



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

222 Lewis Street
River Falls, WI 54022

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AGENDA
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
Wednesday, September 21, 2016
City Hall 5:15PM- Training Room

5:15 p.m. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

Minutes of August 17, 2016 Tour Meeting

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Non-Agenda Related Topic

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Municipal Code of Ordinances on Park and Recreation Areas**
- 2. Blue Bike Rules and Information**
- 3. Foster Cemetery**
- 4. User Survey for Summer Programs and Parks**

OLD BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

Council members may be in attendance for informational purposes only.

No official Council action will be taken.



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MINUTES

PARK AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, August 17, 2016

Meet City Hall at 5:15pm - Summer Park Tour

5:15pm CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL – Meeting convened at 5:15pm.

Members Present: Susan Reese (chair), Jim Nordgren, Brandon Dobbertin, Brenda Gaulke, Dennis Zielski, and Patricia LaRue.

Members Absent: Hal Watson (council rep).

Staff Present: Cindi Danke - *Recreation Manager*

Others Present: Ben Fochs, local citizen.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

MSC Nordgren/LaRue to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2016 Park and Recreation Advisory Board. Motion passed 6-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

Park Board toured Foster Cemetery and Knollwood Park and looked at park area, condition of trails, signs and discussed history of Foster Conservancy, native plants and property lines.

ADJOURNMENT

MSC Gaulke/Reese to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Rundle, Recreation Assistant



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

TO: Park Board Members

FROM: Cindi Danke, Recreation Coordinator 

DATE: September 16, 2016

RE: Park Board September 21st Agenda

Municipal Code of Ordinances on Park and Recreation Areas

This is to review of rules and ordinances on Park and Recreation areas as it has been ten years since we last reviewed them. Staff has tracked a few minor changes. Also attached are a few cities that have a policy on drones in Park areas, something we may want to consider. Also the blue bike program is looking at added rules on usage of the bikes and would like to add it within our ordinances and rules. At the present time the Police Department has a lack of enforcement ability to help with the program.

Foster Cemetery

After we toured the Foster property a few questions were asked on boundaries, Park versus Conservancy and Assistant Community Development Director, Amy Peterson will discuss management plan for the future.

Summer Survey of programs and parks

Brenda Rundle is putting together questions for the next survey on programs, parks and Park Board can review and approve.

Chapter 12.20 - PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS

Sections:

12.20.010 - Park defined.

"Park" means any park, playground, recreation field, building, swimming pool and other areas which are under the jurisdiction of ~~the~~ the City of River Falls ~~p~~Park and ~~r~~Recreation ~~b~~Boards. In addition any parcels zoned Park (P) in the City.

(Prior code § 23.02)

12.20.020 - General rules.

- A. Park Hours. No cars, campers or pedestrians' shall be in the park or park area between eleven p.m. and five a.m. except as follows:
 - 1. Those involving prescheduled activities;
 - 2. Hoffman Park in the area signed and marked for overnight campers. This exception is for campers only.
- B. Defacing Park Property. No person shall cut, break or in any way injure or deface any building, fence, lamp, equipment or facility, or any feature or property, including natural objects, upon or within any park.
- C. Wild Flowers. No person shall remove, damage or disturb any plant, timber or vegetation unless authorized by designee.
- D. Pets. Pets shall be leashed in the park and no person shall allow his or her pet to deprive or disrupt the enjoyment or use of any area by others. Owner promptly removes and disposes of, in a sanitary manner, any excreta deposited by a pet.
- E. Littering. No person shall throw, deposit, place or leave in any park or waters therein any paper, rubbish, waste cans, bottles or refuse of any kind except in receptacles provided for waste or recycling.
- F. Bill Posting. No person shall post, paste, fasten, paint or affix any placard, bill, notice, sign or advertising upon any structure or erect any structure for that purpose unless authorized by the ~~p~~Park and ~~r~~Recreation ~~b~~Boards.
- G. Athletics. No adult persons shall play organized hardball upon the athletic grounds. The use of the athletic grounds by organized teams shall be subject to the approval and scheduling of the ~~b~~Board or designee.
- H. Benches and Tables. No person shall move benches, seats or tables from the park property.
- I. Selling Goods. No person shall sell or offer for sale any article or thing in any park. This prohibition shall not apply to sales of refreshments and other articles authorized by the ~~p~~Park ~~b~~Board.
- J. Alcohol Beverages.
 - 1. Subject to the permit provisions of subdivision 1 of this section, no person shall possess or consume any intoxicating beverages in any ~~e~~City ~~p~~Park or recreation area, with the exception of Hoffman Park, Glen Park and DeSanctis Park. Alcohol beverages may be consumed or possessed in these three designated parks. The ~~e~~City ~~e~~Council may by resolution authorize an exception for a special event.

