



11333 N. Cedarburg Road
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Office of Parks and Operations

PARK AND OPEN SPACE BOARD
Wednesday, July 27, 2022
6:30 PM
South Conference Room

Agenda

- 1) Call to Order, Roll Call
- 2) Approval of Meeting Minutes
Action requested: review and approve
 - a. 6-22-22 minutes
- 3) Discussion Item
 - a. Parks Budget Strategy Discussion
- 4) Adjourn

Dated: July 27, 2022

/s/ Jason Cain, Chair

.....
Notice is hereby given that a quorum of other governmental bodies may be present at this meeting to present, discuss and/or gather information about a subject over which they have decision-making responsibility, although they will not take formal action thereto at this meeting.

Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations for attendance at this meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at 262-236-2914, twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the meeting.

Any questions regarding this agenda may be directed to the Parks Department Office at 262-236-2945 Monday through Friday 8:00 am – 4:30 pm.



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Office of Parks and Operations

PARK AND OPEN SPACE BOARD

Wednesday, June 22, 2022

6:30 PM

South Conference Room

Minutes

1) Call to Order, Roll Call

Chair Cain called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

Present:

Chair Jason Cain
 Vice Chair Breanne Plier
 Alderman Brian Parrish
 Board Member Joseph Branch
 Board Member Peter Bratt
 Board Member James Lysaught
 Board Member Anton Usowski
 Board Member Gerald Vite
 Board Member David Wolfson
 Alternative Alderman Jeffrey Hansher -- **Excused**

Also present were Parks and Forestry Superintendent Gies, and Administrative Assistant Deuster.

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes

a. April 20, 2022 Minutes

RESULT: **Approved [Unanimous]**

MOVED BY: Board Member Lysaught

SECONDED BY: Board Member Vite

AYES: Cain, Plier, Parrish, Branch, Bratt, Lysaught, Usowski, Vite, Wolfson

3) Action Item

Discussion and Action

a. Kueny Architechts Lemke Park Renderings

Attachment: 06-22-2022 Minutes (7529 : 6-22-22 minutes)

Parks and Forestry Superintendent Gies provided the Board with the updated Lemke Park Pavilion renderings from Kueny Architects.

The board discussed the renderings and with feedback on possible ARPA funds, a detailed list of costs from Kueny, questions on connecting the existing pavilion to the new pavilion via the roof, if there is ARPA funding how does that affect the Parks getting more operation and maintenance money. The board also discussed making it energy efficient, and potential for greenseams money toward pavers or rain gardens in the park.

4) Discussion Item

a. Budget 101 Discussion

Parks and Forestry Superintendent Gies provided the board with the previous 2021 budget letter along with a new budget letter for 2022.

The board discussed shortening the letter to more of a single page with information documenting this is what we can do with the money we have and what falls off the list without more money. They also discussed having a subcommittee meet to update the letter prior to submittal in the budget documents. The board agreed to have more attendees at the budget meetings to answer questions from Common Council.

b. Conditional Use Permit Review

Parks and Forestry Superintendent included a draft of the City of Mequon's conditional use permit for review. This document needed to be updated to allow for more specifications of what is considered a conditional use or not within the City.

The board discussed the permit and provided feedback. Parks and Forestry Superintendent stated he'd like the board to further review and submit any feedback prior to the next meeting.

c. 2022 Work Plan

Parks and Forestry Superintendent Gies provided the 2022 Work Plan for review.

5) Parks and Forestry Superintendent Report

a. Parks and Forestry Superintendent Report

Parks and Forestry Superintendent Gies updated the Board on the 1840 Brewing Events and the moving of the July 20th meeting to either July 27th or August 3rd.

6) Adjourn

a. Motion to Adjourn at 8:22 PM.

