

**Parks and Recreation Board
of the City of Onalaska**

Monday, September 23, 2019

1

1 The Meeting of the Parks & Recreation Board of the City of Onalaska was called to order at 5:17
2 p.m. on Monday, September 23, 2019 at City Hall. It was noted that the meeting had been
3 announced and a notice posted at City Hall.

4

5 Roll call was taken with the following members present: Ald. Dan Stevens, Andrea Benco,
6 Steven Nott

7

8 Also Present: Parks and Recreation Director Dan Wick, Mayor Joe Chilsen, Recreation
9 Supervisor Kraig Koelbl, Administrative Assistant Louann Keane

10

11 Excused Absences: Brian Udermann, Ohbe Johnson

12

13 Absent: Patric McGuane

14

15 Mayor Chilsen told board members Dennis Aspenson has resigned his seat on the Parks and
16 Recreation Board due to out-of-town employment commitments that prevented him from
17 fulfilling his duties as a board member. Mayor Chilsen also commended Dennis for his many
18 years of service to the City of Onalaska.

19

20 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from the previous meeting**

21

22 This item could not be acted upon as there was no quorum present.

23

24 **Item 3 – Public Input (Limited to 3 minutes/individual)**

25

26 Steven called for anyone wishing to provide public input.

27

28 **Xaarki Gamerdinger**

29 **806 Madison Street**

30 **Onalaska**

31

32 “I am here because I would like to present to the board my request to start a K9 Toss and Fetch
33 League in the Onalaska and La Crosse communities. I specifically would like to request the
34 Onalaska Parks and Rec Department partner with us to start this league. In their partnership, I
35 would be asking that they agree to provide a facility for us to have our Toss and Fetch League at.
36 And if they’re willing to also help with advertising, [I would ask that they put] the league
37 information in the fall/winter/spring brochure. I can talk a little bit about what K9 Toss and
38 Fetch is. K9 Toss and Fetch is a competitive league where disc dog clubs from around the world
39 get together four times a year to play in their hometowns once a week for five weeks. This is a
40 family-friendly competition where humans and dogs of all ages and abilities are encouraged to
41 participate. The goal of K9 Toss and Fetch League is to provide dog lovers and their dogs with

**Parks and Recreation Board
of the City of Onalaska**

Monday, September 23, 2019

2

42 an opportunity to get outside and socialize with other members in their community. They have a
43 website which you can go on if you want more specific information. As I mentioned, the role of
44 the Onalaska Parks and Rec Department would be to grant the Coulee Region Disc Dog Club
45 permission to play in one of the parks for the winter K9 Toss and Fetch season. Right now, I'm
46 only asking permission for the winter season. Then once they release the dates for next year's
47 seasons, we could meet and I would request permission again, depending upon how the winter
48 league went. I currently have six people who are for sure interested in playing. We need a
49 minimum of eight to have an actual club, but if there are at least six people we can still compete
50 in the K9 organization. We wouldn't be competing as a club; it would just be more for fun. The
51 requirement for the field is it needs to be a flat patch of grass at least 70 yards long and 30 meters
52 wide. I spoke with some of the Parks and Rec staff and the directors about potential candidates
53 for fields, and I am open to suggestions at this point. I was looking at Community Park, but I've
54 also been presented with a couple other really nice options. We're definitely flexible to see
55 whatever location works best with the city. Ideally, we would like it to be somewhere that's not
56 by busy streets. If it was by busy streets, then somewhere that is primarily fenced in.

57

58 I just want to address a couple potential concerns I anticipate the Parks and Rec Department
59 might have. Pet waste would not be an issue. I would personally take responsibility that it all
60 got cleaned up. We would bring pet waste bags to all the events and provide them to anybody
61 participating, and we would dispose of them."

62

63 Andrea asked if the waste bags would be removed from the park, or if they would be placed in
64 refuse containers located in the park.