2. No person shall possess beer in containers larger than one liter in any eCity pPark, except that containers larger than one liter may be possessed in any eCity pPark in accordance with a special permit obtained five days prior to the event from the pParks and rRecreation dDepartment. A fifty-dollar (\$50.00) deposit shall also be required at the time of permit issuance, which is refundable upon inspection of the area by eCity staff. The approved permit shall conform with all requirements of Chapter 125, Wis. Stats.
 3. No person shall possess or consume any beverage in glass containers in any park or recreation area.
- K. Vehicles on the Grass. No motorized vehicle shall be parked on the grass of any municipal park except areas delineated as parking by the placement of parking posts.
 - L. Swimming Pool. No person shall enter the fenced pool area to swim unless the pool is officially open under the jurisdiction of the appointed lifeguards. All are subject to the regulations concerning pool use as determined by the pPark and rRecreation bBoard.
 - M. Traffic Rules. No vehicle shall be driven at more than fifteen (15) miles per hour on any park road. The driver of any vehicle shall bring such vehicle to a complete stop where there is in place any sign or marking which says, "STOP." Upon a park street that has been established as a one-way drive, a vehicle shall be driven only in the direction indicated. A vehicle shall enter and exit only in the exits and entrances indicated.
 - N. Fires. No person shall start, tend or maintain any fire or burn any refuse except at designated fireplaces or personal grills. No person shall leave any fire unattended.
 - O. Horses. No person shall ride a horse in a careless, negligent or reckless manner so as to endanger the life, property or person of others in the parks. No horse riding shall take place in City Parks. Horse riding shall be confined to the road or parkways.
 - P. Weapons. No person shall have in his or her possession or under his or her control, any air gun, as defined in Section 939.22, Wis. Stats. unless the same is unloaded and enclosed in a carrying case or any bow unless the same is unstrung or enclosed in a carrying case.

(Ord. 2007-17 § 1: prior code § 23.03)

12.20.030 - Posted regulations.

In addition to the regulations herein contained and provided, the board may post from time to time specific rules and regulations which when posted shall be incorporated by reference into this chapter as fully as if set forth herein.

(Prior code § 23.04)

Marathon County-We are using our existing policy on radio controlled aircraft. We do not allow their use in parks, but we have built a radio control field that they are able to use.

The Kenosha County Parks have a “NO Drone “ policy, Supported by a county ordinance , Have had occasion to enforce it, once being at our county beach on a busy day.

Eau Claire Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department Policies and Procedures	
Objective Number: 8.4	Effective Date: October 21, 2015
Subject: Drones in Parks	
Purpose: To provide guidelines for the use of drones in Parks.	

POLICY

The policy for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) or drones focuses on public safety and the facilitation of event planning and administration. The City of Eau Claire prohibits the use of drones per Ordinance 9.76.110 B. 2.

The code prohibits flying or operating a model airplane - "or other radio control device". The code applies to city parks, playgrounds, public green space, trails and pools.

