

CHISAGO COUNTY PARK BOARD OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, December 16, 2021 - **DRAFT**

At 3:00 pm, Thursday, December 16, 2021 Chair Wille called the meeting of the Chisago County Park Board of Directors at the Chisago County Government Center. The following members present: Jolene Wille, Dan Kaiser, Jill Sicheneder, Gregg Carlson, and Frank Storm. Also present: County Commissioner Mike Robinson, Joe Tart; Park Director, Diane Sander; Support Specialist, Jill Behnke; Center City Mayor, Parks and Trail Foundation members: Laird Mork, Joe Sausen, and Bob Frandsen.

Meeting Summary:

- Unanimously the Board approved the agenda
- Unanimously the Board approved the October 21, 2021 meeting minutes
- Unanimously the Board approved to coordinate with cities and mark trail with the bicycle stencil

Meeting was called to order by Chair Wille.

Motion by Dan Kaiser to approve the agenda. Second by Frank Storm and carried unanimously.

Motion by Frank Storm to approve the October 21, 2021 minutes. Second by Gregg Carlson and carried unanimously.

2022 Operational and Capital Budget Update

Director Tart reviewed the approved 2022 operation budget. The Operational budget had an increase of 2.6% with six main categories: services and charges (beach monitoring), rental and service agreements (trash and portable toilet), equipment maintenance and repairs (fix aging equipment), maintenance supplies (lumber, steel and gravel), machinery and rental equipment (skid steer, stump grinder), and contracted services (electrical, fog sealing, turfgrass care). Director Tart completed a sign assessment on the Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail (SPRT) and all signs will need to be replaced. New signs will identify trail crossing signs and be more visible. A signage inventory will be initiated to track purchase and updates for both trails and parks. Director Tart reviewed the 2022 – 2026 capital improvement project request. In 2024 funding the request dramatically increases with identified funding match for grant applications. Capital improvement includes both project and equipment funding. Future projects include: woodchipper acquisition, American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance improvements, mower trailer acquisition, installed covered dugouts, replace restroom at Checkerboard Park and installing electrical and security lighting at other parks.

Shelter Rental Review

Director Tart provided an overview of shelter rental rates from surrounding counties and cities. Overall, Chisago County is comparable based on similar capacity sized shelters. Isanti County has the same reservation/payment system. Shelters with electricity have higher rentals. Board held a brief discussion on maintaining rental rates to cover staff costs.

Winter Activities

Director Tart displayed a draft winter activity flyer to advertise groomed trails within the county. A variety of trail signage maps and etiquette signs were highlighted. Groomed trails can have designated skiing,

snowshoeing, and walking lanes. Trails will likely need to be signed to keep snowmobiles off of the county groomed trails.

Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail (SPRT) – Segment G Update

Director Tart explained he was still waiting on the State's Natural Heritage approval for the SPRT Segment G grant. City of North Branch has a similar grant application and situation. The city is still waiting for their approval and it has been five months. The SPRT project is ready to go, Director Tart only needs the Natural Heritage approval to move the project forward.

Chisago County Parks and Trail Foundation Request

Members of the Chisago County Parks and Trails Foundation discussed a 6 ft x 3 ft bicycle stencil for use on the trail. The Foundation purchased two stencils and would like to donate them to the county or cities to share to mark a route through town. Trail riders have a difficult time following the trail through Center City, City of Lindstrom, and Chisago City. The hope is to use both blue and yellow paint to apply the stencil. The colors would mimic the Swedish Immigrant Regional Trail (SIRT) sign colors to develop a lasting impression and brand for the trail. **Motion** by Dan Kaiser to coordinate with cities to mark the trail with the stencil as presented. Second by Frank Storm and carried unanimously.

Discussion was held on communication with the Peehl property. Director Tart indicated extended family have expressed interest in relocating to Minnesota and living on the property. Communication will continue with the family if they are interested in donating the land. Foundation members expressed interest in mountain bike/singletrack trail or small offshoots off the SIRT. The Woolly Trail in St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin provides a great example of mountain bike trails. Foundation members indicated the Peehl property could be a great location for this type of trail. Director Tart indicated he has been collecting information on singletrack trail development, cost, maintenance, and contacts. Development costs of a singletrack/mountain bike trail is approximately \$2,500 and installation for a 2.5 mile singletrack mountain trail is approximately \$55,000. Discussion continued on possible locations and Foundation interests.

Discussion was held on trail connection from SIRT to Center City with the necessity to continue communication with property owners in the connection area. Mayor Behnke indicated she has met with a property owner to ascertain the owner's goals and vision for their property. Discussion continued on developing a collaborative meeting/communication between Center City and County with ways to leverage funds/resources for future grant applications of the trail connection. Mayor Behnke indicated Center City would like to move forward with developing a trailhead/shelter design including a charging station for electric bicycles (E-bikes) near HWY 8.

Public Surplus Auction Update

Director Tart provided an update on the auction items. All equipment was sold. The skid mounted high pressure sprayer was sold for \$337; Toro Z Master Commercial Zero Turn Mower was sold for \$2,275; and the 1999 Dodge Ram 2500 Diesel Truck with plow sold for \$8,101.

Staff Report

Director Tart provided a 2021 Year End Review highlighting the following activities/projects:

Parks and Trails Maintenance

All restrooms, shelters, picnic tables, signage, and park and trail benches were painted; brushed back hiking trails and regional trails along with tree removal/chipping/stump grinding; removed over grown shrubs and cleaned up landscaping at each park; added new signage at parks and trails; completed

patching on regional trails and entryways; preparation of pollinator garden project; replaced fence, reshaped gravel parking lots and ball fields; installed new player benches; replaced two shelter roofs and four shelters received new fascia/soffits; and grill stations have been added and picnic tables and benches have been adjusted/leveled.

Administrative Review

Completed and closed out SIRT – Interstate Park grant; awarded grants for land acquisition at Checkerboard Park and Trail installation on SPRT; completed four Capital Improvement Projects (CIP), and coordinated the pollinator seeding volunteer event. It is anticipated staff will complete twelve CIP projects in 2022.

Director Tart provided a brief 2022 Anticipated Projects List:

Parks and Trails Maintenance

Replacing and adding new signage in parks and on trails; installing additional trail benches and concrete pads; adding kiosks on SPRT, updates at Fish Lake with installing seating/retaining wall, removal of fisherman's restroom and replacing dock boards; paint maintenance building at Ki-Chi-Saga; adding playground spring rockers and hiking trails at Checkerboard; and building portable restroom/dumpster barriers.

Administrative Tasks

Manage: SPRT project, contracted service projects, order signage, maintain multiple budgets including operations, capital, and grants, direct capital projects and develop annual report.

Greater Minnesota Parks & Trails

Director Tart highlighted the December 15, 2021 Board meeting with communication updates, membership committee updates, legislative updates, and legislative action day.

2022 Meeting Schedule

Director Tart displayed a list of 2022 meeting dates per quarter:

1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
January 20	April 21	July 21	October 20
February 17	May 19	August 18	November 17
March 17	June 16	September 15	December 15

Adjourn - Motion by Dan Kaiser to adjourn the meeting. Second by Jill Sicheneder and carried unanimously.