

MINUTES – HULL PARKS COMMISSION
Thursday, April 5, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

TOWN OF HULL MUNICIPAL BUILDING

4550 WOJCIK MEMORIAL DRIVE, STEVENS POINT, WI 54482



1) **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting of the Hull Parks Commission was called to order on Thursday, April 5, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. by Parks Chairperson Dave Wilz at the Hull Municipal Building, 4550 Wojcik Memorial Drive, Stevens Point, WI 54482.

Present: Chair: Dave Wilz, Committee Members: Carmen Coey, Maurice Stoltz, Mike O’Keefe, Brian Hicks, Katrina Hittner, Parks Secretary: Patty Amman.

Also Present: John Jury, Dave Way, Patty Fritsche

Excused: Jim Mendyke, Pete Kaminski

2) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 28, 2017 HULL PARKS MEETING.** *Motion made by Brian Hicks to approve the minutes of the Sept. 28, 2017 Hull Parks Commission meeting. Seconded by Mike O’Keefe. Motion passed with voice vote.*

3) **CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS. AGENDA ITEMS ARE FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: NONE.**

4) **ANNOUNCEMENTS; PARK’S CHAIRPERSON AND MEMBERS.**

- Dave W. announced the Hull Annual Meeting on Tuesday, April 17, 2018 at 6:30 p.m., everyone is welcome and encouraged to come (here at the Hull building).
- Well #11 Agreement between Hull and City of Stevens Point has been signed. Details of an implementation plan to be worked out. This agreement was worked on for over 4 years.
- Dave W. said he had been asked by a member of the Green Circle organization if there would be someone from Hull who would be interested in being a ‘scout’ for a portion of the Green Trail that is within Hull. A scout involves monitoring the condition along a portion of the Green Trail and notifying the Green Circle contact person if there are trees down or other issues to be checked out. This is done once a week during the season starting in April. Brian Hicks volunteered to be a ‘scout’. Dave W. will let Brian know which portion of the Green Trail in Hull that needs ‘scouting’ or monitoring, if that position has not already been filled.

5) **GREEN CIRCLE PRESENTATION – JOHN JURY.**

- Dave W. introduced John Jury. John and his wife Dory are residents of Hull. John has received numerous awards and is a very involved person in the local community on quite a variety of areas. John was instrumental in getting the Green Circle started and will share its history.
- John J. joined the City’s park board back in 1982. Around that time, land near Bukolt Park was bought and used as the start of the Green Circle and the beginning of the River Front