RESULT: **Approved by Voice Acclamation [Unanimous]****MOVED BY:** Board Member Vite**SECONDED BY:** Board Member Branch**AYES:** Cain, Plier, Parrish, Branch, Bratt, Lysaught, Usowski, Vite, Wolfson

Respectfully Submitted,

*Casey Deuster**Administrative Assistant*

Attachment: 06-22-2022 Minutes (7529 : 6-22-22 minutes)



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Office of Parks and Forestry

TO: Park and Open Space Board
FROM: Mike Gies, Parks and Forestry Superintendent
DATE: July 27, 2022
SUBJECT: Parks Budget Strategy Discussion

Background

At the June meeting a subcommittee was formed to create a budget strategy for 2023's POSB budget request. The subcommittee worked on the following:

- Create a one page budget request letter
- Work on editing the longer version appropriations budget request outline and letter

Analysis

Just as a review the following is a list of potential funding sources, and their current funding level.

Capital improvements to a park are the addition of labor and materials that improve the overall value and usefulness of that park. Capital improvements are designated and funded individually through segregated municipal funds. Routine maintenance, on the other hand, is the repair and upkeep of existing park facilities, such as painting a shelter building. Routine maintenance of park facilities does not appreciably increase the value or usefulness of the park and is traditionally funded through the park department's operations budget. Non-routine maintenance of park facilities, such as upgrading a toilet facility to be barrier-free, is usually considered to be a capital improvement. Most projects can be easily identified and categorized, but some are difficult. When a project falls on the borderline between a capital improvement and maintenance, the overall cost becomes the determinant. Projects with a high cost, such as that for seal coating roads or parking lots, are categorized as capital improvements.

The capital improvements program for each park is a combination of several types of projects. These projects are ranked according to their importance and priority in the overall development of the park and the value of the project to the overall City Park system. Capital improvements for this plan are ranked in the following manner/ priority:

- a. Improvements to existing facilities that will:
 - i. Correct health and safety hazards
 - ii. Upgrade deficient facilities
 - iii. Modernize adequate but outdated facilities
- b. Installation of facilities as deemed appropriate and necessary through public demand
- c. Development of new facilities as deemed necessary through level of service, population projection and age cohort analysis

The balance/budget allocation for 2022 capital funding is **\$50,000**, but the balance has been allocated to the fishing pier replacement at Rotary, HVAC at River Barn, and Fence installation

at River Barn for 2022.

Park impact fees are a one-time payment by new residential development to pay for capital costs of facilities needed to support the new development. Park impact fees are charged during the building permitting process and used to fund projects to maintain levels of service of Mequon's park system. The city of Mequon's current impact fee charge for parks is \$900/residential unit. The current balance of the park impact fee account as of June, 2022 is **\$302,000**.

Mequon Ordinance: The impact fee for parks, which includes parkland acquisition, playgrounds and land for athletic fields, as calculated in accordance with the applicable comprehensive park plan and needs assessment.

Variable Costs (O&M) are the general operating and maintenance costs in the Parks and Open Space Division. The variable costs do not reflect salaries and benefits, just operating accounts such as: project supplies, park supplies, M&R, and Contracted Services. The current budget for general operation costs in the parks without labor, benefits, or equipment is approximately **\$79,000**. Note that of the \$79,000 in O&M funding, approximately \$52,000 is designated for contracts. Leaving approximately \$27,000 for park operations use.

Fiscal Impact

The intent of this exercise is to allow the Park and Open Space Board to prioritize needs and expenditures for not only 2023, but also beyond.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the board review and strategize for budget requests for 2023.

Attachments:

PSOB Budget Letter Draft PB Gies final draft 7212022 (DOCX)

Draft 2022 Budget Letter (DOCX)

The Common Council is requested to allocate \$50,000 to the Parks Department budget. The Common Council is also requested to include an additional \$150,000 in Capital Funding and an additional \$5,000, in Operations and Maintenance funding in the 2023 budget for the Parks Department for a total request of \$205,000. This additional funding is requested and subsequently required to meet the needs identified within the City of Mequon's Facilities Assessment (2018) and the Parks and Open Space Plan (2019).

