

**Hiawatha Parks and Recreation
Regular Meeting
November 10, 2020**

Michelle McIllece called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. virtually via Google Meet. Present: Charles Uthe, Chris Klostermann, Heather Gibson, Dan Wilkes. Employees: Kelly Willadsen, Director of Parks and Recreation Kim Downs, City Administrator, Aime Wichtendahl, Council Member and Ambyr Severson, Administrative Coordinator.

Motion by Charles Uthe, second by Chris Klostermann to approve the November 10, 2020 agenda as amended. Motion carried.

Motion by Charles Uthe, second by Dan Wilkes to approve the minutes of July 7, 2020. Motion carried.

HiCREW Kiwanis request for 2021 concessions: Willadsen informed the commission that Kiwanis submitted their annual request to sell concessions at the 2021 concerts. Kiwanis has been great to work with over the years and gives back in many ways. They help and give back at Fun Fest, donated to the Tucker Park Project and gives back to Cedar Rapids and Hiawatha schools. If 2021 is allowed to happen they plan on selling grilled items as they have in the past.

McIllece asked if this is a fundraiser for them?

Willadsen answered yes. They purchase dictionaries for students and most recently agreed to put \$1,000 towards Hiawatha parks trees.

McIllece asked that in the event they can't sell concessions at the Music in the Park if there is another creative outlet they could go with?

Willadsen mentioned that they could possibly look into Kids League concessions or Movies in the Park or other outlets.

McIllece asked that this motion wouldn't lock them into just Music in the Park?

Willadsen confirmed.

Wilkes added that he is a member of Hi-Crew Kiwanis, therefore he would not be voting, and that they make about \$200 to \$250 per concert. They have other fundraising opportunities such as pancakes after the Fireman's 5K and things like that but that everything is just on pause right now.

Motion made by Charles Uthe, second by Chris Klostermann to approve Hi-CREW Kiwanis request to sell concessions at 2021 Music in the Park. Motion carried.

Hiawatha Kids League Request for Guthridge Park Baseball Diamonds 2021: Willadsen advised that that Hiawatha Kids League submitted their annual request to use the ball diamonds in Guthridge Park. Typically, they would be accepting enrollment for teams by now but they're waiting until after the first of the year. The department has a great relationship with HKL. They are great to work with and are a great resource. The department is currently out for quotes to rebuild dugouts after derecho.

Motion by Charles Uthe, second by Dan Wilkes to approve the request of Hiawatha Kids League to use the Guthridge Park Baseball Diamonds in 2021. Motion carried.

Approval of Ice Rink Purchase: Willadsen advised that with the cold weather coming she'd like to have an option for community members to stay active this winter. With everything shutting down and limiting social events she advised that an ice rink would be an option for residents to use for open play where they could wear masks and social distance. If approved the department would remove the poles from the tennis court and the rink would be placed inside of the fencing on top of the court so that the department can lock the gates when necessary. Willadsen reached out to Ely who has the same set up and they like that it's portable and easy to install. The Fire Department would fill the rink with water.

McIllece asked if it needed to be on a hard surface.

Willadsen answered no but needs to be a level surface so it doesn't freeze one way or the other.

Wilkes mentioned that he's worried about how it will leave the tennis court surface.

Willadsen informed the commission that there's only 3 inches of water spread evenly so there's not a lot of water or weight. Other communities hadn't noticed any issues.

Wilkes asked how much it costs to resurface the courts?

Willadsen answered she didn't have that information right in front of her but right around \$10,000.

Wilkes added that he thought it was double or triple that.

Willadsen answered that's a correct total with the basketball court resurfacing as well.

Wilkes added that he's worried that we would add this amenity at the expense of a summer program and asked if there was another flat area to use.

Willadsen talked to Marion who floods their basketball court to use as an ice rink in their community. Their recreation coordinator doesn't have many issues with it but it's hard to know what would happen in Hiawatha with not having a way to lock and secure it. She is worried about people out and about messing with it when they shouldn't be.

McIllece asked what the gap between the fence and rink would be.

Willadsen said ten feet or more.

Uthe mentioned his only reservation was how many kids would actually have skates and that he doesn't see a demand for it.

Willadsen answered that there's kids in local hockey programs and thinks it will get utilized.

Klostermann added that Uthe has a good point but that he's from Minnesota and still has his skates. Thinking about this, he would go to Play it Again Sports and purchase skates or even attend without them.