65

66 Xaarki said the waste bags would be placed in the refuse containers. However, Xaarki said they
67 could be disposed of elsewhere if there are any concerns. Xaarki said, "I'm open to all
68 suggestions. I know damage might be a concern, so I want to express that only one dog would
69 ever be on the field at a time. All the other dogs participating would be kenneled or in their
70 owners' vehicles. Only one dog is participating and competing at a time. Sometimes liability is
71 a concern, but the K9 Toss and Fetch organization offers liability insurance. That's something I
72 can request from them and get the paperwork if that's something that the city would request. We
73 would also sign waivers agreeing that the city would not be liable for anyone who would
74 potentially be injured – not that I anticipate that would ever happen."

75

76 Steven called three times for anyone else wishing to provide public input and closed that portion
77 of the meeting.

78

79 Steven asked Dan if the board should next discuss Item 4, noting the board will be unable to vote
80 on it as there is no quorum present.

81

82 Dan said board members may receive the information and told Steven the board may vote on the

**Parks and Recreation Board
of the City of Onalaska**

Monday, September 23, 2019

3

83 item if Patric arrives. Dan said this item could be forwarded with no recommendation to the
84 October 8 Common Council meeting.

85

86 Steven asked if perhaps the board should first address Items 9, 10, and 11, and wait to see if
87 Patric arrives.

88

89 Dan said that while the board may do so, he also reminded Steven that the discussion pertaining
90 to Item 5 likely will take approximately 25 minutes. Dan said he believes the board may address
91 Item 4 next and told Steven the board may return to Item 4 and approve it if and when Patric
92 arrives.

93

94 Steven expressed concern that Patric might have questions and not have any information if he
95 arrives.

96

97 Dan said the board may discuss any questions or concerns Patric might have when he arrives.

98

99 Steven said the board will address Item 4 next.

100

101

Consideration and possible action on the following items:

102

Item 4 – Request to use a City Park for K9 Frisbee Toss and Fetch League

103

104
105 Dan showed board members a video of a K9 Frisbee Toss and Fetch League, and Xaarki
106 explained the rules and procedures. Xaarki said she would serve as league captain and choose
107 which night competition would be held. Contests would be held one night a week for five
108 weeks.

109

110 Andrea inquired about the size of the league.

111

112 Xaarki said the league currently has approximately 200 cities that participate. Xaarki told board
113 members she had participated in a spring contest in Nekoosa, Wisconsin, and she said she
114 wanted to start a league in Onalaska.

115

116 Steven said he assumes it is standard procedure for each organization that utilizes city facilities
117 to carry liability.

118

119 Dan said he would want there to be some type of liability insurance in place. Dan told board
120 members he sees this as a great opportunity for the city, noting there are parks that are
121 underutilized.

122

123 Ald. Stevens inquired about parks that could be utilized.

**Parks and Recreation Board
of the City of Onalaska**

Monday, September 23, 2019

4

124

125 Kraig told board members he had given Xaarki maps of Sandalwood Park, Wellington Greens
126 Park, and Holiday Heights, all of which have flat areas.

127

128 Ald. Stevens and Andrea both said they believe Holiday Heights would be an ideal location.

129

130 Dan noted there is minimal traffic in the Wellington Greens Park area.

131

132 Andrea asked if Meier Farm could be a potential location.

133

134 Dan said yes.

135

136 Steven asked if the league could have access to the Onalaska High School football field during
137 the offseason.

138

139 Dan said no.

140

141 Ald. Stevens asked to whom the league would be marketed.

142

143 Xaarki said the league is something she is looking to grow in this area, noting she and her
144 husband own a border collie and became interested in participating in dog-related sports. Xaarki
145 said there currently are no opportunities in the La Crosse area, noting one must drive to the
146 Wisconsin Dells area, Madison, or Milwaukee to participate. Xaarki said she would promote the
147 league for the entire Coulee Region and told board members she is attempting to start a Coulee
148 Region disc dog club. Xaarki told board members approximately 12 people – a couple of whom
149 are not available to participate in the winter, but are willing to do so in the spring – are interested
150 in participating. Xaarki expressed her desire to partner with the Onalaska Parks and Rec
151 Department so that the department could assist in promoting the league.

152

153 Dan said the department would include information in its guides. Dan also noted Louann
154 manages the dog park memberships and told board members that is another avenue by which the
155 public may be informed of the league.