- Rendezvous. That first part of the trail was 6/10th of a mile between Pfiffner and Bukolt Parks in 1984. People really liked it but said it wasn't long enough.
- In 1985, John visited his relative in Ft. Collins, Colorado and saw a trail connecting two parks. When he returned he and a local group got maps of the local wetlands, state lands, corporate lands, park lands and university lands. They counted 30 private properties. In 1988 there was a business gathering that asked for a talk on the future of local recreation. At that time, John was going off the City park's board because he was moving into the Town of Hull. Some of the local business leaders and banks asked for information on a trail. Some recently retired local leaders decided to take on the project. They realized if government asked landowners for permission to allow people across their land, that would go nowhere. But if neighbors asked neighbors for that permission, it might work. Between 1989 and 1996 the group met every Friday morning at Al's Diner for an hour. Slowly things began to fall in to place with various grand openings of different sections of the trail. People responded well and liked the idea. Different things were done to raise money/funds like cycling events then they started the annual 'ask' the community for funding. The first year they did that they got \$30,000. Since then there have been years where they've gotten as high as \$50,000. The more people that use the trail, the more the trail is appreciated. There is very little government involvement. The director of the County parks is on their committee as is the director of the City parks and the director of the Schmeekle Reserve. They provide their expertise but the rest of the group are local citizens who run the program. Up until 1996 there were 7 people involved with about 22 miles of trail. Then they had a walk around the whole trail event with a couple hundred people who participated. That was the first time they considered Walk Wisconsin which has now been around for 15 years. It falls on National Trail Day. The board now has about 20 members including people who are familiar with fund raising, environmentalists, attorneys and interested/concerned people who are community servants who have adopted this program.
 - John said the Green Circle Trail is within a half mile of 68% of the Portage County population located in the Stevens Point area. It started along the Wisconsin River with the first 3 miles, then other sections were gradually added. It was intended for locals to be out there with their families.
 - Because they couldn't get the trail under the railroad at Patch, Dan Trainer put in for a state grant and it then became a state designated trail and that has helped other people find the trail. They get a lot of people who come into the area to use the trail.
 - John said they have been fortunate and it seems like the Green Circle Trail was just meant to be. When approaching various entities over the years, when they would get a 'no', sometimes personnel would change and then they'd get a 'yes' for permission to use corporate lands. The relationship with the paper mills and Consolidated is now very good.
 - There are some small sections of the trail that are sidewalk and blacktop. The Whiting Mill project takes sidewalks and blacktop to zig zag through there now. The Green Circle will go through before Whiting develops that land.
 - Although realtors were at first resistant to the trail being near properties they were selling, it has turned out that those properties near the trail sell before other properties. People want to live close to the trail and it's considered an advantage.
 - In 2019, the Green Trail will come around through upper Whiting Park and cross at Elm. That will reduce the crossing to 1/2 mile from 1 1/2 miles. It will go into the Whiting well field area from the Whiting upper park.
 - There are some other small areas they are negotiating. They would like to get a box culvert near Hilltop to connect to Iverson.

- It's about \$15,000 a mile to surface one mile. Depending upon the base soil type, sometimes the gravel sinks in, other places it doesn't. Sometimes they need to resurface the trail every 10 years or so. The Green Trail contracts with ConsTrucks right now for that work.
- The Green Trail pays the County around \$8,000 a year to do routine maintenance and signage. The County is their maintenance vendor. They also use volunteers if it's not a dangerous job that needs doing. Various groups from churches, etc. will come out and plant seedlings and screening.
- Although there have been rumors about connecting the trail to Brilowski via a bridge over the Plover River, that is still a ways away. That would be another project that needs to purchase about 33 acres. On the east side of the river, the property is City owned through their water department. The current water director is open to low recreational usage of that land. A retired Corp of Engineers man is going to serve in the Green Trail committee and help in the discussion of that. There's about 500 acres of conversancy in that area. The FAA wants them to move the Green Circle around a bit. The Scouts out there also would like to see a bridge. It hasn't been discussed publically yet. It would cost between \$300,000 and \$500,000 to put in a 90-foot span bridge.
- At one time, there were 2 groups, the Friends of the Trail that dealt with networks of trails going into Plover and into other parts of the County. Both groups were searching for funds so decided to come together and focus on the Green Circle. There are still trail spokes and spurs that come up. They just got a call from the Country Club on how they can utilize the trail. Spokes are inside the trail and spurs are outside the trail.
- Brian Hicks, as an avid user of the trail, thanked John for the trail which Brian said is amazing. They have stayed in their current house for 20 years in part because of its close proximity to the Green Trail (1/2 mile). Brian does recruiting for Skyward and uses the Green Trail as an incentive to prospective college students to come to the area to work.
- John J. said it's an ethic of the community showing they care about the family, about fitness and living in harmony.
- John mentioned that all the Green Trail arrangements with private land owners are for 60 to 90 days at a time and if the landowner wants them off, they get off. If a very small percentage of people are doing something wrong, you end up losing something for all the people. It's hard to monitor 24-28 miles of trail. By using trail counters, they estimate about 140,000 trail users a year. Many people use the trail close to where they live.
- The Green Circle has won a number of awards. It's unique in that it circles a community. There are very few places that have an extensive trail system like the Green Trail anywhere in the country.
- Dave W. said the Green Circle is always open to financial donations to keep it going and you can become Friends of the Green Circle and it's money well spent. There are some good information clips on Facebook about the Green Circle Trail including a 9 minute video done about 10 years ago where they interviewed John J. and Dave Carlson from Eau Claire. It includes statistics and how the trail works. It's still on the Green Circle website. Northland Adventures.
- John J. said Jim Bukholt wrote a grant to get funds for the new section of the trail that is going through Whiting. At the same time a large donation came in to build a shelter but the Green Circle needed to match the funds. Also, Schmeekle Reserve wanted outside bathrooms year round. Jim put all this into a grant which John didn't think would have much chance. But they just got the grant approval the other day.
- John talked about Walk Wisconsin and Active Portage County. Walk Wisconsin provides funding and is set up like a walking marathon with no time limit. They want the events to be

