

A special meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Tuesday, September 27, 2022 at the Al Quaal Lodge. Member Demarest called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Present: Commission members, Claudia Demarest, Edmund Holmgren, Lisa Thompson, School Representative Carrie Meyer and Council Representative Lindsay Bean. Also, present was DPW General Foreman Bill Anderson, DPW Assistant Foreman-Cem/Parks Kaleb Rundman and DPW Office Manager April Holm. Absent: David Morton and Dr Stephen Pieresen. 2 vacant seats.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Jason Chapman at 204 Ready St came to the Park Meeting. He wanted to let everyone know that he believes the lodge attendant should be paid a fair wage which would help with employee retention and pride in their work.

He also wanted to let us know that he is in favor of supporting the kids in our community and one of the ways to do that is to open tube slide. He is of the opinion that the tube slide can lose money because it is a service to our youth and the community. If the city is going to lose money on something it should be on something benefiting the children of our community. Keeping them safe and giving them a safe place to play should be one of our priorities.

#### LODGE ATTENDANT PAY

The current wage for our lodge attendant is \$10 per hour. Currently we have our college students filling in as the lodge attendant. The students are actually taking a \$2 an hour pay cut when they do the rentals. The Parks would like the board to consider increasing the wage for the lodge attendant to be at least equal to what they make as summer students. Commission member Demarest made a motion with support from Council Representative Bean to advise the City Council to consider increasing our lodge attendant wage from \$10.00/hour to \$12.50/hour. The motion was passed unanimously.

#### LODGE RENTAL RATES

We are currently charging \$200 for residents and \$250 for non-residents for the rental of all of our facilities. The Parks department would like to simplify the paperwork and the clean-up bond returns by eliminating the resident/non-resident rate. DPW General Foreman proposed to advise the City Council to adopt 1 flat rate of \$225 for all rental facilities. The clean up bond would still remain \$100. Commission member Demarest made a motion with support from Council Representative Bean to advise the City Council to eliminate the resident/non-resident rate and change our rental rate to \$225 for all rental facilities. The clean-up bond would remain \$100. The motion was passed unanimously.

Commission member Holmgren would like to add no smoking to the park permit as well as the no alcohol rule.

#### CANCELLATION/BOOKING POLICY FOR RENTALS

Currently the Parks does not have any policies in place for rentals. The rentals have been challenging this year with no policies in place. The board advised the Park staff to draft some booking and cancellation policies to review at the next board meeting which is scheduled for October 18.

During the discussion many members of the board realized they would not be able to attend the next scheduled Parks meeting and wanted to reschedule the meeting from October 18 to October 25.

#### BUILDING UPDATES

DPW General Foreman Bill Anderson wanted to discuss a few buildings that the Parks Department would like to have torn down. The first building would be the south tow building. It is very deteriorated and currently only used to store fireworks for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July committee. A meeting was held with the committee and they are going to purchase a trailer for their fireworks which would actually work better for them.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> building is located by the entrance to the Deer Lake Trail. It is basically just a shack and the roof is almost completely gone and not a safe.

The removal of the south tow building would make grooming the ski trails easier. Commission member Holmgren made a motion with support from Member Demarest to tear down the two buildings. The motion was passed unanimously.

DPW General Foreman Bill Anderson had Creative Industries take a look at our lodge facilities and give their opinion on repairs that were needed.

The Al Quaal Lodge currently needs a lot of repairs and maintenance. The lodge is currently not handicap accessible because the bathrooms are located down a set of stairs. The lift station is currently not working properly and we are unable to take any new rentals at this time because of back up concerns. There are many other concerns with this lodge that will need to be addressed in the future but the most pressing would be the lift station and making the lodge ADA compliant. Creative Industries gave a quote of \$34,780 for just the scraping and painting of the outside of the lodge. The quote did not include the lift station or building a handicap accessible bathroom on the main floor.

The Teal Lake Lodges deck is in terrible condition and needs to be redone. Also, the front porch is not supported correctly so the roof is starting to sag. No estimates were provided for this.

The Al Quaal bathrooms by the Pavilion need to be sand blasted, pressure washed. and repainted. Creative Industries provided us an estimate of \$8,700.

Mr. Anderson was looking for board approval to move forward to seek Council approval and funding to make the necessary repairs and maintenance of the rental facilities. A motion was made by Commission member Demarest with support from Council Representative Bean to move forward with informing the City Council on the state of the rental buildings and the maintenance that will be needed.

#### TUBE SLIDE

The Parks Department has had no student interest in out part time tube slide positions even after we increased the wage to \$12 last winter. The department would like to advise the board and council to increase the part time student tube slide attendant position to \$15 an hour. Commission member Demarest made a motion with support from Commission member Thompson to advise the City Council to increase the part time student tube slide attendant position from \$12.00/hour to \$15.00/hour. The motion was passed unanimously.

The city will start advertising for the position once Council votes on the wage suggestion. If we are unable to secure enough part time help by December 15, 2022 a decision will be made to keep the tube slide closed for the season.

If we are able to schedule enough part time help, we will begin taking reservations for private tube slide rentals Thursday through Sunday starting in January once the lake is frozen and the tube slide is deemed safe to operate.

Commission member Thompson wanted to discuss the daily rate for the tube slide. She stated that the Luge Run in Negaunee was charging \$25 per person for 2 hours on that hill and they were very extremely busy last year. Park Assistant Foreman Rundman also explained that through some research he found that Gladstone was charging people \$20 for 2 hours to use their tube slide. Council Representation Bean made a motion with support from Commission Member Demarest to increase the tube slide daily ticket price from \$10 to \$15. The motion was passed with a unanimous vote.

SKI TRAIL UPDATE

The Park department will not be plowing from the road going to the Teal Lake Lodge to the south tow building as it will interfere with the ski trails. That section will be groomed for skis and foot traffic only.

The park department is looking to try to get the US Nationals held at Al Quaal Recreation Area some time in the future. We have been unable to hold the race in the past because we did not have a slope that was the right length and had a downward and upward transition. Thanks to the water project a few years ago A. Lindberg & Sons dumped gravel, sand, and dirt over at Al Quaal which with a little more dirt work we would be able to get have a better slope angle which would be the correct length.

The Parks have been meeting with the Great Lakes Sports Commission on a possible \$150,000 grant that could be used toward a new groomer and help cover the cost of the dirt work needed to create the perfect slope to bring in the bigger ski races like the US Nationals.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting has been rescheduled and will be held on October 25, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:30 p.m. a motion was made by Commission member Holmgren supported by Commission Member Thompson to adjourn. The motion was unanimously carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

April Holm  
DPW Office Manager/Recording Secretary