156

157 Steven said the league would be similar to the private clubs utilizing the ice at the Omni Center.

158

159 Ald. Stevens noted the cost to the city would be negligible, and he asked if this is something that
160 would need to be permitted through the Administrative and Judiciary Committee.

161

162 Dan said no and told Ald. Stevens it can be advanced via the Parks and Recreation Board.

163

164 Xaarki said she anticipates between six and 12 humans participating during the winter, with the

**Parks and Recreation Board
of the City of Onalaska**

Monday, September 23, 2019

5

165 goal of increasing that number to 20 in the spring of 2020.

166

167 Dan told board members this item may be forwarded with no recommendation to the Common
168 Council as there is no quorum present. The Common Council will need to make a motion to
169 approve at its October 8 meeting. This item will appear on the Non-Consent Agenda.

170

171 **Item 5 – Presentation on Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Accessibility and Transition**
172 **Plan**

173

174 Dan contacted Mark Trieglaff, who is putting together the city's ADA plan, by telephone. Mark
175 said he will update the board via PowerPoint on what had been accomplished regarding the ADA
176 Transition Plan for the City of Onalaska. Mark's PowerPoint presentation included the
177 following:

178

- 179 • The City of Onalaska is covered by the State and Local Government area.
- 180 • The intent of the ADA is to provide equal opportunity for people with disabilities for the
181 services the city offers.
- 182 • The Department of Justice is one of the agencies that enforces the ADA, and it has the
183 jurisdiction to levy fines of up to \$75,000. A municipality also could be required to cover
184 an individual's legal fees. The State Attorney's Office also enforces the ADA.
185 Individual lawsuits also could occur.
- 186 • There is an attempt to present two or three different solutions so that a municipality may
187 come into compliance.
- 188 • Someone should be designated as the city's ADA coordinator who will ensure an
189 infraction has been addressed correctly and sign off on it in the report.
- 190 • The report has columns pertaining to priority, estimated cost to remove barriers, projected
191 date for removal of barriers, and action taken. There is up to a seven-year window in
192 which to remove the barriers.
- 193 • Level One barriers include the accessible route up to and through an entrance into a
194 building or onto a playground or a picnic shelter. The DOJ and Access Board consider
195 these barriers to be top priority and must be addressed first, if possible. Level Two
196 barriers can be found once someone has entered a structure, a playground or a picnic
197 shelter. Level Three barriers include restrooms and locker rooms. Level Four items are
198 not as critical for someone to participate in a program or activity, but they are listed
199 within the probe and must be addressed.

200

201 Examples of Level One items include:

202

- 203 • One of the parking spaces at the Community Center does not have an access aisle. One
204 of the curb ramps is too steep, and it does not have truncated domes. The domes serve as
205 a warning for those with impaired vision.

Reviewed 9/25/19 by Dan Wick

**Parks and Recreation Board
of the City of Onalaska**

Monday, September 23, 2019

6

- 206 • There are tree branches protruding in front of City Hall, and they could impede someone
207 with impaired vision. Green Coulee has areas that could present challenges to those who
208 have mobility issues.
209 • While the surfacing at the Aquatic Center and Van Riper Park was mostly adequate, there
210 are gaps and cracks in the walkway.

211

212 Dan asked if asphalt filler would address the problem.

213

214 Mark said yes and told Dan a rubber epoxy/black tar-like substance could be utilized. Mark said
215 the goal would be to prevent a wheelchair or a walker from catching in the cracks.

216

- 217 • Slabs of concrete in the sidewalk may settle, and other slabs may raise slightly. This
218 causes a tripping hazard.
219 • Concrete will stay longer than asphalt. Asphalt material may be utilized to fill in gaps so
220 there is not an abrupt transition.

221

222 Andrea asked if the example to which Mark was referring was an issue of two materials not
223 being at the same height.

224

225 Mark said yes and reiterated concrete will remain stable longer than asphalt, which will shift
226 easier and is a weaker material.