fun. They have information on their website on how to train for the event and when to start. They get sponsors; generate some income for the trail through the Community Foundation. The Green Trail have now gotten their own tents, tables, chairs, cones instead of having to borrow from other groups. They also do hiking events, the Moon Walk to help familiarize local people with these lands. They're trying to put together a bike ride that would go from county park to county park. Active Portage County has a website and is a non-profit group based very much around family interaction in a recreational setting.

- John said he knows of a variety of doctors that have come and stayed in the community because of the trail and the local environmental ethic, parks and feeling of the Central Sands and how we care about the land.
- Katrina H. talked about how the Hull Park's Commission has discussed connecting their local parks. She asked about how we might do that. Or how to connect more of north Stevens Point, Hull, the parks and the Green Circle.
- John said they are interested in a network to help people easily access the trail. There is a sub-group with the Green Circle Trail group that addresses those ideas. There are some signage considerations with that idea.
- Dave W. asked what should we be doing if we want to move from the traditional park to other opportunities of recreation. John said if you're just talking about a trail, then it would be talking to the land owners, how to get through that. John can share legal documents about how to do that. The courts have ruled that if someone is letting you use their land for that, you can't turn around and sue them if you have an accident. It's called recreational immunity.
- Dave W. mentioned a potential subdivision development off Torun and there is an old park ordinance from 1988 that talks about developers donating either land or funds for park area as a development goes in. In discussing this new sub-development, the Park's Commission thought connecting paths from the development to an existing park would be useful.
- Dave W. mentioned redoing the ordinance, updating it, to encourage developers to work with the Town in developing connecting trails while their plans are in the development stage. It's a lot harder to put those in once streets and homes are already in place.
- John J. though the City has a similar policy with development of a certain size needing to donate money or dedicating park land. John's group tries to ask early on in that process if the land donated can be used for linear trails.
- Dave W. mentioned that when the 10,000 steps a day idea was starting up, John J. challenged people to do 10,000 miles over the next 5 years of their life. People started to take up the challenge and write journals on their 10,000 mile challenge (over 5 years).
- Dave talked about the idea of becoming the Parks and Recreation Commission instead of just the Park's Commission. The idea has evolved over time.

6) RE-COMMISSION OF EXISTING MEMBER OF HULL PARK'S COMMISSION (Jim Mendyke).

- Dave Wilz spoke with Jim Mendyke and Jim has agreed to renew his membership on the Hull Park's Commission.

A motion was made by Maurice Stoltz and seconded by Katrina Hittner to approve the renewal of the membership of Jim Mendyke for another term on the Hull Park's Commission. Motion passed.

7) REVIEW OF SPRING 2018 PARK INSPECTION SHEETS.

- In general, the parks weathered well over the winter season. Due to the recent snowfall, Brian Hicks was unable to check Jordan Acres Park but will do so as soon as the weather allows inspection.