There is a possible exception when permitted by the director of parks and city council with a safety plan.

PROCEDURES

The use of drones/UAVs for any purpose at City Parks may be permitted provided the following conditions and requirements are satisfied:

A. Drone operation over city parks events requires Certificate of Authorization (COA)—or the necessary 333 Exemption—as issued by the FAA when required by law.

B. A signed agreement holding the ownership and operators of event facilities and harmless from any claims of harm to individuals or damage to property. In addition, UAV operators must provide the City of Eau Claire with proof of insurance with liability limits of not less than \$1 million that identifies the City of Eau Claire as additionally insured.

The Drones are Coming



Virtually anyone who has flown a quadcopter or other modern drone will say that they are a blast to fly. Drones combine the cool factor of impressive technology, the excitement of unmanned flight and the thrill of exploration, all in one amazingly simple and easy-to-operate package. Whether you fly alone, with friends or with your kids, flying drones is just plain fun.

But drones aren't only about fun. They will have an impact on virtually every aspect of our lives from agriculture to energy, scientific research, conservation, public safety and more. Drones have been labeled "disruptive technology," and held up as avatars of the mythical "billion-fold improvements" that have taken place in computing, imaging, aeronautics, medicine and other fields. Drones will come to shape our lives every bit as much as cellphones, tablet computers and other game-changing technology.

Futurists are abuzz with speculation that you will soon have your Amazon packages or Papa John's pizzas delivered to your door by drones. Mainstream media outlets breathlessly report breaking-news stories about unauthorized or potentially dangerous drones, such as the recent story of an errant drone piloted by a possibly inebriated operator in Washington, D.C., who, while reportedly trying to impress a female friend at 3 a.m., flew his friend's quadcopter from an apartment balcony a few blocks from the White House and crashed it on the White House grounds, causing major heartburn for the Secret Service.

Industry and media statistics on how many drones have been sold to the public differ slightly, but the sales totals almost defy belief. Hobby and commercial drones are reported to be selling at the rate of 15,000 or 16,000 per month, or almost 200,000 per year. That's a lot of people who will be looking to get outdoors and fly their new drones. And where will these people want to fly their drones? Why, in the wide open spaces designed for outdoor recreation, of course — parks!

There is no doubt drones are coming, and they are likely to have a profound effect on parks and recreation. The public and commercial use of drones will present substantial challenges to park managers very soon and agencies will do well to be prepared for the coming wave.

The Allure of Drones

It is not difficult to understand why drones are becoming so popular. Flying a drone is a cool thing to do. The technology is amazing, the flying is exciting, and if there was ever a gadget that appealed to people's imagination, drones would have to be near the top of the list.

Drones and quadcopters are also relatively inexpensive and easy to operate. But just as they are fun to fly, they are more than just cool toys. They represent a quantum leap in how technology can be used not just for personal enjoyment and enrichment, but also to expand human knowledge, aid research, fight environmental threats, save lives and much more. We haven't even plumbed the depths of what drones might be able to do, but we are starting to see those scenarios take shape.

There may be challenges ahead related to public flying of drones in parks, but there are also tantalizing opportunities for park agencies to utilize drone technology to fulfill important conservation, natural resource management and public-safety responsibilities. These include search-and-rescue operations, wildfire control, managing threatened natural areas, mapping the spread of invasive species, monitoring remote park locations and others. Drones may be able to provide agencies substantial time and cost savings for a wide variety of tasks. There is no doubt that drones are already stimulating interest among park planners, GIS specialists, park managers, rangers and even recreation program staff. Some agencies are already making plans for how they might use drones.

From a recreational perspective, one of the most popular uses of hobby drones is for photography. New drones can carry high-resolution cameras with onboard image stabilization and other advances. "It's all new," says Eric Cheng, director of aerial imagery for DJI, one of the largest manufacturers of hobby and commercial drones in the world. In a recent interview, he said the ability of drones to facilitate extraordinary new ways to photograph objects and landscapes has provoked intense curiosity and public interest. "The view from right overhead is unique. Nobody has ever seen such photographs before, and you are taking them. It's exhilarating."