These two reports, adopted by Common Council, addressed immediate, intermediate, and long-term expenditures that are necessary to maintain expected community standards for Mequon Parks. The Parks and Open Space Board (POSB), in consultation with City of Mequon staff, has reviewed and prioritized specific expenditures, from the Annual Report's capital improvement list, that are identified as immediate needs in 2023. This request for funding is higher than the 2021 allocation of \$50,000 but falls short of what is fully needed. This incremental level of funding is needed to meet minimum safety, facilities, and amenities standards set out in the Plan in Section 1.3. Additionally, the 2019 community survey provided resident feedback indicating that more than 68% of residents were interested in seeing a nominal increase in their taxes to provide parks funding (see question 28 of the survey). This community support, along with the Council-adopted reports, is the rationale for this request of an additional \$155,000 towards Mequon Parks capital and O&M budget requests in 2023.

The funding request would go towards the following priority spending items:

1. **Lemke Park Pavilion Construction** – breakdown of funding is as follows
 - \$250,000 funded from a onetime capital request
 - \$250,000 requested through possible ARPA allocation
 - \$250,000 utilized in park impact fees
 - Total = \$750,000
2. Repaving and dual purposing of basketball/pickle ball court at Rotary Park
Total=\$100,000
3. Replacement of one playground
Total = \$190,00 each

The Parks Department staff and the POSB want to ensure that Mequon's parks and open spaces are meeting the needs and expressed desires of our growing community. With the guidance of the Facilities Assessment, the 2019 Plan, and community survey, this is an appropriate baseline budget request.

We would also like to invite the Common Council to take a tour of the parks with the Board ahead of budget decisions where we can share our needs and future visions for Mequon's Parks.

Further justification and information on annual expenditures/donations can be provided upon request.

Respectfully, requested on behave of the Mequon Park and Open Space Board.

Jason Cain (Board Chair)

Breanne Plier (Vice Chair)

Joseph Branch

Peter Bratt

James Lysaught

Anton Usowski

Gerald Vite

David Wolfson

Alderman Brian Perrish

7/226/2022 DRAFT

Dear Mayor and Members of the Common Council,

The Park and Open Space Board (POSB) has drafted a budget proposal for the coming fiscal year. Our work over the past several years has focused on both short and long-term projects, ongoing operations, and maintenance. We believe it is important to present useful information to our elected leaders with the belief we all share the same goal-continuation of a great quality of life in our community, in large part because of parks, open space and the good people of Mequon.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Park and Open Space Board members envision a future which includes:

- Meeting with and gathering detailed information from user groups about their needs, wants and goals relating to their park and open space experiences.
- Strengthening public/private partnerships to launch new projects and sustain what we have throughout the Mequon Parks and Open Space system.
- Addressing urgently needed Capital Improvement Projects (CIPS), including operational and maintenance concerns.

The Board has identified ~~threeseven~~ major areas that we believe the City should fund to initiate ~~or restore~~ direct actions in 2022-2023.

The funding request would go towards the following priority spending items:

1. Lemke Park Pavilion Construction – breakdown of funding is as follows
\$250,000 funded from a onetime capital request
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\$250,000 utilized in park impact fees
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Total = \$190,00 each

1. ~~Restoration and increase of operation and maintenance budget cuts applied for the FY2021 due to anticipated decrease in revenue: \$12,966 and an overall increase of \$5,000 into Parks M & R annually (\$17,966)~~
2. ~~An additional \$20,000 for continued parks' facilities needs~~
3. ~~Parks Capital—restoration of previous funding of \$50,000 from 2019~~
4. ~~Emerald Ash Borer—restoration of previous funding of \$80,000 from 2019.~~
5. ~~Removal of dead trees in parks due to EAB—additional designated amount for parks of \$20,000~~

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- ~~6. The continued designation of parking lot funds of at least \$200,000~~
~~7. Additional Parks Staffing in the amount of \$100,000~~

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~~During the current fiscal year, the Parks budget was decreased by 7% largely due to the Pandemic. As we emerge from the health emergency, park usage has climbed back to and above pre-pandemic activity. For the upcoming fiscal year, we formally request that the funds be restored and increased to the pre-pandemic numbers to further support deferred maintenance and increased operational expenses.~~

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The City's parks and associated facilities serve as a phenomenal resource and a vital part of what makes Mequon the greatest place to live and play. Our parks are extensively used by numerous youth sports teams. During their peak seasons they are practicing, playing games, or holding tournaments, some of them nationally recognized. Thousands of Mequon families and visitors enjoy this system year after year.