227

228 Examples of Level Two items include:

229

- 230 • There is no route at Park Avenue Park to access the basketball hoop. There also is a
231 cross slope in Dash-Park that needs to be addressed.
232 • One of the city's newer wells has piping that protrudes.
233 • There must be continual maintenance of playgrounds that have wood fiber surfacing.
234 The wood fiber should be raked down at least once a week.
235 • Sand surfaces are not considered to be accessible for someone in a wheelchair.
236 Engineered wood fiber or rubberized surfacing is needed. Surfaces also must provide a
237 cushion for children who fall off playground apparatus.
238 • Door hardware should be levered and not round. A door at the Community Center is too
239 narrow for individuals in wheelchairs.
240 • All signage designating a permanent room such as a restroom must have raised characters
241 and braille, and it must be located on the latch side of the door. There is no braille or
242 raised characters at Van Riper Park.
243 • There should be a route of up to 20 percent of a bench, as well as a companion seating
244 spot.
245 • Grills must be at a height of no more than 34 inches, and they also must have surfacing

**Parks and Recreation Board
of the City of Onalaska**

Monday, September 23, 2019

7

246 that go around them so that individuals in wheelchairs may access them.

- 247 • There should be a route of up to 20 percent for picnic tables, which also must be placed
248 on a hard surface, connected to an accessible route, and must have an accessible design.

249

250 Examples of Level Three items include:

251

- 252 • Regarding facilities with one portable toilet, that toilet must have an accessible design,
253 and it must be on an accessible route.
- 254 • A toilet paper dispenser at Van Riper Park is located where it can impede someone who
255 is attempting to utilize the grab bar. The dispenser must be at least 12 inches above or
256 below the grab bar. Protective pipe wrapping should be utilized on the sink at Rowe Park
257 so that the knees of wheelchair-bound individuals are protected. Refuse cans should not
258 impede access to sinks.
- 259 • There are challenges for individuals who attempt to utilize the shower at the Aquatic
260 Center. There also is a grab bar that impedes access to a shower area.

261

262 Examples of Level Four items include:

263

- 264 • A mirror at the Community Center is too high. It either must be lowered, or a second one
265 must be installed at a lower height.
- 266 • Drinking fountains must have a high-low system. One must be at a wheelchair height,
267 and one must be at a standing height.

268

269 Mark's presentation also included the following:

270

- 271 • There are requirements related to "other power-driven mobility devices." Board
272 members saw a slide of a veteran who has been giving away Segway scooters to veterans
273 who were injured in the line of duty in Afghanistan and Iraq. Guidelines pertaining to
274 this have been created for staff to examine.
- 275 • Service animals such as dogs and miniature horses may be utilized. Guidelines
276 pertaining to this have been created for staff to examine.

277

278 Ald. Stevens referred to a slide of Holiday Heights the board had seen and told Mark there might
279 be instances in which there will not be sufficient funding to make something ADA-compliant.

280 Ald. Stevens asked if the city will have to consider possibly closing down Holiday Heights Park
281 as it consistently floods. Ald. Stevens described the park as being in "a perpetual state of
282 maintenance," and he said, "I'm not suggesting that we just let it run without being compliant,
283 but how are the really hard to handle or not very cost effective to fix situations handled when it
284 comes to municipal resources?"

285

286 Mark referred to Title Two of the ADA and said there is a focus related to what would be the

Reviewed 9/25/19 by Dan Wick

**Parks and Recreation Board
of the City of Onalaska**

Monday, September 23, 2019

8

287 high program in a high-profile park. Mark said his suggestion as related to approximately 50
288 percent of the parks or structures would be the recommended high-profile parks on which to
289 focus. Mark said, “It gives you another layer of focus related to parks that should be very, very
290 accessible because they’re probably going to be used by a lot of different programs and a lot of
291 different individuals just because of the features that they offer.” Mark suggested that as changes
292 are made, the city could highlight on its website some of the parks that would be very accessible.
293 Mark said he would make sure corrections have been made before that information is included
294 on the website. Mark also said there are instances in which retention areas are given over to the
295 Park Department for a park district. These areas are utilized as ballfields or a playground.
296 However, Mark noted these areas also are consistently flooded, and he suggested noting on the
297 city’s website or in the Parks and Recreation Department’s brochure that Holiday Heights Park is
298 consistently flooded.