McIllece agreed that she had the same thoughts. Kids will slide around with or without skates. She's just worried about her kid in the fence.

Willadsen added that there would be an elevated boarder and extra plywood to make a taller fence line.

Downs added that another advantage is to try something new at a low cost – free – compared to the ice arena where you would have to pay for skates, admission and concessions.

Uthe shares the concern with the surface and fencing. Lighting would be an advantage though. He also asked if the department had looked at the data for how many days it would actually be cold enough to freeze? As a kid there was one down the road from him and it was always complete slush.

Willadsen said that's the benefit of being able to lock the tennis courts with thawing and freezing.

Uthe asked what the earliest it would be up and running.

Willadsen said with the commission's approval it would be sent to council for approval on November 18 and be set up as early as December, if weather allows.

Uthe added that there's videos of homemade Zambonis on YouTube to keep it smooth.

Motion by Dan Wilkes, second by Charles Uthe to approve purchase of an ice rink for \$7,599.

Motion carried.

Park Reports: Willadsen informed the commission that Turtle Creek Park Phase I is close to completion. The trail and parking lot are complete and signage has been ordered. The roadway is pretty well complete and the crosswalk has been installed. There were dollars left over from Phase I so MSA will be completing a complex drawing plan to be able to market as a visual of what the park will look like and share it with the community.

Derecho clean-up is finally done. The department has been so busy with trees. Miller Logging was amazing to work with.

The dog park is open again. The hope is to keep it open longer than six days this time. D & N Fencing was great to work with as well.

Dugouts at Guthridge are next on the list. The department is waiting on quotes. One quote they have received mentions that this company could build them over the winter and then place them in their respective places in the spring.

Clark Park lighting project started this week.

Restrooms are closed at the parks. Port-a-Johns are available at Guthridge and Clark. Parks are otherwise open.

Recreation Reports: Witch deliveries went well. Farmers Market Manager and former commission member, Dawn Ewoldt, dressed up and delivered goodie bags and a pumpkin to 24 Hiawatha kids. It made a revenue of \$147 so it's a small amount but something the community enjoys. Thanksgiving and winter crafts will be next.

Letters from Santa is starting soon. Registration is available online.

Friends of Parks and Rec was ready to have the Reindeer Run but it will ultimately be cancelled. They're considering holding it virtually since stocking caps are ready to go but we'll see. Twenty people had already registered but we want to be safe.

The department is planning on holding a home decorating contest. The Friends Foundation is giving out a 45" flat screen tv to the winner. This will take place a week before Christmas. Go to the website to register your home or another deserving home. We will create a map for the community to go around and see the lights.

Klostermann asked for clarification whether the Reindeer Run was happening or not.

Willadsen replied possibly virtually.

Wilkes suggested sending in pictures of dogs dressed up as reindeer.

McIllece suggested opening it up and charging an extra \$10 to NOT run.

Downs wanted to share the awesome support the Parks and Recreation staff has provided over the last few months. The entire departments responsibilities have changed. The individuals were not bored and had plenty to do. Ted and Jeff drove trucks and removed trees. Kelly has been working on the tree inventory in the right-of-ways. There's a lot of work with that for FEMA. Pictures before and after of each tree. Ambyr has taken on the City Newsletter which she has made a little more creative that it has been. The department stepped up and got things done. A big thanks to this group for going above and beyond.

Wilkes added that there's an opportunity to learn and grow through crisis.

McIllece asked how many easement trees were lost. She lost two and one was her favorite.

Willadsen responded it's one of those things that you don't realize how much they matter until they're gone. Hiawatha had 3,000 trees that needed to be evaluated based off of the completed city tree inventory. We've had to take pictures and document everything. There were trees to remove, trim and add notes on how the tree was doing. A lot of work ahead still. We will be replanting. We've raised \$700 for park trees through the t-shirt's the Friends Foundation sold. Trees Forever and Alliant grants aren't available to the parks because those trees have to be close to homes. We are approved for \$5,000 worth of trees to plant in the right-of-way. However, we can't start on that until stump grinding is complete. Lots of replanting will take place eventually. DNR did approve all removals before trees were taken down.

Wilkes added that properly planted trees in the right-of-way will have a great effect on the community over the next thirty years.

Motion by Dan Wilkes, second by Chris Klostermann, to adjourn at 6:57 p.m. Motion carried.

Charles Uthe, Vice Chair

ATTEST: Kelly Willadsen, Director of Parks and Recreation
