and then wait for approval by the Common Council. Sometimes the request comes in too late to go through this process and must either be denied or approved administratively. It must be determined where alcohol can be consumed in the park. It has always been understood but never adopted that we were referring to beer and wine coolers, but the code states intoxicating liquors. At this time hard liquor is only allowed at the Bay Beach Pavilion.

Staff would like to work with the Law Department to draft an ordinance to bring back to the Committee for review and recommends alcohol only be allowed with shelter reservations at parks other than the current beer allowed parks. If the Committee establishes a policy, the department staff will enforce the policy. Ald. Theisen suggested coming back to the Committee when anyone renting a shelter caused problems. Staff also recommended eliminating the April 1 to Saturday before Memorial Day restriction. Ald. Hansen made a motion to direct staff to draft an ordinance along with the Law Office to be brought back to the Committee for review prior to being forwarded to the Common Council. Motion was seconded by Ald. Baenen and carried.

5. Requests to Serve Alcohol in the Following Parks:

a) Danz Park	Saturday, June 13	Graduation
b) Joannes Park	Sunday, June 14	Graduation
c) Mather Heights	Saturday, June 20	Graduation/Birthday
d) McAuliffe	Saturday, July 4	Birthday
e) John Muir	Sunday, July 12	Company Picnic
f) St. James	Sunday, June 21	Event Unknown
MUSIC REQUESTED ALSO		

Staff recommended approval of items (a) through (e) but had concerns regarding item (f). This person requested to rent St. James band shell for live music and also requested alcohol be allowed. This is a small park with residents across the street on all four sides. The residents are sensitive to music and alcohol being allowed. If music is allowed, this person would be reminded about the policy which only allows music during a three hour time period which includes a one hour break in between. Also, if the music exceeds the allowed decibel level, the group will be asked to leave.

Ald. Theisen asked that we set criteria in the alcohol policy dealing with restrictions for small parks or parks too close to residents. Ald. Hansen made a motion to approve the request for music following the three hour criteria policy and deny the request to allow alcohol. Motion was seconded by Ald. Baenen and carried.

6. Closed session - Pursuant to Section 19.85(1)(e) Wisconsin Statutes, the Committee may convene in closed session for the purpose of deliberating the purchase of public property. The Committee may then reconvene in open session.

After convening in closed session, the Committee reconvened in open session with the following action. Ald. Hansen made a motion to move forward with the purchase of land to continue the riverfront walkway along the Fox River. Motion was seconded by Ald. Baenen and carried.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded and carried.