299

300 Steven noted it would take a substantial amount of funding to bring the trail system up the bluff
301 in Green Coulee into ADA compliance.

302

303 Mark addressed trails and said some of the intent of the outdoor developed areas is to provide
304 individuals a route either directly to or an alternate route to a vista or a feature such as a
305 waterfall.

306

307 Dan noted Mark had conducted training with staff.

308

309 Mark said that even though the project has been completed, he has encouraged Dan and his staff
310 to contact him should they have any questions.

311

312 Andrea asked if items such as door hardware, signage, slopes, and bathroom design on the
313 buildings that were constructed since the ADA rules went into effect are the responsibility of the
314 architects who designed the projects and not the city.

315

316 Ald. Stevens asked if the State of Wisconsin owned the property on which the Great River
317 Landing sits and gifted to the City of Onalaska.

318

319 Dan told Ald. Stevens the city was part of that project and noted the cross slopes at the Great
320 River Landing exceed the recommended 2 percent.

321

322 Andrea said it is the architect’s responsibility to ensure that the city meets every code.

323

324 Dan said Mark told him several ADA requirements are missed during the construction of new
325 buildings. Dan stressed that not everything Mark had brought up must be addressed immediately
326 and said staff is looking to identify the higher priority items and obtain funding through the
327 funding process.

**Parks and Recreation Board
of the City of Onalaska**

Monday, September 23, 2019

9

328
329 Andrea said she believes funding should come from the architects who had incorrectly designed
330 the buildings.

331
332 Dan told Andrea he does not disagree with her and noted the piping for the shower in the family
333 changing room at the Aquatic Center is on the incorrect wall.

334
335 Andrea stated architects are hired for their expertise.

336
337 Dan said, “This is a small piece to that puzzle that has major effects that a lot of the ... This is all
338 Mark does. Mark travels around the country working with communities.” Dan also told board
339 members that for a fee, Mark will review any new construction projects the city is doing to
340 ensure they are ADA-compliant in the Unified Building Code.

341
342 Steven asked if it would be cost prohibitive to do so.

343
344 Dan said it would be wise to do with new projects.

345
346 Mayor Chilsen said he would prefer to have each contract state all new structures must be ADA-
347 compliant, “and if they aren’t, you’re going to come back and fix it.”

348
349 Board members ensued in a discussion of some of the topics Mark addressed during his
350 presentation.

351
352 Dan noted Mark had told him communities were supposed to address deficiencies by 2010 and
353 2013, but several, including the City of Onalaska, had not. Dan said, “We jumped on it as soon
354 as CVMIC brought it to our attention. They brought it to us late last year. The Capital
355 Improvements Budget was [nearly] done, and we moved funds around to say we had to do this.
356 To have a plan in front of us to what we can work with to go forward, we’re in a much better
357 place than we were 12 months ago. We have something. Staff have bought into it and are
358 looking at things.”

359
360 **Item 6 – Review Rowe Park Master Plan Draft**

361
362 Dan noted draft copies of the Rowe Park Master Plan, which was prepared by MSA Professional
363 Services, have been included in board members’ packets. Dan noted more than 600 individuals
364 had completed a survey regarding what they would like to see in Rowe Park. Dan told board
365 members what is in front of them is the most up-to-date document. Dan also told board members
366 he will inform MSA to proceed with completing this project and preparing a budget for 2021.

367
368 Ald. Stevens asked if the plan is to proceed with every project, including the splash pad.

**Parks and Recreation Board
of the City of Onalaska**

Monday, September 23, 2019

10

369
370 Dan said, “The plan right now is all the items that are in here, yes. The one thing I liked in
371 reviewing the plan is the phasing project. If you take all projects, when you look at it, two
372 phases are \$2.7 million together. You probably have \$5 million worth of projects here. To have
373 that done is a very nice dream, but by putting it in phases we can look at those phases and we can
374 try to develop those phases and those pieces to do it. We have the capability working with our
375 Public Works Department and their expertise on doing some things. Could any of this be done
376 in-house? Those are pieces to this puzzle to look at.”