Legitimate Fears

So what's not to like about drones? Well, crashes, lost drones, operator errors, mechanical failures, privacy invasions and other undesirable consequences of inept or irresponsible drone flying, just to name a few reasons. Such outcomes are becoming an increasing concern of those responsible for public safety, not to mention the ever-present threat of a drone being used in a terrorist plot. There is already a compendium of hair-raising stories of near-misses or collisions with drones including reports of drones flying too close to aircraft or in other highly inappropriate locations. Reports of drones flying within 50 feet of commercial aircraft at New York City airports make some believe that a collision with an airliner is not a matter of if, but when.

Parks have not been exempt from problems created by irresponsibly piloted drones, including a number of high-profile incidents at iconic national parks such as Zion and Grand Canyon. A

widely reported incident occurred at Mount Rushmore National Park when a hobby drone was launched from a parking lot, hovered over a crowd of 1,500 people gathered for an evening program at the monument, and then flew over and around the four sculpted heads before being flown back to the parking lot. Other public complaints about inappropriate or unauthorized use of drones have been received by the National Park Service (NPS), including harassment of wildlife, noise at iconic scenic viewing points and drone crashes in parks.

Jeffrey Olson, public affairs officer for NPS, says that the prohibition on unmanned aircraft in national parks issued by Director Jon Jarvis in a policy memo last June was “basically a timeout.” The ban on new drone flying was prompted by public complaints concerning incidents similar to what happened at Mount Rushmore. NPS management policies call for careful consideration of any “new form of recreation,” which drone flying clearly is, and the impact of this activity has not been evaluated. The administrative action will trigger a review of existing and proposed policies and will lead to a Notice of Proposed Regulation, a process that is likely to take about 18 months, according to Olson.

Incidents from rogue operators or inexperienced pilots are not the only concern. Privacy advocates, industrial and national security experts, and law enforcement officials are very concerned about the potential use of drones in terrorist plots or other criminal activity. Drones are starting to be a concern at virtually every large-scale public event that someone might want to observe or photograph, such as a drone that buzzed Chicago Park District’s Lollapalooza Festival last year. The Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) even went so far as to declare the 2015 Super Bowl a “No Drone Zone,” and issued an advisory to enjoy the game, but “leave your drone at home.”

Concerns about drones range from the relatively minor annoyance of crashes in open areas to the very deep concern regarding bad behavior by pilots whose ignorance or dangerous operation of drones can literally endanger people’s lives. Many drone enthusiasts are concerned about rogue operators giving all operators a black eye. “The rogues are outliers,” according to Jon Resnick, policy and marketing representative for DJI. Christopher Vo, president of the [DC Area Drone User Group](#), says, “There are a lot of people who are interested in flying safely and who just want to find places to fly.”

Nonetheless, there are still many concerns about drones from a variety of quarters, especially park agencies that many expect to be on the front lines of managing public flying of hobby drones. Vo agrees that crashes and uncontrolled descents are an issue. “Everyone who gets their first drone and takes it out to fly will crash — that’s almost a guarantee,” he says. “But it is not necessarily a problem, just a reality. The solution is user education about where it is safe to fly and to not fly near buildings or over private property.” Technology improvements, says Vo, such as inexpensive onboard infrared sensors and downward-facing cameras will help measure changes in speed and assist automatic hold, takeoff and landing. “It is also why the industry is trying to make drones lighter, stronger and safer,” he says.

Vo points out that how a drone is flown is a factor in how safe it is. There are two principal methods of piloting drones, First-Person-View (FPV) and Line-of-Sight flying. In FPV flight, the operator flies the aircraft through the lens of an onboard camera. Some think this is a largely

unsafe way to fly, and that hobby drones should be only be flown by line-of-sight with a spotter present at all times the drone is in operation.