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BACKGROUND

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The next few paragraphs provide you with further detail and attached appendices will share important granular information on each of the aforementioned items.

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Restoration and Increase of Operations and Maintenance Funding:

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Many of our park buildings were built in the 1990s. As any homeowner knows, replacement of many fixtures and appliances like faucets, water heaters and toilets are necessary (please see the full list of items in Appendix A) Further delay will compound the problem and create more expensive fixes.

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The two primary reasons for this request are:

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First:

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Mequon citizens want a higher caliber of service at the parks than what we can possibly do currently. Operating and maintaining 25 parks and open spaces at the current budget level is untenable. This further compounds the deferred needs that affect every park user.

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Second:

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Our aging park amenities are leading to many recurring problems fixed on an emergency basis rather than proactively. Emergency breakdowns lead to disappointed users, injury, or additional costs.

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While capital funded projects are a priority of the Board, funding operations and maintenance is also critical to the parks now and in the future. Therefore, the Board requests a restoration of funds lost due to the impacts of the pandemic and additional funds to support necessary maintenance and repair. Deferred and delayed maintenance will cause future funding crises!

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Facilities:

Our most-used facilities require upgrades, spaces and buildings serve the public, are often reserved in advance, and generate revenue. Fee-paying users inform us of various facilities' deterioration or disrepair. Many of these problems date back to the original construction and are aging.

Some facilities have superficial, and aesthetic issues that have become an embarrassment. Others need fundamental repairs that require replacement due to deferred maintenance. Examples include:

- Lighting fixtures (LED conversions to all parks buildings)
- Bathroom fixtures (to reduce waste and increase water efficiency)
- Water heaters (on demand-old water heaters are original to the building)
- Furnaces
- Concession roll doors (install new clear doors to increase year- round usage),
- Windows (replace with high efficiency new windows)
- Original water fountains, restrooms
- Door hardware
- Garage doors
- Concrete
- Play equipment replacement
- Signage
- Fencing
- Pond compressors
- Painting
- Bridges

Replacement of these fundamental amenities will improve user experience and the overall efficiency of the buildings, providing a cost savings to the city over time.

Capital Improvements

Our parks are in varying states of disrepair. At a minimum, park structures ought to be restored to their original level of service and supplemented with adequate operations and maintenance funding.

The City's asset management report states that pavilions at Rotary Park, Reuter Park pavilion, and River Barn Park need to be repaired. This report should be the basis for ~~restoring capital funds lost in 2021, as well as~~ considering an increase starting in the 2023~~2~~ budget and beyond.

The Board therefore requests an increase of \$20,000 annually in Facilities Capital, with it being specifically earmarked for parks facilities. This will begin addressing the most acute challenges.

Parks Capital:

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~~Much like the decrease experienced in operations and maintenance funding, the Parks capital budget was affected by a 6% decrease in 2021. Our park's capital expenses continue to be a priority of the Board. In addition to needed facility improvements, stakeholders and users have growing expectations for improvements within the parks system. The Board is requesting funds be restored to pre-pandemic numbers.~~ The Capital funding would be utilized for Capital projects including:

- ~~Lemke Park Restroom and Concession Facility.~~
- ~~Basketball/pickleball court reconstruction.~~
- ~~Playground replacement.~~
- ~~Replacement of the Rotary Fishing Pier.~~
- ~~Installation of Clear Garage Doors at Rotary and Reuter Pavilions (making them more usable facilities year-round).~~
- ~~A/C installation at River Barn (increased usability in summer months).~~
- ~~Lemke Park combined Bathroom, Concession, and Storage Facility.~~
- ~~Outdoor Patio Area at Reuter Pavilion.~~
- ~~New Playground Facilities.~~

Dead tree removal:

~~Trees dying off caused by Emerald Ash Borer is an issue throughout the City. Proper removal at our parks must be implemented soon! City crews have begun work on removals throughout the park system with an impact felt only on our larger parks with high densities of Ash.~~