377
378 Andrea asked if some of the projects may be removed.

379
380 Dan said they may be removed and stated it is part of a plan. Dan said he is hesitant to begin
381 removing items now, adding, “As we move forward, I think we can look at it and see what we
382 want to do. I think it is a very unique plan. It provides a lot of opportunities. But I think at the
383 time we get into the budgeting we can start looking at what we want to do. That’s just my
384 opinion.”

385
386 Ald. Stevens told board members there are groups looking to become involved in a new cause
387 now that the sculpture that will be installed Tuesday at the Great River Landing has been
388 completed. Ald. Stevens also said there is support for a splash pad and suggested forming a
389 citizen committee that will explore fundraising for one. However, Ald. Stevens also said there
390 might not be general support for a splash pad.

391
392 Dan told Ald. Stevens there is significant community support for a splash pad.

393
394 Ald. Stevens said he might be able to speak with community members regarding a splash pad
395 and inquired about the cost of one.

396
397 Dan said the cost of the splash pad included in the plan is \$200,000.

398
399 Andrea noted that is only the cost to construct the splash pad and does not include maintenance
400 and water costs.

401
402 Dan said he believes the splash pad should remain in the plan. Dan also told board members
403 there are several pieces to the plan that are worthy of support, and he said, “If we would do the
404 new entrance to the park, that really opens up to a lot of different places we could jump around
405 and look at doing.”

406
407 **Item 7 – “Nature’s Backyard” sculpture dedication on September 24th from 5:15 p.m. to**
408 **7:00 p.m. at the Great River Landing (FIO)**

409

**Parks and Recreation Board
of the City of Onalaska**

Monday, September 23, 2019

11

410 Dan showed board members a photograph of the sculpture he had taken earlier Monday. Dan
411 said further work on the base must be completed after the dedication.

412

413 **Item 8 – Public information meeting regarding Oak Park #5 will be on October 9th from**
414 **5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (FIO)**

415

416 Dan encouraged board members to attend and said letters will be sent to citizens who reside on
417 Craig Lane West, Julian Way, and Craig Lane East.

418

419 **Item 9 – Report from Blufflands Steering Coalition**

420

421 No report.

422

423 **Item 10 – Report from Onalaska Enhancement Foundation**

424

425 No report.

426

427 **Item 11 – Director’s Report**

428

429 **a. Parks Update**

430

431 Dan reported the following:

432

433 • Staff is mowing.

434 • A majority of the seasonal staff has left.

435 • The Park Fund balance sheet distributed to board members shows the fund balance in the
436 Park Development account totals \$244,687.24. The fund balance in the Non-Resident
437 Fees account totals \$25,540.47. The fund balance in the Reserve for Parkland account
438 totals \$238,590.49.

439

440 **b. Recreation Update**

441

442 Dan reported the following:

443

444 • Fall programs (football, volleyball, soccer) have started and are going well.

445 • Staff is working on the winter/spring guide.

446

447 **c. Aquatic Center Update**

448

449 Dan reported the Diggity Dog Dip, which was held August 31, had drawn approximately 270
450 dogs.

Reviewed 9/25/19 by Dan Wick

**Parks and Recreation Board
of the City of Onalaska**

Monday, September 23, 2019

12

451

452

d. Omni Center Update

453

454 Dan reported the following:

455

456 • Board members had received a list of upcoming events at the Omni Center.

457 • An MMA event was held September 14.

458

e. Library Update

459

460

461 Dan reported the following:

462

463 • The library hosted a Chicken Q earlier in September.

464 • Staff is working on replacing furniture.

465

466 Steven noted the board will have to approve the minutes from both the August 26 meeting and

467 this evening's meeting at the October 28 meeting as there is no quorum present tonight. Steven

468 also noted Item 4 is moving forward without a vote from the board to the October 8 Common

469 Council meeting, also because there is no quorum present tonight.

470

Adjournment

471

472

473 The meeting ended at 6:36 p.m.

474

475

476 Recorded by:

477

478 Kirk Bey