

Parks and Natural Resources Committee Minutes June 15, 2023

Members present: Michalk, McCarthy, Arsenault, Simmons

Agenda approved with additions:

- Safety inspection of the playground
- Update on Birch Beach

Minutes of May 18, 2023 were approved.

Committee Business

Public Forum - no one present

New Discussion Items

Garlic Mustard Plants

Bryan McGinnis submitted comments about this invasive plant and its current pervasive status. He is willing to walk through park walkways to show anyone wanting to help identify and remove it. He noted too that a gate at Ash Walkway needs repair.

McCarthy will ask Birchwood maintenance man, Jim, to repair it.

The committee extends its gratitude to McGinnis.

Members agreed that Chairman Michalk develop an avenue of communication between the committee and the community regarding important parks/beaches and environmental information.

Swimmer's Itch

McCarthy will contact other cities to see what policies may exist and if Birchwood should develop one regarding treatment of our swimming beach.

Bear Update

It appears the bear has moved out of Birchwood. Members discussed that a warning could go out in early spring to educate residents and prevent potential problems with black bears.

Safety Inspection of Tighe-Schmitz Playground

Arsenault reported that she found no state inspection regulations relevant to Birchwood. She also checked with Mahtomedi which does monthly inspections and has an extensive maintenance checklist. Birchwood is currently relying on resident calls regarding problems. She

volunteered to inspect the City equipment with the maintenance checklist. A semi-annual inspection might be in order.

Discussion Items Carried Over from Previous Meeting

Hall's Marsh

Birchwood City Engineer, Marcus Johnson, is working with the Rice Creek Watershed District on needed management strategies for Priebe Lake and its link to Hall's Marsh. He will submit his notes and a Memo of Agreement with all concerned entities around a plan that would help keep the marsh healthy.

Sign at Curt Feistner

Once the new sign is found, the committee will decide its placement location.

Public Signs on City Beaches

Issues at Kay Beach continue
to be discussed: dogs, fishing, age of kids needing supervision.
Simmons will check out the costs for beach/park signs.

Planning for Tighe/Schmitz Park

Update: Simmons and Arsenault will meet on June 22 with representatives from Washington Conservation District regarding the potential improvements of the park.

Maintenance of the Birch Beach Raingarden

McCarthy met with Cameron of the Washington County District who said the drainage system at Birch is generally in good shape. It could use a clean out with hand tools and a regular check for additional clean ups. McCarthy stated that the Council will get bids for cleaning out the main water collection pit.

The Council will seek bids for a hand railing for the Owl Street walkway.

The City may purchase a trailer for Jim to remove wood chips. Note: Jim will paint the picnic table at Kay Beach.

**Next meeting: July 20 -
Public forum at 5:30.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
MarySue Simmons
Acting Secretary

