

**Hiawatha Parks and Recreation  
Regular Meeting  
January 12, 2021**

Charles Uthe called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. virtually via Google Meet. Present: Charles Uthe, Chris Klostermann, Heather Gibson, Dan Wilkes. Absent: Michelle McIllece. Employees: Kelly Willadsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, Kim Downs, City Manager, and Ambyr Severson, Administrative Coordinator.

Motion by Chris Klostermann, second by Charles Uthe, to approve the January 12, 2021 agenda as amended. Motion carried.

Motion by Chris Klostermann, second by Charles Uthe, to approve the minutes of November 10, 2020. Motion carried.

**Elect Chairs:** Chair and Vice Chair's terms have ended for the 2020 year. Recommendations were made to nominate Charles Uthe as Chair, he accepted. Recommendations were made to nominate Heather Gibson as Vice Chair. She accepted.

Motion by Dan Wilkes, second by Chris Klostermann to elect Charles Uthe as Chairperson and Heather Gibson as Vice Chairman for the 2021 year. Motion carried.

**2021 Park Commission Meeting Dates:** Motion by Charles Uthe, second by Dan Wilkes to accept the 2021 meeting dates as printed. Motion carried.

**2021 Schedule of Events/Programming:** Willadsen informed the commission that the dates are shown as if we are going to have a normal year. Typically, we would take volunteers but we'll wait to see if we're able to hold these events first. We did not make an activity brochure as we are not sure what's going to be able to take place. Instead, we'll utilize Facebook, the Hiawatha Newsletter and email blasts. We've decided not to hold the Family Campout. We may be able to do the babysitting clinic in the community center socially distanced, as we did last year. We're considering revamping Adventure Camp and doing it one week at a time. Earth Day is a city event that's held annually. Ambyr and I have a meeting with Cedar Rapids and Marion to discuss Rec United Soccer and we'll let you know if we are moving forward with that. We hope COVID numbers go down and we can have our activities again. We will look at doing a brochure next year.

**Kona Ice:** Willadsen advised that Kona Ice's schedule books up fast so she reached out to John and Rachel Booms, owners of Kona Ice, to reserve our dates, in the event we are able to have

them. She advised that the owners and staff are always great to work with and looks forward to them serving their iced beverages at Adventure Camp, Outdoor Movies and Fun Fest.

Motion by Charles Uthe, seconded by Chris Klostermann, for approval of Kona Ice to attend Adventure Camp on June 16, June 30, July 14 and July 28, Outdoor Movie on July 16 and Fun Fest on August 6 and 7. Motion carried.

**Upcoming CIP Projects:** Willadsen informed the commission that last year was quite the year. It was impressive what was completed in the middle of a pandemic and derecho.

**Guthridge and Tucker Playground Replacement:** One project to look forward to is the playground replacement at Guthridge and Tucker. The playground next to the Green Pavilion at Guthridge, across from Hiawatha Elementary, is more than 20 years old. 15 to 20 years is about the lifespan of a playground but some of the older equipment was grandfathered in. She has reached out to Boland Recreation and Cunningham Recreation for quotes on equipment with the requirements being: unique to the area, accessibility for all and safety surfacing. Right now, there's \$300,000 reserved for updating Guthridge's playground and \$200,000 reserved for Tucker with room to shift one way or another if needed. Once she receives information from the companies, she will bring it to the commission and work together to come up with a plan. This project is budgeted for this fiscal year which ends July 1, 2021. She advised that it is vital to get all of the important park projects completed because the Fire Station is the next on the agenda for the city and will take priority of funding in the future.

Gibson asked if the old equipment would be auctioned off upon removal.

Willadsen responded that Guthridge may be able to be sold because they're single pieces but the big set at Tucker will not be able to be salvaged. She will look into it.

Wilkes asked if we're planning on using this \$500,000 in the future.

Willadsen responded that the \$500,000 has to be spent by July of this year. The CIP was reevaluated before Christmas and safety concerns got moved to a higher priority.

**Turtle Creek Park:** Phase I of Turtle Creek is complete and we are getting started on Phase II. With a combination of the comprehensive plan, survey results, a committee that consists of two park board members, two council members, two members from the area and City staff, decisions will be made to determine what Turtle Creek Park will be utilized for in the near future. 152 surveys were mailed on January 4<sup>th</sup> and as of January 11<sup>th</sup> we had already received

back 83. The survey found that the area is populated with mostly middle-aged families with children ages 17 and younger and a few homes with ages 56 and older without kids. The survey asked if they had to pick one of the following which would they like to see done next: add trail, add a playground and picnic/pavilion area or add restrooms. From what we've received back, a majority is leaning towards additional trail. Many responded that it is important that we preserve our open space and plant trees. Final results will be compiled at the end of January and analyzed at the Turtle Creek Park Committee meeting on February 3<sup>rd</sup>. There will be more to come at the February commission meeting on what is decided.

**Trail Lighting** - Trail lighting in Tucker should be done before spring. The company can get started sooner than anticipated as they have time in their schedule, the ground hasn't completely frozen and the equipment to complete the project is in stock. Clark lighting was completed last week and looks good. Timers just need figured out but we've gotten a lot of compliments on them. Tucker's lighting won't look the same as Clark's because the lights at Tucker will be 10 feet tall.

Wilkes asked if Guthridge Park trail lighting is next?

Downs answered by saying that Engineering reviewed Guthridge and determined that Guthridge had enough lighting at the time of the review. She added that Clark Park is very impressive and encouraged commission members to venture that way, if they have not already.

Klostermann added that he and his dog did a lap at Clark and it turned out really, really well.

**Ice Rink**- Adding the ice rink has been a bigger project than anticipated. Tennis courts are not as flat as you would think. There is a slope so it's deeper on one end than the other and creates a lot of pressure on the walls. One wall blew out as a result. We've added cones to the end that doesn't have a lot of water so they'll freeze in it and residents will know not to go past that area. All departments have come together to help with this project. It's back together now and we're hoping it will freeze soon so the community can utilize it.

**Holiday Parade**- The Holiday Parade was a huge success with the community and staff. Santa Mrs. Clause already committed to coming back next year!

**Friends of Hiawatha Parks and Recreation Light Decorating Contest**- Eight houses were submitted to the contest and the foundation decided that the best decorated home was on the corner of 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Cress Parkway. The winner was excited to receive a 39" flatscreen TV as their prize. We are hoping numbers will grow for next year's contest.

**Craft Kits-** These programs do not bring in a lot of money but the kids have a lot fun! 24 Christmas Kits were delivered between 14 homes and 16 families took part in the New Year's Eve Kits. Valentine Kits are available now and going over well.

If you have any ideas for Craft Kits or anything else send them our way! Hopefully programs and events can happen at some point this year!

**Letters from Santa-** 48 Santa Letters were sent this year between Colorado, Iowa, Missouri and many towns and cities in between!

Willadsen added that she's working on a right-of-way tree planting guide that will include tree options, where to plant and tree care. She's meeting with the DNR and Trees Forever to obtain more information. She's looking forward to educating residents as a lot of them are interested in replanting.

Motion by Charles Uthe, second by Heather Gibson, to adjourn at 6:40 p.m. Motion carried.

Charles Uthe, Chair

---

ATTEST: Kelly Willadsen, Director of Parks and Recreation

---