- KATRINA HITTNER

THE RED BRIDGE – This is located a little ways beyond (to the west) of St. Casimir Church along Walkush Road. It's a gravel road by the bridge and there are 2 homes down by the end of the road. The gravel road there is allowed to flood in the spring time and the landowners know that. Katrina said the parking lot area by the bridge gets used by high school students on their break time (fast drivers); a lot of fishermen use it. The parking lot area is owned by Paul Leonard. The bridge is owned by the Town of Hull. The Red Bridge is not a park as such and not indicated as a park on our maps. Hull has an arrangement with Paul L. where Hull maintains the parking lot. In the spring, when the water is high, the local homeowners will go across in their boats for a short while until it dries up enough for our road crew to bring in gravel. Hull meets periodically with the local property owners to address various issues that come up. There has been talk about putting trail cameras in. The bridge is painted a rusty-red color. Everything is in good shape but the bridge may need painting soon. Dave W. will mention that to Pete to look at it. Maybe add another carry in/carry out sign on east side of bank.

- **THE PIPE** – Further north off Granite Ridge. Everything looks good. Garbage can is full. Dave W. mentioned the Eagle Scout project that put the benches in. Hull provided the materials. The benches are anchored with 6 or 8 foot rods because of the water level.

- **MEADOW MANOR** – Looked good. Check the glue job on the bouncing button. Structurally still okay.

- CARMEN COEY – she asked why we can't locate our parks by GPS. An address is needed to post it to GPS. Dave W. will look into that. The Committee has mentioned before the usefulness of being able to bring up the park location on the web or by GPS.

CONIFER ACRES – looked good. Picnic table could use sanding, scraping and repainting.

PLEASANT VIEW EAST – bench has peeling paint. Digger showing wear but still works good. Could use more chips along the trail but nothing fell across the trail. Fill in chips under swings.

- PETE KAMINSKI – he left some comments about Somerset Park where he would like to cut down the leaning Jack Pines before they damage the smaller maple trees. Dave W. will tell Pete to do whatever he needs to do.

PLOVER HEIGHTS – trees look good. No change from last season. Trim pine trees affecting neighbor's solar panels.

- MIKE O'KEEFE

SOMERSET – Park looks good. Maple trees need some specific trimming and Mike explained the best way to do that to Pete K. last week when Pete was out there trimming bushes. When cutting off the top branches, keep the dominant branch otherwise the tree will bush out horizontally. Some of the benches and picnic tables need scraping/painting. Yellow swing needs paint. Balance beam logs are weathered, splitting and loose. Consider replacing those posts. Remove 2 Jack Pines by ball diamond. Mike mentioned in the spring, there is a lot of activity with dads playing baseball with their kids. The baseball diamond should be raked out again.

- MAURICE STOLTZ

SORENSEN – Looks good but by end of summer, picnic tables may need paint.

TRADER – Looks good.

- JIM MENDYKE'S REPORT

EASTWOOD – Looks good. Some paint needed.

- DAVE WILZ

PLEASANT VIEW WEST – Wintered well. Needs some chips.

A motion was made by Maurice Stoltz to accept the Hull Park Inspection Reports. Motion was seconded by Brian Hicks. Motion passed.

8) PETE KAMINSKI REPORT. STATUS OF PARK SIGNAGE, TREES, SPRING FERTILIZER, EQUIPMENT.

- Although Pete was excused, he had left some information for the members to review. Copies of printout information was shared with the group regarding rubber mulch. This was discussed last year. Pete suggests using 1 or 2 parks to test out this material in place of conventional wood chips. The rubber mulch has advantages over the wood chips in that it doesn't need replacement, has better cushioning, doesn't need to be as deep as wood chips. It was suggested by the group for Pete to get pricing, protocol procedures to installation. Dave W. will email that information to members once Pete provides the costs. If costs are acceptable, Dave will authorize Pete Kaminski, per the group, to test the rubber mulch in Sorenson and Somerset parks in the rectangle areas where the park equipment is grouped together. Commission suggested the rubber mulch be surrounded by timbers or edging to keep it confined. Wood chips would need to be removed and then replaced with the rubber mulch. Rubber chips should be less costly than wood chips over time since it doesn't need to be replaced.

