

Town of Verona
Open Space and Parks Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 3, 2015

Present: Keen, Mathies, Hoffman, and Maxwell
Absent: Stellick
Also Present: John Wright, Clerk-Treasurer (C-T)
Called to order at 7:30 PM

Approval of Agenda

Mathies moved to approve the agenda; 2nd Hoffman. Mathies noted that the Town Chair appoints members to Committees and Commissions, so questioned the agenda item that suggests the Town Board appoints members to these bodies. After brief discussion regarding the appointment process, it was agreed that item 5 of the agenda should be revised as follows: *Swearing in and Installation of New Appointment to the Open Space and Parks Commission*. Motion to approve the agenda as amended carried.

Public Comments

C-T Wright reported per email correspondence with Dane County Park Planner Chris James of Dane County Parks and Open Space, construction of the Sunset Drive parking has been delayed until late June. This lot will provide access to the Falk Wells Sugar River Wildlife Area as well as a proposed loop trail. C-T Wright noted that the Dane County Comprehensive Planning Steering Committee met on April 29, 2015. According to their minutes, this was the final meeting of this body. There followed brief discussion of the Resource Protection Corridor Map that had been prepared by the Steering Committee.

Chair Keen announced that the Upper Sugar River Watershed Association (USRWA) was awarded the Dane County Environmental Council Grant for Capital Equipment. The DR Trimmer has been purchased along with replacement trim line and bits. Although the grant covered 50% of the cost to purchase, the USRWA was able to count their in-kind contribution of hours spent trimming brush along navigable waterways. Keen further noted that the grant requires proof of purchase, a narrative of its use and how that has contributed to the goals of the USRWA, and a log of in-kind contributions. There was brief discussion of how well the trimmer works and its availability for use for other Dane County groups. Keen noted that there are plans next year to remove buckthorn along the Sugar River with saws. There was also brief discussion regarding the schedule for restoring the remainder of the land adjacent to the public parking area on Valley Road to prairie.

Chair Keen reported about the success of **Rob's Sugar River Ramble** held May 31, 2015. This was an event to benefit the USRWA. The bike/canoe trip originated in Mt. Horeb and ended in Verona. There followed a discussion as to whether the Open Space and Parks Commission can be reduced again to a five-member board or authorized under a different State Statute than §60.66 (which requires seven members appointed for staggered 7-year terms). C-T Wright will check with one of the Wisconsin Town's Association attorneys regarding whether a Town with Village powers can create a Parks Commission independent of the statute cited above.

Approval of Minutes

Mathies moved to approve the April minutes as presented; 2nd Hoffman. It was noted that in paragraph three of page two, *prairie* was misspelled. In the following paragraph, *proposed* was misspelled. Motion to accept the corrected minutes from the April 1, 2015 meeting carried; Maxwell, who was not yet a member of the OSPC in April abstained.

Approval of and Installation of New Appointment to the Open Space and Parks Commission

C-T Wright administered the Oath to Douglas Maxwell, the new Town Board appointment to OSPC.

Discuss Survey Results Regarding Town Land Purchase and Annual Town Meeting

Chair Keen was surprised how few residents of the 386 respondents to the survey were aware of the purchase of land by the Town; he stated he will do a better job of keeping his neighbors informed. Member Maxwell proposed community meetings organized by commission and Board members to be held at private residents or public spaces such as the local library. Maxwell further noted that landscape planning of the new site would be appropriate for this Commission to review. He also thought that donations of materials/labor were possible in regards to landscaping. Member Mathies agreed to contact local resources Ron Endres and Rich Henderson by email to see if they may be interested in attending the July meeting to discuss prairie restoration.

Continue Discussion of New Town Hall Site

There was brief discussion regarding recent changes to the site plan that would minimize the amount of asphalt required for a driveway and for parking. The proposed hall and public works buildings will be moved further north and east. The public works building has been rotated ninety degrees clockwise from its previously proposed location. Office sizes have been reduced to further reduce the cost of construction. The design team provided gratis by Epic Systems has continued to meet regularly with the Town Chair and Town office staff in an effort to reduce costs further before a proposal is presented to the public for review.

Continue Discussion of Future Conservation Efforts within the Town of Verona

There was continued discussion of prairie restoration efforts within the Town and a brief discussion regarding trees. Member Maxwell is in favor of a short grass prairie on the Town property. Chair Keen stated that the USRWA is looking to restore tall grass and other native plants along the banks of local waterways.

Establish an Agenda for the July 1, 2015 Meeting

The proposed agenda is as follows: Call to Order; Approval of the Agenda; Public Comments; Approval of Meeting Minutes for June 3, 2015; Discussion Regarding Repurposing the Retained Acreage of Town Land Purchased for the Proposed Town Hall/Public Works Facilities Including Prairie Restoration; Review Preliminary Certified Survey Map(s) (this item should only be added if there are maps to review); Update on Dane County Parks Sunset Drive Parking Lot (this item should only be added if there is an update); Continue Discussion of Future Conservation Efforts within the Town of Verona; Set August Agenda; and Adjourn. Member Mathies suggested adding an item to a future agenda to begin discussing updates to the Town of Verona Parks Plan. The current plan is effective through calendar year 2017.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by Hoffman; 2nd by Maxwell. Motion carried at 9:23 PM.

John Wright
Clerk-Treasurer

Approved: 7/01/2015