Rules Not Well Understood; Guidance Lacking

With the large numbers of hobby drones being purchased daily and intense interest in commercial use growing, it is perplexing that there is so little understanding of exactly what the federal rules are for operating drones. The FAA regulates all U.S. airspace and there are strict rules for any type of aircraft flying above 500 feet. The rules governing unmanned aircraft systems, however, have been criticized for being seriously out of date.

Commercially flown drones present a different set of issues than hobby drones. Guidance for the operation of both commercial and hobby drones has been long-awaited and significantly overdue. At present, virtually all commercial use of drones is currently prohibited without a very difficult-to-obtain Certificate of Authorization (COA), but few rules govern hobby drones. Since sophisticated and versatile hobby drones can be purchased easily and without licensing requirements to operate them, not many people know what is actually allowed and what is prohibited by law.

Just before publication of this edition of *Parks & Recreation* magazine, the details of a Notice of Proposed Regulation by the FAA for commercial drone use were inadvertently posted online, and the FAA was essentially forced to release the entire proposal over a holiday weekend. To the commercial drone user's relief, the proposed regulations are being viewed as reasonable. They would not require operators to have a pilot's license as some had feared, and the training and costs to obtain a required FAA operator's certificate would not be prohibitive. Other proposed restrictions include a 500-foot ceiling, operation by line-of-sight only, and no flying above any people except those involved with the drone flight, such as a spotter. So, damp your expectations — no drone pizza deliveries to your door for now. The 60-day public comment period has now closed. The review and rule-making is expected to take up to two years. Cheng believes the FAA will need to issue some interim guidance for commercial users before the proposed rule becomes final, however, because there is such interest from potential commercial users for innovation and applications.

The recent FAA announcement indicated that guidance on hobby drones will be issued in the near future. The Academy of Model Aeronautics has advocated for more education and user training of drone operators and has supported the idea that hobby drone operators be required to obtain an operator's certificate or become a part of an organized model aircraft club.

If FAA-proposed rules do require hobby drone operators to be part of an organized club as some expect, there is likely to be an uptick in the membership of local model airplane clubs and drone user groups accompanied by an increasing demand for more public spaces in which to fly drones. But solutions may not be simple. It is true that many park and recreation agencies have a long history of providing model aircraft clubs space to fly radio-controlled planes, but virtually none are prepared for drone users. In addition, some park managers who currently provide parkland for radio-control clubs believe that flying fixed-wing RC planes and quadcopters on the same fields is not workable or desirable. This may mean that there will be new demands for drone-

flying areas and that park agencies will need to expand the search for suitable spaces for this purpose.

Policies for Public Flying in Parks Unformulated

While the popularity of drones is growing exponentially, the awareness of park and recreation agency personnel who will need to manage them is not. In response to a query on NRPA Connect, a number of park administrators said their agencies either had no policies on drones or that they were unaware of any if they did.

One conclusion was clear from conversations with park agencies across the country: Those park agency personnel who have not anticipated the boom in public drone flying will be caught unprepared both on a policy level and a management level. An important lesson is emerging — if your agency hasn't started thinking about how to manage drones, it's time to start thinking about it now.

Those agencies that react with blanket prohibitions on drone flying will find them difficult to enforce and they will do a disservice to people who are just looking for a place to safely recreate. Decades of successful experience providing space for model airplane fliers have shown that park agencies can and do accommodate this kind of outdoor recreation compatibly with other activities.

Vo says, "Most of our users are law-abiding and only want to fly. But a lot of us who want to fly safely and responsibly simply don't have any places to fly. A lot of park agencies turn us down because they just don't want to deal with us." The good news for drone users like Vo is that some agencies are expressing willingness to consider how they could accommodate the drone-flying public.