A motion was made by Dave Wilz to authorize Pete Kaminski to test the rubber wood mulch in Sorenson and/or Somerset Parks as noted above in the minutes. Motion seconded by Brian Hicks. Motion passed.

9) REVIEW OF HULL PARK'S BUDGET – 2018. No costs posted to the Park's budget yet.

10) TOWN OF HULL 1988 PARK'S ORDINANCE – UPDATE AND DISCUSSION.

- Dave W. talked about the proposed Kluck subdivision and whether we wanted land donated or funds towards parks per the ordinance. The ordinance has not always been used, especially over the past 10-12 years in order to not overburden developers during that time. Dave W. wrote a position paper for the Hull Plan Commission regarding this. Per input from the Park's Commission, Dave W. suggested to the Plan Commission a connecting path/trail between the existing park off Sunny Crest (Jordan Acres) and the newly proposed east/west road through the proposed Kluck sub-development. This would help keep walkers/joggers off Torun and within the residential areas more.

- The development is still being reviewed by the County. There is talk of putting more roads in and other possible changes. Hull would like to contain the traffic flow.

- Dave W. has discussed with John H. about possibly expanding the view of the Park's Commission and think of it more as a Park's and Recreation Commission.

- Two Hull Board meetings ago, the Board said, "We need to have an ordinance, this one is old. This needs to be updated, made larger. We will update this. We need to have a way to deal with developers and the quality of life issues that are in the community." The Board voted on that and that is why it's on the Park's agenda tonight.

- Dave's thoughts are we can talk about how many parks we should have, how much land we should get, update the money issues, or, we could expand the area in the document that talks about 'or anything else you can use it for'. We need to be partners and we need to define that. When there are developments happening, it would be great to have walking paths connecting areas. Carmen thought that would be very beneficial and build community cohesiveness. Brian said it would be part of the community, these trails to get you from one community to the next.

- Katrina suggested at a future meeting to bring out a map and start making these connections. Looking at how to use these paths if we should decide to go in the direction of connecting to our parks and to the Green Circle. Look at land that may come up to be developed in the future.

- Dave W. said we need to start talking about this and putting some energy into it. When we have the opportunity to suggest paths, that's the time to do it. It's too late once the building goes up or the

sub-division goes in. Ask developers to show on their plans a trail system that connects to major roads or other trails or parks. We want them to be willing to participate in planning and paying for some of the development of parks or trails. Maybe we should be more about recreation than parks.

- Katrina felt we probably have enough parks right now. Maybe more conservancies like Plover Heights.

- Dave W. had talked with John Jury earlier since John had been on a parks board for the city. He asked John about what is needed and John said people want to move and they want to connect, think along those terms.

- Carmen said now a days, people can buy a jungle gym and put it in their back yard almost better than what a park can have.

- Some discussion about lot sizes changing over time and how most of Hull now, because it's in various parts of the wellhead protection zone, requires a minimum of 2-acre lots. The larger lots are needed for dispersion of septic drain fields and nitrates. This was researched by Byron Shaw back in the 1980's and has gradually been implemented over the past 10 – 15 years. Many of the smaller/closer together size lots in Hull were build up in the 1960's and 1970's.

- Discussion about how trails are so much safer to bike on than the main roads. People are so distracted with their phones, etc. that the car drivers just don't see the bikes and walkers on the road.

- Dave W. suggested bringing this ordinance back for review to this group. The Town Board will work on revising this ordinance prior to it coming back to Park's for review. Dave will probably do most of the rewriting of the ordinance.

11) DATE OF NEXT HULL PARK'S COMMISSION MEETING: Thursday, July 12, 2018.

- Mike O'Keefe and Carmen Coey are not available on that day. Some discussion that we may need to change this date to accommodate more Commission members. Dave Wilz will contact members to determine the possibility of a better date for the group to meet.

12) ADJOURNMENT. *A motion was made by Maurice Stoltz to adjourn the Hull Parks Commission meeting. Motion was seconded by Brian Hicks. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Amman
Hull Parks Commission Secretary
Town of Hull, Portage County