~~Some of our parks are at risk of closure for public safety reasons. Many parks will require extensive safety measures to remove the dead and dying ash trees, to save other foliage and park amenities. For the safety of the park users, and to maintain the health of existing foliage and surrounding desirable trees, proper removal is a high priority. The Board requests a restoration of funding to levels, and a possible increase in sufficient funding to remove dead trees that are a risk to public safety in our parks.~~

Parking Lots:

~~It is anticipated that the City will be going to market in early 2022 to bond for transportation funding, including parking lots. The POSB supports the continued designation of a minimum of \$150,000 in annual allocation for parking lots.~~

~~The parking lot is the first thing that a park user sees and feels. Parking lots are also the first structure to suffer from deferred maintenance or no maintenance by simply breaking up. The repaving of Rotary Park was completed in 2021. Additional funding is still necessary at~~

- ~~River Barn (portions originally installed in 2003).~~
- ~~Katherine Kearney Carpenter Park.~~
- ~~Community Park.~~
- ~~Villa Grove.~~

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Additional Parks Staff:

~~The Board recognizes the need for additional Parks staff to maintain the Parks and Open Spaces to a level requested and supported by park users. Current staff levels consist of the following:~~

~~1. Superintendent split between Parks and Forestry~~

~~1. Administrative Assistant across all of DPW~~

~~2. 50/50 park workers (50% of the year in Highway and 50% in Parks)~~

~~2. Full time Park workers~~

~~The National Recreation and Park Association lists the national average for park employees per 10,000 residents as (8.1) FTE positions. The Board acknowledges the City of Mequon has an independent Recreation Department but is still operating the parks and open spaces of Mequon at a below the national average. Current staffing does not allow for care of the P&OS up to Board and stakeholder expectations. The Board recognizes both current obligations and future maintenance, rental, and stakeholder obligations and would like to request additional parks staffing. The following are all options that would significantly improve service to the Mequon community:~~

- ~~1. **Full time Parks Administrative Assistant/Rental Coordinator**—Currently, the DPW has one administrative staff servicing seven (7) Divisions. Rental coordination is currently shared between the DPW Administrative Assistant and the Parks and Forestry Superintendent. In 2021 the Parks and Open Space rental facilities experienced more rentals than any other year to date, generating approximately \$15,000 in additional rental revenues. An additional position will provide better user experiences and perhaps lead to an uptick in rental revenues over time.~~
- ~~2. **Park Foreman**—Much like the other DPW Divisions, Foreman is necessary to allow the Superintendents/Directors to focus more on long term planning and administration of big picture initiatives. A foreman would help manage and respond to day to day tasks and the needs of both park staff and park patrons, with oversight assistance from the Superintendent.~~
- ~~3. **Full time Park Worker**—With the addition of City infrastructure, common space/land, and park assets in need of both in season and off season care the need for additional Park and Open Space staff to keep up with demands of the users is essential. The (4) current Parks and Open Space employees account for the care of over 1,100 acres of park and open space land. Providing Park patrons with an experience that they want to come back to is crucial, and at current staffing levels this has become difficult to impossible to keep up with demands.~~

~~The Board requests sufficient funding to be included in the 2022 budget to address the proposed FTE positions.~~

Possible funding sources:

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The Board recognizes that the Common Council has an obligation to the taxpayers to be responsible in establishing funding levels. As each member of the Board is also a taxpayer in the City we respect the hard choices you must make to keep our taxes low. We are proud of the way Mequon is growing and how the value of our homes is increasing during the best economic conditions we have experienced in decades.

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Please consider this letter not only as a set of recommendations and support, but as a formal request for a general levy increase to provide sufficient funding for the park system. The Common Council could also consider utilizing a percentage of the park revenues that are generated annually as a reoccurring funding source for parks. The Board believes our city's park system should be a source of pride for all citizens of Mequon and for the thousands of park users who frequent them annually. We know you share our pride and will include adequate funding in the 2023~~2~~ budget to start the work to bring our parks back to the level of quality and service that makes Mequon great!

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Thank you for your consideration,

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The City of Mequon Park and Open Space Board

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