Many Agencies Anticipate Using Drones Themselves

Even if some agencies are unprepared for public drone use, quite a few are thinking about how they might use drones for a variety of management, monitoring, mapping and public safety applications.

The requirements for obtaining a COA from the FAA to use unmanned aircraft systems for governmental or research purposes are quite rigorous, but Cleveland Metroparks (CMP) was willing go the distance, said Brian Zimmerman, executive director of CMP. "When we saw the potential, we never wavered," he said. They have obtained a COA for a research project to monitor the Rising Valley wetlands complex, the largest freshwater wetlands in their park system.

Stephen Mather, geographic information systems supervisor, says that to map and study the wetlands is extremely time-consuming and difficult to accomplish. By employing a small fixed-wing drone, they will be able to do 3D mapping of surface topography and plant communities as well as track the spread of invasive species, monitor stormwater events, and create other datasets in real time to better manage and protect this valuable wetland. "We will also use the drone on a

forest restoration project, and we hope to use it to do an ongoing assessment of shoreline infrastructure along Lake Erie,” Mather says. “With resolution accurate to within an inch, we can create 3D maps of new construction and monitor its condition over time.”

The Future of Drones in Parks

Cheng of DJI says, “We are in the earliest stages of drone technology and it is literally improving daily.” According to Cheng, there will be reliable, redundant return-home programming; mandatory no-fly software to prevent flying in federally designated no-fly zones; more autonomy and self-aware behavior; “follow-me” technology; and much more safety-related decision-making capability. “There is no reason that a drone should ever fly into a tree or building, and every drone will have sufficient power to return home.”

What’s on the horizon for drones in parks? Well, consider that drone fliers are already envisioning drone racing just like the old air races of the 1950s. Fly-ins, drone-building workshops and educational programs for drone users are already in the minds of forward-looking parks personnel. And the potential applications of commercial, hobby and agency-operated drones are mind-expanding. Hummingbird and nano-drones could aid in citizen science projects and enhance STEM learning opportunities for teens and adults. And what kid (under adult supervision of course) wouldn’t want to get connected to nature and the outdoors using a drone to observe and discover our natural world?

When asked if he could ever envision a future in which drone use in national parks could be common, Olson says, “Yes, probably, but the question will be where such use would be approved.”

So, what would the ideal future look like for users? Vo says, “Ideally, there would be park sites set aside for model aviation and open to users to fly their aircraft. There would be a way for users to communicate with park managers about what they were permitted to do and what they wanted to do. There would be a way for them to query the park managers about conditions and to be able to schedule times to fly. And there would be times and places where we could be able to educate others.” Possible? We’ll see.

Richard J. Dolesh is NRPA’s Vice President of Conservation and Parks.

Blue Bike Program

What it is:

The Blue Bike program is a free bike-share program coming to River Falls in 2016. There are four designated bike racks throughout the City located at Hoffman Park, Veterans Park, the UW-River Falls campus and in front of Our Neighbors Place. Each rack will have four to six blue bikes of various sizes and styles along with a permanently affixed fix-it station.

What it isn't:

It's not like the bikes you've seen in big cities where they all look identical and you have to swipe a card. Our eclectic collections of blue bikes are free to use.

How does it work:

We try to keep the rules to a minimum but here they are:

- Our Bikes Are Available for Recreational Use
- Please Use Respectfully
- Follow the Rules of the Road
- Please Turn the Seat Backward if Repair is Needed

Where are the racks?

The bike racks are located in two of the City's parks (Hoffman and Veterans Park), on the UW-River Falls campus, and at Our Neighbors' Place. Please return your bike to any of the four racks. [Click here for a map.](#)

Our Helpful Map

Looking for all four Blue Bike racks, trails to ride or where to get some ice cream? Click [here](#) for a map that provides that information.

Donating Bikes

Want to donate a bike to the program? Email or call [Mike Noreen](#) at 715-426-3467.

Blue Bike Program Sharing Stations

